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Exploring Three Fifth-Grade Teachers' Understanding of Historical Thinking: A Case Study

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EXPLORING THREE FIFTH-GRADE TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF

HISTORICAL THINKING: A CASE STUDY

by

Deanne R. Murray

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UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
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ABSTRACT

Exploring Three Fifth-Grade Teachers' Understanding of Historical Thinking:

A Case Study

by

Deanne R. Murray, Doctor of Philosophy

Utah State University, 2013

Major Professor: Sylvia Read, Ph.D.
Department: School of Teacher Education and Leadership

Elementary school students' knowledge of history appears to be at an all-time low as evidenced by the 2010 NAEP scores that indicated only 20% of fourth-grade students scored at the "at least proficient" level in a test of historic knowledge. Many culprits are being blamed for this dismal performance of U. S. students, such as No Child Left Behind's (NCLB) lack of emphasis on history, teachers' lack of training in teaching history, traditional textbook use in teaching history, and society's general apathy toward history and civics. The U.S. Department of Education attempted to improve students' historic knowledge in 2001 by creating the Teach American History (TAH) grant program, which promoted school district/university collaboratives intended to increase K-12 teachers' historic knowledge and improve their classroom practices. Research over the past decade has grown substantially regarding the need for teachers and students to think historically rather than just learn historic facts. Increasing historical thinking has been a

goal of TAH projects around the country. This study investigated three fifth-grade teachers involved in a TAH project in Utah. Teachers were interviewed in their classrooms and observed in TAH settings in an attempt to determine the growth of these teachers' historical thinking and how this growth might affect their classroom instruction. The results indicated that these teachers reported learning to think historically and improving their classroom practices substantially through this TAH socially mediated professional development. These teachers also reported evidence that the historical thinking of their students had improved. Findings indicated that the characteristics of historical thinking were discussed in this TAH project but not necessarily in depth. The three teachers' understanding of what is involved to think historically remains somewhat vague.

(163 pages)

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Exploring Three Fifth-Grade Teachers' Understanding of Historical Thinking:

A Case Study

by

Deanne R. Murray, Doctor of Philosophy

Utah State University, 2013

Deanne R. Murray at Utah State University conducted a qualitative case study aimed at examining the understanding and practice of historical thinking of three fifth-grade teachers. These three teachers had each been a participant for 3 years in a federally funded Teach American History (TAH) grant project aimed at increasing teachers' historical knowledge and classroom practices. This TAH project in Utah was particularly focused on teachers learning to use cultural tools in socially mediated settings with the ultimate goal of improving their students' performance in history.

This study sought to understand the development of these three teachers' historical thinking through their participation in this TAH project and explore how this development influenced their teaching of history to their students. It was the aim of the researcher to probe the understanding of these three teachers regarding historical thinking after 3 years of professional development. If we are interested in strengthening the historical thinking competence of students in our schools, it makes sense to begin by gaining a better understanding of teachers' professional development experiences that are

intended to foster historical thinking.

This study required the collection of data from teacher interviews, teacher observations in the TAH setting, teacher lesson reflections, and teacher analysis of their students' work and understanding of historical thinking. Teacher participation in this study was voluntary and uncompensated and no outside funding was used during this study. The researcher, Deanne R. Murray, volunteered her time and resources for the study to fulfill the requirements of a Doctor of Philosophy in Education degree.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This journey began at a time in my life when I sought needed change and a new focus. Enrolling in a doctoral program provided exactly that—change and a new focus. What I have learned throughout the doctoral courses and the dissertation process has helped me grow in ways I had not anticipated. I have made many new and wonderful friends; I have shared incredible learning experiences with my husband and best friend, Greg, as we have journeyed together in this quest; I have become much better prepared to teach students at the university level; and most importantly, I have developed a great respect for research and the role it plays in education.

I wish to thank all of my professors at Utah State University for their commitment to hard work and to helping me learn and grow. Particularly, I express my gratitude to Dr. Sylvia Read, the chair of my dissertation committee, for sharing her wisdom, experience, and guidance. May I provide for my students what she has provided for me. I would hardly hit "send" before her response would be in my inbox with very constructive and clear feedback. She both urged me and supported me throughout the dissertation process and I am very grateful to her.

The other members of my dissertation committee were willing, accessible, and extremely helpful as well. Thank you to Dr. Steven Camicia for urging me to consider and truly listen to varied perspectives, as well as exploring my own, as I study history. To Dr. Martha Whitaker, thank you for expecting me to better understand the theoretical thread necessary to guide my research. To Dr. Susan Turner, thank you for posing questions I had not thought about and for offering advice regarding professional

development for teachers. Also, thank you to Dr. Daniel McInerney, for continually urging me to consider the viewpoint of historians.

I owe much to many who have helped and guided me. I thank my first teachers, my parents, Marriner C. Rigby and Lois E. Rigby, who set the standard for college graduation for my sisters and me, as they both had attended and graduated from Utah State University. Their commitment to educating youth and their service in K-12 schools provided a remarkable lifetime example for me.

To my daughters, Whitney and Margo, I wish to pass on a legacy of the importance of continual learning. Whitney, already an accomplished teacher, will contribute much to the field of education in her lifetime, I am certain. Margo, in her deep commitment to service to others, will contribute to the education of many.

The patience and support of my husband, Greg, has provided opportunities for me to continually learn and progress in this project and others. Without a companion to talk me "off the ledge" at times and to take me away to hike the trails of Zion National Park, I would not have enjoyed this fantastic journey nearly so much.

<div align="right">Deanne R. Murray</div>

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

What U.S. students *do not* know about history seems more of interest to the public than what students *do* know. Talk show hosts and others in society laughably point out the folly of our students' wrong answers to questions about history, and in schools we continue to test students' historical knowledge with ongoing discouraging results. VanSledright (2002) called it "a curious national pastime" when groups of students are periodically asked to recall specific historical facts on multiple-choice tests even though discouraging results are expected. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) history test is administered to students in randomly selected schools every 4 years and the results concur that U.S. students' scores have changed little since 1994 on tests aimed at measuring historical knowledge. According to the 2010 NAEP results, few students scored above the proficient level and only 20% of fourth-grade students scored at least proficient (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2011). The results of the tests are dismal and seem to be expected, which makes us wonder: Why do we continue this practice?

Do repeated tests of facts based upon historical dates, places, and events adequately represent what students know and understand about history? It would seem the answer is a hearty "no," but differing opinions on this point surprisingly continue. Two decades of research have produced a multitude of books, research studies, journal

articles, reports, and lectures encouraging teachers to concentrate less on historical "facts" and to proceed in teaching their students to think historically. Many of these research-based publications display titles such as *Research into Action* or *Research and Practice*, which suggested that teachers might be reading this research and using the findings in their classrooms. This, however, appears not to be the case (Barton & Levstik, 2010; Hynd, 1999; VanSledright, 2002, 2004, 2010).

Although many teachers of history understand the value of having students read and interpret primary and secondary source documents, most history teachers still cling to the practice of using only textbooks on a daily basis (Hicks, 2004). Using and *covering* mammoth textbooks remains the most common method of teaching history regardless of teachers' disciplinary knowledge. At best, some of these teachers use primary sources, videos, photographs, and so forth to back up the story told by the textbook (VanSledright, 2002). This continued practice is vexing. Why do we see this disconnect between theory, research, and practice?

What Is Historical Thinking?

Research from the past few decades has suggested that "there is little point in simply transmitting a story of the past to students in hopes that they will remember it and repeat it (Barton & Levstik, 2010, p. 33). This practice offers no opportunity for historic interpretation. Barton and Levstik continued with this description of what students who are taught to think historically should be engaged in during their history classes.

> Instead, students should learn how such stories are developed in the first place:
> They should be involved in historical investigations, they should analyze and

interpret primary sources, and they should understand the relationship between historical evidence and the construction of accounts—both their own and those of others. (p. 33)

This kind of history instruction has as its goal that students understand that perspectives may differ according to the specific evidence discovered, because of the different interpretations of this evidence, and/or because of the divergent outlooks of different people throughout history.

As Levesque (2009) noted, often educators consider historical thinking as simply the skills needed to process the content and the content to be "indisputable facts." Levesque defined historical thinking as "the intellectual process through which an individual masters and ultimately appropriates the concepts and knowledge of history and critically applies such concepts and knowledge in the resolution of contemporary and historical issues" (p. 27). This type of learning, it would seem, is much more difficult and involved than memorizing content or substantive knowledge that has been read and/or transmitted through master narratives.

Substantive knowledge, which focuses on what history is *about*, is represented in forms such as textbooks, stories, movies, oral stories and retellings. It's typically understood as what students need to know about people, events, themes, ideas, etc. Procedural knowledge is not what history is *about*, but rather it is what students do to understand and process history. Historical thinking involves using both types of knowledge in tandem and does not suppose either substantive or procedural knowledge can be used alone to interpret historical events (Levesque, 2009).

Levesque (2009) constructed these five essential questions to help lead teachers

and students to an understanding of what he referred to as the procedural knowledge necessary for understanding history. Each question is followed by an associated procedural concept.

1. What is important in the past? —Historical significance

2. What changed and what remained the same?—Continuity and change

3. Did things change for better or worse?—Progress and decline

4. How do we make sense of the raw materials of the past?—Evidence

5. How can we understand predecessors who had different moral frameworks?—Historical empathy (p. 37).

These five questions, according to Levesque, can help teachers view historical thinking as "a careful, analytical process" that requires students to use both substantive and procedural knowledge.

VanSledright (2009) praised Levesque regarding his treatment of the five questions. He noted that Levesque provided teachers with specific guidance in unpacking each concept and in assisting novices in developing deeper understandings. In a review of Levesque's work VanSledright claimed, "[Levesque] is careful to situate his guidance in the context of a variety of studies that have explored how novices come to enhance their understandings of these procedural ideas and concepts" (p. 436).

VanSledright (2010) offered a definition of historical thinking similar to that of other historians, "Historical thinking is a very close relative to active, thoughtful, critical participation in text- and image-rich democratic cultures" (p. 118). In defining historical thinking, he offered a rich description of what historical thinkers can do:

They are careful, critical readers and consumers of the mountains of evidentiary source data that exists in archives and that pours at us each day via the media.

> Good historical thinkers are tolerant of differing perspectives because these perspectives help them make sense of the past…. They also know what it means to build and defend evidence-based arguments because of practice constructing interpretations rooted in source data. (p. 118)

VanSledright, as did Parker (2010) and Barton and Levstik (2010), also described the importance of students building and writing their own interpretations of historical events as a critical part of historical thinking.

Gaps in Research and Practice

Keirn and Luhr (2012) referred to a "scholarly canon of sorts" including "the works of Robert Bain, Keith Barton, Peter Lee, Linda Levskik, Stephane Levesque, Bruce Van Sledright, and Sam Wineburg—to name a few," (p. 493) as expanding the historical thinking movement. They credited the work of these scholars as promoting historical thinking skills for secondary students and to some extent, elementary school students. Keirn and Luhr, however, claimed that even with the historical thinking movement expanding, the training of preservice history-social studies teachers is inadequate. Is important research in this area guiding both classroom teachers and preservice teachers in need?

Much educational research is written for a limited research community and read by few; rarely is it shared with those in most need of understanding research findings— the practitioner. Arbaugh and colleagues (2008) described the gap between educational research and practice to be "insurmountable," but offered hope in this statement:

> Scholars in a number of content areas have begun to argue that a targeted focus on better linking research and practice is necessary to improve the landscape of educational research, the way that it is used (or not used) in day-to-day decision-

making in schools and districts, and, ultimately to improve student learning (p. 3). Teachers see their two primary teaching tasks as controlling student behavior and content coverage (Barton & Levstik, 2010). These views keep teachers from practicing their disciplinary knowledge to its full extent. Additionally, teachers are plagued by high-stakes testing requirements that focus on factual knowledge of historical events rather than historical thinking practices (Alleman & Brophy, 2006; Cornbleth, 2010).

"Research on teachers' attention to K-12 students' disciplinary thinking in the field of history education is limited," claimed Monte-Sano (2011), but it is evident in other content fields. Researchers in other subject areas suggest that by creating teacher awareness and focusing teacher attention on students' thinking, students' learning can be improved. Focusing teachers' attention on students' thinking in history education includes "cultivating students' interpretive and evidence-based thinking" (p. 260). How do teachers move toward creating opportunities for their students' engagement in inquiry?

It seems that facilitating this kind of disciplinary understanding would require teachers to establish student-centered classrooms, but pedagogical disagreements have long existed as to whether classrooms should be teacher-centered or student-centered (Cuban, 2006). Teacher-centered education is still strongly represented in elementary schools as "teachers control what is taught, when, and under what conditions, and transmit knowledge, skills, and values to students" (p. 793). Cuban described student-centered classrooms to include much more student discussion, group work, choice of topics, and choice of methods of study. He contended that student-centered classrooms

more often produced students who emerged as responsible, well-rounded, and contributing community members. These classrooms tend to encourage an active engagement in inquiry, necessary for teachers' awareness of their students' thinking.

Reform efforts continue to push educators to balance outside pressures such as high-stakes testing, state and district mandates, and adherence to strict curriculum standards with teachers' own knowledge of sound instructional pedagogy (Alleman & Brophy, 2006). Indeed, to create opportunities for students to think deeply and reason soundly, teachers must possess strong pedagogical content knowledge. Few professional development opportunities are offered for teachers already in the field to improve their content knowledge and pedagogical skills in history education (Seixas, 1999; VanSledright, 2010).

Borko (2004, as cited by Van Hover, 2008), called the current state of professional development "woefully inadequate" (p. 3) and Sykes (1996, as cited by Van Hover, 2008), considered professional development "the most serious unresolved problem for policy and practice in American education today" (p. 465). Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009), in their report on professional development in the U.S. and abroad, examined professional development as a subset of professional learning. "We conceptualize professional learning as a product of both externally-provided and job-embedded activities that increase teachers' knowledge and change their instructional practice in ways that support student learning," the report declared (p. 1). These authors referred to Fullan (2007), who argued "that external approaches to instructional improvement are rarely 'powerful enough, specific enough, or

sustained enough to alter the culture of the classroom and school'" (p. 1). Teachers themselves must become learners and self-developing as they participate in structured professional development programs (Wei et al., 2009).

To help students learn to think historically teachers must have substantive and procedural knowledge and be able to translate that knowledge into instructional practices. Traditionally, and even today the most common way for teachers to develop professionally has been in workshops and/or summer institutes. Research reviewed by Van Hover (2008) found these programs fragmented and lacking critique.

Teaching American History Projects

When teachers are offered socially constructed opportunities to improve their pedagogical content knowledge about history and to experiment with sound pedagogical methods in ongoing professional development, how does their instruction change? The U.S. Department of Education attempted to address this question through the creation of the Teaching American History (TAH) Grant program. The grant's purpose statement states, "By helping teachers to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of American history as a separate subject matter within the core curriculum, funded programs will improve instruction and raise student achievement" (http://www2.ed. gov/programs/teachinghistory/index.html). The TAH website describes the goal of this program:

> The goal of this program is to demonstrate how school districts and institutions with expertise in American history can collaborate over a 3-year period to ensure that teachers develop the knowledge and skills necessary to teach traditional American history in an exciting and engaging way. Through these projects,

districts will demonstrate comprehensive professional development approaches for providing high-quality American history instruction. Students will develop an appreciation for the great ideas of American history.

The origins of the TAH grants lie in a 2000 report displaying the weak historical knowledge of elite college and university seniors. National House and Senate members, led by Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, adopted a resolution to increase the importance and value of U.S. History education. Byrd then sponsored legislation to provide $50 million to the Department of Education to improve the teaching of traditional American history. Of the term "traditional history," PL (public law) 107-110, Subpart 4, Sec. 2351 reads:

> For the development, implementation, and strengthening of programs to teach traditional American history as a separate academic subject (not as a component of social studies) within elementary school and secondary school curricula, including the implementation of activities—
>
> > (A) To improve the quality of instruction; and
> > (B) To provide professional development and teacher education activities with respect to American history. (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001)

Humphrey, Chang-Ross, Donnelly, Hersh, and Skolnik (2005) reported that TAH project directors were identified, needs assessments conducted, and activities planned that were believed to improve history instruction and student achievement. Most project directors were employed by the school district that received the grant while others worked for a college or university. Project requirements included a partnership with one or more institutions of higher education, nonprofit history or humanities organizations, or libraries or museums.

Participants were recruited in various ways. Among these, school districts distributed flyers, invited principals to select teachers, and accepted volunteers. In some

projects the partnering institutions were involved in participant selection, but generally participants volunteered because of a desire to improve their content knowledge and teaching skills.

Financial incentives in the form of stipends were provided to participants in some projects, while additional teacher resources, credit toward recertification, leadership opportunities, college credit, or combinations of these incentives were offered in others. Most projects offered intensive summer institutes (averaging one and one-half to two weeks) for participants as well as opportunities for follow-up during the school year (Humphrey et al., 2005).

Several school districts and district/university collaboratives in Utah were granted funding to produce programs to meet the TAH goals. Have these learning opportunities for teachers made a discernible difference in teachers' classroom practices? Limited research has followed teachers in Utah to investigate the changes in classroom practice as a result of TAH professional development grants. It would seem necessary to examine the changes or lack thereof in teaching practices of participants in these professional development programs in order to plan future programs.

The Evaluation of the TAH program, a national report in 2005, prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, aimed to evaluate the first two grantee cohorts of 2001 and 2002 (Humphrey et al., 2005). Findings included that the teachers who participated in those early TAH projects were often not those traditionally thought of as most in need of history professional development, as 70% were experienced secondary teachers with academic backgrounds in history. It was suggested that the TAH projects likely "reached

those teachers most interested in American History—not necessarily those most in need

of additional professional development" (p. xi).

It was also determined that TAH projects covered a wide range of historical

content, thinking skills, and methods. The four U.S. history framework themes measured

by NAEP were covered with the following frequency throughout the projects in 2001 and

2002:

1. The gathering and interactions of peoples, cultures, and ideas (91%).
2. Change and continuity in American democracy: ideas, institutions, practices, and controversies (83%).
3. Economic and technological changes and their relation to society, ideas, and the environment (69%).
4. The changing role of America in the world (58%). (Humphrey et al., 2005, p. xii)

Also projects covered a wide range of historical content, thinking skills, and methods, at

different rates of frequency including:

1. Analyzing historical documents, such as manuscripts and diaries (94%).
2. Analyzing history by themes, periods and regions (86%).
3. Analyzing historical artifacts, material culture, and/or media (i.e. video, internet, and music) (86%).
4. Analyzing the historical significance of place (66%).
5. Comparing and contrasting differing interpretations of history and historical events (63%).
6. Forming hypotheses and making conclusions based on historical evidence (63%).
7. Analyzing oral histories (50%). (Humphrey et al., 2005, p. xiii)

The evaluation suggested that TAH project activities displayed some, but not all,

of the research-based characteristics of effective professional development. Participants'

responses to surveys indicated that, overall, the professional development offered active

learning, promoted coherence, and encouraged professional communication, but failed to

provide adequate follow-up for classroom teachers and generally followed traditional

training formats lacking in the characteristics of research-based, high-quality professional development (Humphrey et al., 2005).

Although this evaluation report did survey teacher and project director participants, the grantees studied were trained in 2001 and 2002, a decade ago. Many changes have been made throughout this decade to insure more effective programs. More study is necessary to determine whether teacher participants today are receiving higher quality professional development that translates into effective changes in classroom practices.

Another limitation of this report exists in the methods of data collection. Teachers were asked to self-report in order to determine the effectiveness of the TAH projects. Teachers' self-reported data varied substantially from project directors' reports. Case studies were provided in the evaluation, but again data was accumulated through written accounts provided by the individual participants. Views from outsider eyes seemed to be missing.

In addition to this evaluation report, participants of individual TAH projects have more recently discussed their involvement. Mucher (2007) described the findings of a study of one TAH grant project in Michigan as troubling. He claimed that many of the teachers involved did not significantly change their instructional approach, yet dialogue between historians and educators improved and increased. Long (2006) expressed the benefits of teachers as participants rather than observers, as well as the success of the district/university coordination provided in a Colorado TAH project. Supporting peer networks and providing teachers with more confidence was reported by Coughlin, Lee,

Gasser, and McCollum (2011) about a California TAH project. Reports of TAH projects around the country seem to differ in their claims of both benefits and challenges. A lack of common findings seems to prevent the generalizing of benefits of TAH projects. Therefore, specific study of a TAH project in southern Utah could add to the generalizing of findings in other such studies and be beneficial to educators in this part of the country.

Research Questions

In light of several decades of research regarding history education, teachers' history instruction in elementary and secondary classrooms should appear to be much different than in the past. This, in part, may be a result of TAH grant projects across the United States. The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' historical thinking as they participate in a TAH grant project. Two questions were addressed throughout this work.

1. How did three teachers who participated in a TAH grant project for 3 years' experience changes in their own historical thinking?

2. In what ways do these teachers report their TAH participation has influenced the historical thinking of their students?

One TAH grant program in a southern Utah school district will provide access for data collection for my study, including program directors and teacher interviews, professional development training sessions, teacher reflections, and materials used by participants. By using qualitative research methods of data reduction, data analysis, collaborative coding of data, and contextual investigation, data will be collected and analyzed through a sociocultural lens.

The perspective of sociocultural analysis I bring to this study closely follows that of Wertsch (2002, 2008a, 2008b), based on Vygotsky (1987), which focuses on mediated action. Mediated acts, in this case, are the thoughts, tasks, and deeds in which teachers choose to engage within the social settings of schools. Rockwell (1999) suggested that "by studying the complex processes involved in the adoption of new practices, we may be able to achieve a closer fit between proposed pedagogical innovations and lived classroom environments" (p. 126). Erickson (1999) summarized this perspective by writing, "in school learning environments, people use cultural tools in uniquely adaptive ways as they engage one another in the work of learning at the zone of proximal development" (p. 129) and suggested that teachers and students alike work together within their individual zones. In learning/working together through socially constructed professional development programs, teachers shape schools and schooling.

Both students and teachers must use tools or meditational means to engage in the acts of learning history or as some describe "doing" history. Various tools are used depending on the settings and the purposes of the learning. As Barton and Levstik (2004) explained, "Tools have developed over time and are used in socially sanctioned ways, the actions people engage in are those considered useful in their societies, the purposes that guide their actions derive from cultural values and so on" (p. 6). It is important to know what tools are being used and how these tools enable or impede learning. Necessary tools in learning to think historically, according to Barton and Levstik, included the inquiry process, narrative structures, rational examination of perspectives, and empathy. Teachers must be equipped with essential pedagogical content knowledge to guide their students to

appropriately use these tools as they learn to think historically.

      What do we know about how teachers and their students learn to think historically? To address this question, I will review some of the research literature on this topic, which has grown substantially over the past decade.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Questions abound in history education: What should be taught? For what purposes should history be taught? How do we know what our students know? How do students learn history and to think historically? What do teachers need to know and do in teaching history? I will begin by exploring some of these questions through a review of the literature of history education in the United States.

History's Place in the Curriculum

Around the turn of the 20th century, Woodrow Wilson and the other members of the Committee of Ten debated history's place in the curriculum (Wineburg, 1999). This group decided that history education should move beyond teaching particular stories, names, and dates. Rather, students should learn "the invaluable mental power which we call judgment" (para. 5).

The politics of this committee were conservative and elitist, and, as Evans (2004) claimed, even though their purpose was stated as "one education for all," the results favored those headed to colleges. This committee's work began the discussion regarding the structural framework for history in American high schools and elevated the status of history. This was done, in part, by the committee's diminishing the value of the more elite and classical subjects (Latin, Greek, astronomy, geometry) in favor of history, which they found to be a more utilitarian subject (Kliebard, 2004). The Committee of Ten ultimately set up an 8-year program of traditional history starting in fifth grade.

The committee suggested that some historical study could be included in the early grades as soon as children began to read, but formal study should begin with students of ages 9 to 11. History, according to this committee, should be studied in depth, with certain time periods and events deserving of "intensive study" (Evans, 2004, p. 9).

Later, the Committee of Seven attempted to more clearly define *what* history should be taught by eliminating some of the generalities and vagueness of the previous committee's report. Changes included consideration of the developmental levels of students and encouraged the value of history in creating thinking citizens (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1998). In addition to curricular content, the committee discussed teaching methods and suggested teachers use teaching techniques to bring history alive, such as story-telling to bring out dramatic aspects and pique students' interest. Teachers were implored, at this time, to guide their students to think historically. Thinking historically was characterized as reading for cause and effect and arranging facts systematically (Evans, 2004).

Some educators seemed placated—others were not. This committee's work included an organizational plan of four chronological blocks required of high school students. Although both the Committee of Ten and the Committee of Seven advanced the discipline's dialogue regarding the value of history in schools (Evans, 2004; Kliebard, 2004), and produced what was considered "traditional history," history remained textbook-oriented and rather pure, with little geography and/or civil government included (Evans, 2004). Nash and colleagues (1998) claimed the work of these two committees produced the closest thing to a national curriculum in history that has ever existed.

Which History and For What Purpose?

Not far into the 20th century, traditional history was once again questioned when John Dewey espoused that traditional history regarded the subject matter first and the child's needs second (Evans, 2004). Dewey's ideas reintroduced tensions into the field regarding the roles of history and the social sciences (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Kliebard (2004) wrote, "The general aim of teaching history [according to Dewey] was to lead the child to an appreciation of the values of social life and to let the child see the forces that led to effective cooperation among human beings" (p. 65). Kliebard referred to such "bandwagons and widely-swinging opinions" as a dominant factor of educational reform throughout the 20th century.

The purpose of history as traditional training of the mind was repeatedly challenged by those desiring a broader category of social studies to train the whole child. "The teaching of subjects has frequently led to rote teaching, passive learning, and the sense that knowledge is a possession rather than an instrument for coming to an ordered understanding of one's world and thereby gaining some control over one's destiny" (p. 249) concluded Kliebard (2004) in his discussion of curriculum struggles in the early 20th century. Assaults on history continued throughout the 20th century regarding history's place in the curriculum along with which history should be taught in American schools (Nash et al., 1998).

An Attempt at National Standards

What is our current educational climate regarding the place of history in our

schools? According to Barton and Levstik (2004), "No one likes the way history is taught" (p. 1). These authors argued that to conservatives it is too multicultural and to politicians it is not patriotic enough. Everyone down the line criticizes another. This debate occurs not only in the U.S. but also around the world:

> Educators, politicians, and everyday citizens throughout the world worry about how history supports or subverts national and ethnic identity, how it increases hatred or promotes reconciliation, and how it props up repressive regimes or mobilizes reform. (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 1)

The pattern of struggle and debate continues and a common view of *which* history to teach evades us. During the 1990s, National History Standards were written with the goal of establishing and solidifying common goals, but this resulted in chaos.

Evans (2004) described the controversial debates of the mid-1990s as the National History Standards were written and introduced. A common definition of history seemed unattainable. Even talk show host Rush Limbaugh joined in the fray, heatedly proclaiming, "Let me tell you something, folks. History is real simple. You know what history is? It's what happened. It's no more…" (as cited in Evans, 2004, p. 166). Limbaugh characterized the National History Standards as an attempt "to skew history" by those trying to interpret what happened and why it happened. Another critic, Lynne Cheney, the former chairperson of the National Endowment of the Humanities, created what Evans called "a storm of controversy in the media" (p. 166) by charging that the newly written standards presented students with a negative and oppressive view of everything European and American. Nash and colleagues (1998) described Cheney's questioning of whether multiple perspectives of events would pass the litmus test of "telling the truth" as adding further fuel to the fire.

The controversy over history standards reached into the U.S. Senate when Slade Gorton, a Republican from Washington State, led the senate in a successful vote to abolish the National History Standards in 1994. Gorton presented the standards as "ideology masquerading as standards" (Evans, 2004, p. 167). The standards were criticized for focusing too much on multiculturalism, racism, and mistreatment of indigenous peoples. "The world's most powerful deliberative body had intervened in support of the most fervent critics of the standards to tell the nation's teachers and academic historians that its guidelines for schools had been written irresponsibly and malevolently," described Nash and colleagues (1998, p. 236).

These National History Standards, developed by educators at the National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS), focused on historical thinking skills and historical understanding. According to Evans (2004), the goal was "to move students beyond the passive approach of absorbing dates, facts, and concepts, and toward an analysis of historical issues and decision making" (p. 167). The Organization of American Historians (OAH), in 1995, also supported the national history standards by bringing educators from all levels together to create teacher-scholar networks to discuss the standards in an attempt to improve history education. Leaders of the American History Association (AHA) supported the goals of the national standards as well, and pointed to the standards' integration of literature, biography, and art while proposing students learn historical thinking (Nash et al., 1998).

By 1995, Nash and Dunn produced a redraft of the National History Standards. Critics had tried to link the standards to left-wing ideology, presenting them to the public

as un-American. This criticism resulted from a misunderstanding of the purpose of standards. The standards were focused on "big ideas, movements, turning points, population shifts, economic transformations, wars and revolutions, religious movements, and so forth" (Nash & Dunn, 1995, p. 6) rather than concentrating on specific historical figures and core developments praised by more conservative thinkers. Evans (2004) viewed the redraft as a watered-down version that omitted the teaching and classroom activity suggestions of the former document. The new version appeased critics but rendered the standards less helpful to teachers. Eventually states and even school districts began writing their own history standards using the National History Standards as a guide, thus moving away once more from a common curriculum.

Dichotomies Continue

Barton and Levstik (2010) argued that arguments continue because stakeholders have no common understanding of the goals or meaning of instruction in history. A common understanding requires consensus on broad issues. Simple dichotomies exist that seem to pull us from a common understanding that keeps real change forever in the future. Among these dichotomies, Barton and Levstik pointed to history versus heritage, history and the past, professional and amateur history, analytic history and collective memory, and the use and the abuse of history. Supporters of one view claim to represent "real" history and argue that the opposing view represents "popular" history. These arguments diminish schools, students, teachers, politicians, and the media; they suppress useful public discourse and prevent improvement of history education.

With history standards being written by state offices of education and local districts, reform has progressed unevenly. Some state offices of education demonstrate a strong interest in history education reform, while others demonstrate none at all. However, most advocates of reform, according to Barton and Levstik (2010), believed that history education should be centered on the processes and thinking necessary for historical interpretation and should support history standards written to promote this.

Measuring What Students Know

How do we know what our students know about history? The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) collects and evaluates data from students across the United States in many subjects, including history:

> NAEP's U. S. History assessment evaluates students' understanding of the development of America's democratic institutions and ideals. Students demonstrate their knowledge of democracy, culture, technological and economic change, and America's changing world role. (Lee & Weiss, 2007, p. 2)

According to NAEP's assessment findings of 29,000 students in grades 4, 8, and 12, students knew more about U. S. History in 2006 than they did in 2001 and 1994. Scores showed gains in historic knowledge; however, only 17% of eighth-grade students scored at or above the proficient level in 2006, which is higher than 14% in 1996, but still quite low. Only 26% of fourth-grade students in 2006 could explain why people settled on the western front (Lee & Weiss, 2007). Students scored higher in areas requiring more factual knowledge, but they scored lower in areas requiring higher level thinking or historical thinking.

What contributes to U.S. students scoring lower on history tests? A 2006 study

by the Center on Education policy revealed that 71% of school districts reported cutting

back time on other subjects to make more space for reading and math instruction (Kahne

& Middaugh, 2010). Social studies instruction, which includes the study of history, is

conspicuously absent in many elementary school schedules, especially in lower-grade

classrooms. In U.S. elementary schools, social studies is generally pushed to the end of

the day, and, more often than not, no time remains for teaching other than "tested"

subjects. With many states not testing their history standards and objectives, the question

arises: Should we spend any time at all teaching history? The lack of class time devoted

to history education is but one of the factors leading to our students' poor performance on

NAEP's history assessments. Arguments continue to abound regarding *what* history

should be taught, *how*, and *why*. These arguments, posed by educators, legislators, and

parents, add to our students' poor performance.

Historical Facts Versus Historical Thinking

The question of the purpose for history education is not a recent one as described

in Chapter I of this dissertation. Nor is it clear why some students exhibit historical

thinking while others do not. Wineburg (2004) recounted that close to 100 years ago, J.

Carleton Bell, a prestigious professor at the Brooklyn Training School for teachers and

the managing editor for the *Journal of Educational Psychology,* asked this very question

in an editorial entitled "The Historic Sense." Bell pondered the reason for one student's

ability to read primary documents, organize thoughts, prioritize information, and produce

a coherent account, while another student assembled only a "hodgepodge of

miscellaneous facts" from his work with the same primary documents. Bell wondered

whether these differences were founded solely in intellectual differences, or if they

reflected different kinds of training? In 1917, Bell and McCollum set out to study the five

aspects they felt were imperative for developing historic sense:

1. The ability to understand present events in light of the past.
2. The ability to sift through the documentary record—newspaper articles, hearsay, partisan attacks, and contemporary accounts—and construct "from this confused tangle a straightforward and probable account" of what happened.
3. The ability to appreciate a historical narrative.
4. Reflective and discriminating replies to "thought questions" on a given historical situation."
5. The ability to answer factual questions about historical personalities and events. (Wineburg, 2004, p. 1401)

Bell and McCollum chose to measure the fifth aspect first because of its ease of

measurement, even though they felt it determined the least important type of historical

knowledge. Wineburg (2004) called their choice to measure factual knowledge "fateful,"

because the measurement of historical factual knowledge became the commonplace

measurement from that time on. These two researchers, "through the first large-scale test

of factual knowledge in United States History" (p. 1402), recorded dismal findings.

Analysis of their data suggested the actual study of history in schools at that time led to

very small increases in factual knowledge as students progressed through the grade

levels.

What's changed over this past century regarding the level of historic knowledge

of our students? The answer seems to be, not much. Students in the day of Bell and

McCollum seemed to be able to answer few of the test questions regarding historic facts,

just as our students of today perform rather poorly on test questions regarding history,

according to the NAEP reports. Seemingly, little has changed from great-grandparents to grandparents, from parents to current students regarding the amount of knowledge they demonstrate on tests of historic knowledge. Wineburg (2004) suggested that the "capacity of the human mind to retain information" (p. 1413) has not changed over the years, thus we should not expect students to remember vast amounts of textbook information today any better than students could in 1917.

Scores on multiple-choice tests explain little of what students need to know about history. Perhaps if history educators concentrated on the first four aspects of historic sense proposed so long ago by Bell and McCollum, we would be heading in a beneficial direction for students to become critical thinkers and engage in historical thinking rather than simply filling in bubbles.

Are elementary school students thinking historically? How do teachers help facilitate historical thinking as their students encounter historical texts? How do students really learn to use the tools necessary for historical thinking? These questions interest educators, legislators, and general citizens as public schools are continually evaluated and scrutinized.

Learning History in the Culture of Schools

The process of thinking historically for both teachers and their students does not seem to occur individually inside the mind, but rather through actions or discoveries, referred to as "culture" within social situations. Sociocultural theory, I contend, provides educators with a productive way of making sense of how students think historically. As

specified within the theory, the complex, *cognitive* processes of the individual are developed through *social* processes using mediated tools and actions (Wertsch & Rupert, 1993).

Sociocultural theory is based on "the assumption that there is an intimate connection between the special environment that human beings inhabit and the fundamental, distinguishing, qualities of human psychological processes" (Cole & Wertsch, 1996, p. 2). Vygotsky (1987) viewed the social dimension of learning as imperative to human cognition. "The beginning point in Vygotsky's analysis of human mental functioning was his claim that 'the social dimension of consciousness is primary in time and in fact [and] the individual dimension of consciousness is derivative and secondary" (Vygotsky, 1979, p. 30 as cited in Wertsch & Rupert, 1993, p. 227).

In explaining the social dimension of learning, Cole (2010) described the word *culture* as historically evolving from the idea of tending something (such as crops or animals), to help them grow. In this sense, teachers create an environment with optimal conditions in which students' thinking can be *tended* in order to grow and develop. Teachers require a similar culture in which their own thinking and understanding of teaching can expand in order to facilitate their students' learning. "Schools," according to Cole, "are institutionalized cultures for growing next generations" (p. 462).

In constructing this culture or fertile environment for growth, tools are needed. Cole (2010) referred to material tools such as hoes and shovels necessary for planting, and mental tools such as *knowing when to plant seeds* in his description of cultural tools. These tools have been perfected over generations and modified or mediated to

accomplish specific tasks or purposes. Such it is in schools, in creating a rich learning environment or culture, tools situated for specific tasks and times become necessary.

Students use cultural tools to perform actions necessary for learning. These include physical tools (texts, documents), electronic tools (computers, internet sites), abstract instruments (thought process and/or memory devices), concept devices (ideas, examples, mental models), and/or linguistic tools (written and spoken language, storytelling). Cultural tools include everything we use to help us make meaning, and how we use these tools to shape our thoughts and actions creates learning. The way a tool is used may or may not resemble its intended use, therefore, in social studies education, the key is for teachers to help students know what tools are available and for teachers to know how these tools both limit and enable students' activity and learning.

"This [sociocultural] theory encompasses perspectives for which the mind is thought to exist inside and outside the head of the individual and cognitive processes are thought to be shared between the mental functioning of the individual brain and the external features of the environment" (Otero, 2003, p. 5). Social interaction directly contributes to the construction of knowledge and understanding through mediated action. "The unit of analysis is the irreducible mediated action consisting of the individual as he creates the context, the cultural and historical artifacts internal and external to the individual and the individual interacting with others and with these artifacts" (p. 5). As Wertsch and Rupert (1993) explained, the idea of mediated action is fundamental in our understanding of how social, environmental, and cultural factors create the mental structures and the mental functions of the individual. Individuals make use of these

mediated actions, some consciously and others unconsciously, to create meaning.

In history classrooms mediated actions include how teachers and students actively and dynamically use cultural and historical tools. Wertsch and Rupert (1993) further described the need for available tools as the individual attempts to recognize and resolve problems.

> A focus on the importance of mediated means in shaping human action does not imply a static body of knowledge or set of analytic practices. Instead, the tension involved in the interaction between meditational means and the individuals using them results in a continuous process of transformation and creativity. In this process, however, we again stress that the creation of new ideas and practices occurs through operating on existing meditational means. (p. 230)

In specific examples of tools used in history education, Wertsch (2008b) explored Russian students' use of cultural tools such as specific narratives and schematic narrative templates in creating a collective memory of the past. Here the dilemma of students making sense of history was examined through the mediated uses of individual stories and historically constructed templates. Barton and Levstik (2004) examined students' use of tools (texts, videotapes, thought processes) "in making decisions about how to sequence and date historical images" (p. 10).

"Reading weighs heavily in the tool belt of a working, technological society. It helps us solve a broad array of personal and social problems in a complex, literate world," noted Sadoski (2004, p. 51). As a major tool, "reading is critical to the growth of a democratic society with a citizenry that can become informed for themselves rather than depending on press releases or canned commentary" (p. 55). Doing history involves using reading as an essential tool in not only accumulating information but also in interpreting and understanding the past.

Levesque (2009) presented various tools necessary for the acquisition of two types of "interdependent" historic knowledge—substantive and procedural. Both are essential for "doing" history. Substantive knowledge, as described previously, focuses on what history is *about* and is represented in forms such as textbooks, stories, movies, oral stories and retellings. It is typically understood as what students need to know about people, events, themes, ideas, and so forth. Because the necessary tools include narratives, substantive knowledge, according to Levesque, "is frequently misused and justified by competing groups for a variety of collective purposes (identity, memory, patriotism, public policy, etc.)" (p. 30).

Procedural knowledge is not what history is *about*, but rather it is what students do to understand and process history. Levesque (2009) referred to the conceptual tools needed to study and construct meaning about the past as procedural knowledge. His examples include "evidence, empathy, progress, decline, and such" (p. 30), which are necessary conceptual tools or ideas for making sense of the substance of history. Procedural knowledge is certainly more difficult to observe and assess, making it seem less influential in learning history. However, both are important and must be promoted in together. Levesque added that Lee and Ashby (2000) warned of the fallacy in thinking that these two types of knowledge follow a linear progression from substantive to procedural.

Sociocultural Analysis as Doing History

Barton and Levstik (2004) proposed sociocultural analysis as a theoretical

framework for exploring how children make sense of history. Sociocultural analysis requires researchers to look at mediated practices, defined by the use of tools to aid in understanding concepts within a social setting. Schools, being social settings, present opportunities for students to learn to use mediated tools in order to interpret or "do" history together.

"Doing" history, according to Barton and Levstik (2004), required students to be able to perform mediated acts of history education, such as these: "identify, analyze, respond morally, and display" (p. 7). Students are able to identify the connections between themselves and people and events of the past, analyze elements of the past to establish links, respond morally regarding events and people's actions of the past, and, finally, display their learning of information about the past.

Learning occurs in many different ways and by different modes of instruction as presented by various learning theories. Sociocultural theory supports the thought that students do not construct historical knowledge and meaning in their minds on their own, but rather they do this in one or more socially constructed groups. This learning occurs with the guidance of mentors who model and scaffold the use of appropriate mediated means or tools. Thus, teachers must attend carefully to their own pedagogical content knowledge in order to guide their students' active construction of learning.

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Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge and

Professional Development

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How do teachers know how to facilitate their students' historical thinking in the

classroom? Sadly, many do not. Much research exists on teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and continues to produce implications for teachers and teacher trainers, but often decisions are made about curriculum, instruction and assessment without regard to the research (Arbaugh et al., 2008).

As Shulman (1986) proposed years ago, a specific content knowledge is necessary for teachers to be able to teach a subject, and a knowledge of how to teach that subject must be exhibited as well. Bridging these two kinds of knowledge constitutes pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Ball, Thames, and Phelps (2008), using Shulman's proposition, broke pedagogical content knowledge into more particular aspects: common content knowledge, specialized content knowledge, knowledge of content and students, and knowledge of content and teaching, with the goal of providing more effective teacher training.

Bain (2006) studied teachers using their own PCK and classroom textbooks as situated tools for student learning. Bain described the mediated actions needed for historical inquiry in order for students to become historical investigators. Students in his study learned history by using the tools provided within the classroom culture, the teacher's own PCK being one of these tools.

Harris and Bain (2011), in a study of pre- and inservice teachers, found the differences in teachers' PCK for world history to be stunning. Preservice history teachers as well as teachers already in the field were asked individually to sort a stack of cards containing historical events and concepts to build a concept map. While they built their concept maps, participants were encouraged to talk aloud about their decisions. The

researchers were able to hear participants' thinking for each move and analyze the cognitive processes that were used in constructing the varied concept maps of world history. The activity was repeated several times. The concept maps of experienced teachers were much more developed and organized than those of novices. Harris and Bain posed the question: when do preservice teachers increase their PCK? Years of experience provide teachers with this growth, but they wondered how to help preservice teachers increase their PCK at a faster rate. In an attempt to create opportunities for accelerated learning, they created an innovation history lab where experienced teachers could work together with novice teachers to explore their ways of thinking while working on curriculum projects. Through student interviews, discussions, and projects researchers found that preservice teachers did actually increase their PCK in a sociocultural setting that included necessary tools.

The National Coalition for History, in June of 2002, joined together staff from the U.S. Department of Education, executive directors of the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and the National Council for the Social Studies with the purpose of creating benchmarks for professional development in teaching history as a discipline. Two fundamental assumptions considered as benchmarks were constructed:

- Content, pedagogy, and historical thinking should be interwoven, and

- Content, pedagogy, and historical thinking should be related to classroom experience.

The document created by this coalition suggested:

> Collaboratives for professional development in history teaching need to be planned and viewed from several vantage points. First, they must be set up according to certain general criteria, in terms of planning procedures, participation and duration. Second, they must involve sound approaches to historical content. Third, they must pay due attention to pedagogy and to active learning. Fourth, they must emphasize several definable habits of mind, ranging from uses of evidence and interpretation in forming arguments to understanding issues of change over time. Fifth and finally, collaborations must help teachers deal with appropriate methods of assessment. (Sterns, 2008)

The benchmarks created are dependent on both content and pedagogy. These benchmarks have been addressed repeatedly in TAH projects around the country. Whether the collaborative work of these organizations has found its way to an adequate number of individual teachers is doubtful. As noted by Van Hover (2008), "Outside the world of TAH grants, very few research studies exist that examine the impact of history professional development" (p. 360). These guidelines could be useful for state offices of education and school districts in planning effective professional development programs to improve teachers' pedagogical content knowledge of teaching history.

Necessary Pedagogy

As VanSledright (2004) suggested, "teachers need to know how to affect a pedagogy that assists students in reading (history) texts and constructing ideas about the past from them" (p. 342). Upon reviewing several content area literacy textbooks, VanSledright found little "intersection between research done in history education with that of work accomplished by reading researchers" (p. 343). Wineburg (2005) suggested that "by focusing on everything but reading and writing we become part of the problem of illiteracy rather than part of the solution" (p. 664). Reading and writing must not be

buried in our social studies curriculum and standards documents, but, instead, as Wineburg advocated, "literacy must become our first standard, the one that appears on our flag" (p. 665). Many teachers of history today lack adequate training in literacy practices to help students understand historical texts.

    Traditional teaching "ruts" continue to survive in spite of professional development. VanSledright (2010) characterized the common practice of teaching history as "committing one fact after another to memory based on textbook recitations and lectures," as damaging to students' ability to think historically. These practices "foster the naïve conception that the past and history are one and the same, fixed and stable forever" (p. 117). Such practices discourage students from questioning the so-called truth of textbooks and continue to support a narrow and unexamined view of the past.

    A limited, narrow view of the past is only one catastrophe created by a lack of teaching history and teaching it well. One certainly might suspect a lack of teaching history well to limit students' experiences and understandings of diverse peoples. Wineburg (1999) suggested "the sustained encounter with this less familiar past teaches us the limitations of our brief sojourn on the planet and allows us to take membership in the entire human race" (p. 490). Without these encounters, students are deprived of opportunities to view from the eyes of others. As issues of diversity dictate our national agenda, students must learn to understand the experiences of others. This requires "the education of our sensibilities" (p. 490) claimed Wineburg. The human dimension in studying history is by far the most compelling.

    How do teachers move beyond teaching so-called facts, names, dates, and places?

Debate continues whether students should and/or can be taught the complexity of skills and thinking exhibited by actual historians. Historians immerse themselves in reading documents and writings left by others. They question, analyze, investigate, and often reconstruct the past from their findings. VanSledright (2010) claimed historians assess sources in "a complex process involving at least four interrelated and interconnected cognitive acts—identification, attribution, perspective judgment, and reliability assessment" (p. 114). As historians go through these processes they begin to build theories and construct histories according to the evidence trails they follow. We must not expect our students to acquire the same level of skill as that of actual historians, yet it is important our students be taught these processes and learn history through these "interconnected cognitive acts" (VanSledright, 2010).

Clearly, professional development opportunities for teachers already in the field and teacher preparation programs for preservice teachers that address historical thinking are lacking. Teachers must investigate and develop their own abilities and skills to think historically in order to model this in their classrooms. The pedagogical content knowledge necessary for teaching history to children is complex and takes time to develop. Effective ongoing professional development programs in history education are far too rare.

Professional Development Programs

The absence of high-quality professional development in many school districts remains a dilemma as many studies and reports have claimed. Blank and de las Alas

(2009) proclaimed this lack as a systemic educational shortcoming in stating, "The whole issue of teacher quality, including teacher preparation and ongoing professional development, and improving teacher effectiveness in classrooms, is at the heart of efforts to improve the quality and performance of our public schools" (p. 1). Their report, a meta-analysis of studies of teacher professional development programs, resulted in the following findings regarding strong professional development programs:

- Strong emphasis of teachers learning specific subject content as well as pedagogical content for how to teach the content to students; and
- Multiple activities included to provide follow-up reinforcement of learning, assistance with implementation, and support for teachers from mentors and colleagues in their schools. (p. 27)

It is also interesting to note that 14 of the 16 programs studied continued for six months or more, and the average amount of time teachers were involved in program activities was 91 hours. Effective professional development must be ongoing and much more than a one-time training according to this meta-analysis.

The report included analysis of effects on student learning as well, and according to Blank and de las Alas (2009), "The analysis of effects showed a pattern of stronger effects for elementary level professional development than for middle or high school teachers" (p. 27). This is certainly an area warranting further study.

Historical Thinking and Young Children

Historical thinking is complex and difficult. Can elementary school-aged children really do this? Lee and Ashby (2000) studied a large sample of elementary school students learning with historical sources. Their findings indicated that young students

could indeed develop historic sense but must be taught explicitly to understand cause and effect. Many teachers doubt the capabilities of their students to understand historical sources, but many researchers have suggested that younger students can be guided to read and interpret historical sources through careful teacher scaffolding of the use of appropriate thinking tools (e.g. Barton, 1997; Drake & Brown, 2003; Levstik & Barton, 1996; VanSledright, 2002). Similarly, many teachers doubt their own ability to guide students through the "complex regimen of investigative techniques necessary for building contextualized interpretations of the events being studied" (VanSledright, 2002, p. 6).

Daunting as it may seem, teachers can start by approaching historical thinking in two rather simple ways, suggested Parker (2012), using the analogy of an airplane for teaching history. The plane will not fly without two operational wings. On one wing children read and "are exposed to historical narratives that others have constructed; on the other, children are engaged face-to-face with historical reasoning as they are helped to construct their own narratives" (p. 125). On one wing students are relating to, comprehending, reading, and absorbing history; on the other wing they are constructing, writing, or what many call "doing" history. Both reading and writing must occur, as must listening and storytelling. The "doing" is often left out, which leaves learning history a passive chore and contributes to students' attitudes that history is boring. "Doing" history requires the socially constructed learning provided in effective classrooms (Barton & Levstik, 2004).

Absorbing history begins at very early ages in social settings, such as in homes, schools, and museums. Young children are read picture books about people, events, and

ideas. Older children read historical narratives by themselves and to others. Teachers tell stories from memory to their students and encourage students to tell stories from memory to other classmates. These stories are tools teachers use to facilitate students' learning of history. Teachers use the same good teaching methods for comprehension of historical texts that they use in all good literature instruction (Parker, 2012). These mediated actions where teachers model, think aloud and use scaffolded guidance are at the essence of good history instruction for young children. These actions include all good literacy strategies, such as before, during, and after reading activities. Materials or tools, such as primary sources including photographs, journals, letters, diaries, newspaper articles, etc. can be read, examined, discussed in whole group, small group, partners, or individually. Communicating stories can be done by reading, telling, dramatizing, and singing. Reading and listening to historical narratives and historical fiction adds depth of knowledge and opportunities for students to make text-to-self connections.

Ideally, students not only read, probe, question, and compare historical narratives, but also they are guided to create historical narratives and arguments of their own. To truly engage in writing and creating essays, articles, presentations, media projects, and other types of historical accounts, students must exhibit sound historical perspectives and knowledge. Teachers lead students in using tools to promote interpretation of sources and artifacts. Students analyze the strength of sources and the perspective of authors by what is included and what is left out of a narrative. Students learn to compare alternative views of an issue or conflict and to consider the views, beliefs, and practices of different groups of people in a particular historical time period.

Through active class participation and investigation students are not taught simply *what happened,* but are encouraged *to figure out* what might have happened using many of the skills of actual historians (Parker, 2012).

Historical Thinking and Positionality

Students in the upper elementary grades benefit greatly from the careful scaffolding of teachers in using the tools necessary to read and interpret sources. Drake and Brown (2003) suggested that a systematic approach is necessary for students to become investigators of sources. Historical thinking is more than reading or telling a historical story, although it involves both. Historical thinking requires the actions of both teachers and students in looking at the frame of reference or positionality of the author of the story. Teachers and students also need to recognize their own positionality. These authors suggested that teachers "probe the positionalities of their students and include opportunities for students to engage in such habits of the mind as historical imagination and empathy" (p. 474). Such mediated acts facilitate students' understanding at a deeper level.

In order for teachers to probe the positionalities of their students, they must consider their own positionalities to "assess dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen" (Milner, 2007, p. 394). Milner suggested that researchers need to work through their own and others' awareness and consciousness of racial and cultural positions. Exploring one's ideologies, beliefs, epistemologies, and practices becomes extremely important for teachers as well as researchers. Teachers' pursuits to be objective and avoid sharing

biases with students require this. Milner constructed a framework to serve as a starting place for educators to explore their own positionality of race and culture. Teachers who participate in this kind of introspection become far better prepared to guide their students to explore their own positionality and that of others.

Milner's (2007) framework suggested the *research of self* by asking questions such as: "In what ways do my racial and cultural backgrounds influence how I experience the world…and how do I evaluate and interpret others and their experiences?" (p. 395). Secondly, this action requires *researching the self in relation to others* which could include teachers asking questions of themselves and other teachers, such as: What do my students believe about race and culture and how do I attend to the tensions or inconsistencies that might exist? Thirdly, the framework suggests engaged reflection and representation of all participants so no one voice or narrative is privileged over another, but all viewpoints and perspectives are heard and discussed. Milner pointed to the framework as providing tools for participants "to learn something about how different people understand, interpret, live, function, and are represented in society" (p. 396). Although his work primarily involved researchers, this also relates to educators in the field.

Studies on Teaching Historical Thinking

Reading a historical account presented in only one text can color students' historical perspective. Stahl, Hynd, Britton, McNish, and Bosquet (1996) studied 10th-grade students in advanced placement history classrooms who were taught using a

multiple text approach to history learning. Although these students had exposure to many different texts the researchers found that this alone did not encourage the students to contextualize and engage in historical analysis. According to Stahl and colleagues, students did not seem to develop disciplinary knowledge because they had not been taught the skills of corroborating, sourcing, or contextualizing—the skills used by historians. It appears that whether one text or many tools are available and read by students, the mediated actions of interpretation and analysis must be specifically modeled and scaffolded by teachers.

VanSledright's (2002) experiences as a teacher-researcher in a fifth-grade class revealed that students of this age can and do benefit from "learning to use specialized investigative processes and critical intertextual reading practices" (p. 134). VanSledright led students to question the accuracy of historical accounts through investigations and inquiry. Although group work including all students was important in the study and used extensively, 8 of the 23 students in this class were targeted to acquire a more in-depth understanding of how students learn to think historically. The sustained involvement of these students in practicing history as historians afforded them heuristics necessary for analyzing historical evidence. The document analysis skills of these eight students were measured throughout the school year as they explored the history of the American colonies. VanSledright noted improvement in the "powerful history-critical reading and analytic practices" (p. 134) of students as they learned to investigate the past.

Drake and Brown (2003) also proposed that teachers help students assess change over time to avoid presentism, the inability to put aside judgment of the past based on

present-day beliefs and practices. An awareness of this tool can be accomplished by guiding students to detect the motives of authors, to construct arguments through the use of evidence, and to analyze someone else's argument. Teacher support here is especially crucial because as Drake and Brown pointed out, "One of the most difficult habits of mind is to suspend judgment and avoid presentism" (p. 476). Repeated modeling by teachers is imperative, as well as opportunities for discussion. In their work in classrooms with both veteran and prospective teachers, they found that using the tools of specific questioning allowed students to make sense of primary and secondary source documents and to compare and contrast positionalities. Criticism for their approach has arisen as some educators feel Drake and Brown have proposed strategies that are too scripted and form driven. However, the findings of Stahl and colleagues (1996) supported the claim that students' experiences or mediated actions with different kinds of texts and teacher guidance become key requirements in students' interpretation of text.

Teachers need not only to introduce and support the scaffolding of necessary skills for becoming good historical thinkers, but they must also provide content that promotes this kind of thinking. Segall (2010) suggested that teachers must consider pedagogy and content as one: "Conceiving of them as such opens the possibility for examining not only how people and issues are represented in subject-area texts but also how audiences are constructed as they are invited pedagogically, to interact with those texts" (p. 229), which again points to the importance of using mediated means to explore positionality. This thinking helps teachers shift the focus of learning from explaining and interpreting what texts mean to learning based upon questions such as: How did texts

come to be what they are? Whose story is being told? Are these the *best, most accurate* histories, or only those told by the powerful?

In her study of fifth-grade students, Epstein (2003) found that the positionality of the textbook as a tool often affected students' sense of empowerment. Students feel a sense of being able to effect change and truly become participants when textbooks describe change as being promoted *by* a group or a community rather than depicting events as happening *to* a group or a community as in many examples involving civil rights. Thus, teachers must carefully choose texts and interactive pedagogies that allow students to become informed readers, writers and thinkers. Historical literacy allows us "to go beyond our brief life and to go beyond the fleeting moment in human history into which we've been born" (Wineburg, 1999, p. 498). Learning to think historically prompts us to ask questions of our past and our present, to read carefully and purposefully, and to write the interpretations we construct.

Teachers must be purposeful in their choices of texts for their students. A trend exists toward the use of primary source documents and in some circumstances these are being overused and/or being used ineffectively (Barton, 2005). Barton suggested using the term "original sources" rather than primary sources because the context of a source, which is variable, determines its classification. He shared common myths regarding sourcework and promoted the careful selection of sources with the purpose of helping students "learn to look for the relationship between the kinds of claims made and the types of evidence used" (p. 748) as they read original sources of historic accounts. He suggested that too often teachers provide students with very complicated original source

documents to read and interpret. Students may lack reading skills that would allow them to critically investigate such a document and may also lack necessary background knowledge to understand the language or content of the document. In such cases, more damage than good can occur in motivating students to learn about history. Again, Barton stressed using original sources for the purpose of investigating claims and finding evidence.

Writing constructivist notions of history is also a difficult task for students. Hynd (1999), in her work in middle schools and high schools, found that students must be explicitly taught how to write about history. Hynd found students having difficulty writing about multiple documents; they tended to generalize and failed to represent different perspectives presented in the texts they had read. Students need thoughtful teacher guidance in writing about history as well as reading about history. Writing about different perspectives and reading about them go hand in hand and many times the two are not experienced together.

In all of these studies the pedagogical content knowledge of the teacher and the ability of the teacher to model for and guide students were shown to be key (see Appendix F). Teachers who systematically and regularly provided opportunities for their students to gain and improve the skills necessary for historical investigation found improved student learning. In my view, teacher modeling in all of these studies appeared to be of utmost importance in students learning to identify the nature of sources, to corroborate evidence as they attempted to refine interpretation, and to read critically and write knowledgeably about historic events. Making the connections necessary for

historical thinking, in these studies, did not occur while students read and processed individually, but rather in socially constructed groups. Teachers, in these studies, helped their students learn to use mediated means or tools in their discoveries of the past.

Perspective as a Tool

With teachers' guidance while reading documents and history texts, students come to realize that different authors often have different perspectives of the same events. Some of these differences can be accounted for by biases, exaggeration, or even purposeful distortions. Some differences are attributed to information being left out, deleted, and/or unintentionally misrepresented. Perspective assessment, as VanSledright (2010) suggested, can become focused on bias detection, which in turn, may lead to a dichotomy of who is right and who is wrong. Often, students infer that someone is lying. The truth-lie characterization is a weak and perhaps misleading thought process in perspective assessment. Teachers can assist their students to realize that many possible legitimate interpretations can and do exist.

How do teachers attend to their students' perspective assessment? In her comparative case study of three preservice teachers, Monte-Sano (2011) found that teachers' response to their students' historical thinking in the classroom "relies on at least four aspects of teacher knowledge: an understanding of the discipline, an ability to design lessons that represent the discipline accurately and that give students opportunities to think historically, the capacity to recognize students' disciplinary thinking, and the capacity to respond to students in the classroom" (p. 269). Providing students with

effective learning opportunities to assess perspective is no easy task for preservice teachers, or for veteran teachers.

As Wooden (2008) found in his case study of two sixth-grade students, students without careful guidance in using historical tools struggle to view historical events and perspectives other than from their own "frameworks of meaning" (p. 23). The tendency toward *presentism* can obstruct the understanding and interpretation of historical texts. Wooden suggested that his two students "did not develop a contextualized interpretation of Lincoln's views on black-white relations and slavery" (p. 29) on their own, even though their reading skills were advanced for their ages. He concluded that students must be taught source work in an organized manner with teacher guidance in order to develop the analytical abilities needed to contextualize.

How can teachers assist students in thinking contextually as they read historical texts and documents in order to challenge longstanding ideas and beliefs? Reisman and Wineburg (2008), in their work with interpreting student essays discovered three mediated means or tools that can help students improve their contextualized thinking as they read historical documents. Teachers can help students by *providing background knowledge*. This should consist of a basic chronology, relevant terminology, and enough background information to allow students "to create accurate mental images as they read" (p. 203). Teachers can also *ask guiding questions* that help students "slow down the reading process and attend carefully to source information and language" (p. 203). Questions guide students to important information and help them construct knowledge about the context of an event or era. These are not "Facts to Remember" questions at the

end of textbook chapters, but questions that probe for evidence-based interpretations of historical documents and/or texts. Reisman and Wineburg also suggested that teachers *specifically model conceptualized thinking* for their students. The think-aloud allows teachers to make their own thinking *visible* to students. This mediated action derives from the model of cognitive apprenticeships in which teachers help students' observational learning by directing students' attention to what the model is doing and by reinforcing them for paying attention (Collins, 1991). Teachers who model contextualized thinking using think-alouds must have the necessary confidence, training, and understanding to help students progress. Multiple examples and guided practice are imperative for the sophisticated thinking necessary to make sense of the past.

In summary, although I have reviewed some studies involving elementary school aged children, the body of research surrounding historical thinking primarily includes studies conducted in secondary history classrooms. It is clear that much learning occurs before students proceed to middle and high schools. How are teachers in upper elementary grades preparing students for interacting with and interpreting historical texts as they proceed to secondary schools? Gaps in the research occur at this level. Also, it is unclear how teachers develop their own historical thinking in order to provide a classroom environment and instructional practices to facilitate and deepen their students' historical thinking. This study will specifically examine the instructional practices explored in TAH trainings and how teachers use them in their own classrooms.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Questions Revisited

In this chapter I focus on the methods of study for these research questions. Again, questions examined in this study were as follows.

1. How did three teachers who participated in a TAH grant project for 3 years' experience changes in their own historical thinking?

2. In what ways do these teachers report their TAH participation has influenced the historical thinking of their students?

Each of these questions addresses different aspects of teachers' learning and teachers' instruction. The first question asks if and how a specific teacher training program influences the development of three teachers' own historical thinking. The second question probes these teachers even further to discuss how their own experiences with this teacher training program regarding historical thinking have influenced their students' historical thinking.

Addressing these questions is important to me as both a researcher and a teacher trainer for many reasons. Of particular importance in the current financial climate is the expense of professional development for school districts, colleges, and universities. Teachers' time is very expensive in both real dollars and in perception of value. Thus, it seems important to determine if the goals of programs are being reached and if teachers are learning topics well enough to transfer that learning into practice. Are we spending

our money and our time wisely? It is also important to know if history education in the United States is moving forward and progressing from facts-based memorizing of substantive knowledge to a study of the past that promotes critical reading, thinking, and writing.

Answers to these research questions might be obtained through different means or methods of inquiry; such as measuring program goal attainment through statistical methods, classroom observations to discover evidence of teachers' and/or students' historical thinking, testing and measuring teachers' academic growth in historical thinking, interviewing teachers to attempt to understand the effectiveness of this teacher training program, and/or by other means.

Each of these means would require a different method of study and would provide different data and would be based on a variety of assumptions. It is my goal in this study to discover what kinds of implications this ongoing professional development has on teachers' learning and their classroom practices. How do teachers cognitively increase their knowledge of history and historical thinking and internalize it through cultural practice? The theoretical orientation that guides this study is grounded in the work of Vygotsky (1987) and is further extended by Wertsch (2008a), who suggested that cognitive acts are produced and internalized through the use of mediated tools in social settings. In this case, teacher learning may be created through the mentoring, scaffolding, and modeling of new concepts and ideas by more knowledgeable others in a socially mediated study group. Learning becomes internalized as it is transferred to another cultural setting, which is the teachers' own classroom.

It is important to consider what a teacher's transfer of knowledge *looks* like within a classroom culture. In this case, transfer might be determined by evidence of mediated actions and tools TAH teachers have learned to use to help their students become engaged historical thinkers and find relevance and purpose in studying history. Throughout this study, I examined instructional practices that aided both teachers and their students in historical thinking. The guiding framework of historical thinking that I used was that of Levesque (2009), who suggested five essential questions and corresponding concepts involved in the actions of historical thinking. "Outlining disciplinary-history as a set of procedural concepts employed by historians can help students make sense of the analytic process of producing and disseminating historical knowledge," claimed Levesque (p. 172). It is an important goal of this study to search for evidence of these concepts of historical thinking in the knowledge and practices of teachers in a TAH program.

1. What is important in the past?—Historical significance
2. What changed and what remained the same?—Continuity and change
3. Did things change for better or worse?—Progress and decline
4. How do we make sense of the raw materials of the past?—Evidence
5. How can we understand predecessors who had different moral frameworks?—Historical empathy. (p. 37)

These questions and concepts guided this investigation of historical thinking while being integrated with the theoretical orientation of Wertsch (2002) for the purpose of determining how and in what situations teachers and their students actually learn to think historically.

Qualitative Methodology

The methods of inquiry used to address the questions in this study derive from qualitative methodology. Qualitative research is steeped in varying epistemological views, such as the notions that phenomena must be studied in context not solely based upon the inductive versus deductive debate, that individuals are unique, that those being studied and those doing the studying all have their own perspectives, and that, to truly study phenomena, a direct experience often provides a researcher with a deeper understanding and more appropriate questions for exploration.

If the purpose of a research project is to understand a phenomenon deeply, qualitative studies can describe feelings, notions, and/or behaviors more completely and potentially lead to a deeper understanding. In the study of historical thinking, a deeper understanding of how teachers and students approach historical interpretation is necessary. As a researcher, if I am to understand how teachers help their students actually read and interpret sources, I must collect and analyze data other than test scores. I must observe teachers as learners in professional development sessions and observe them in groups as they read and discuss sources. I must ask questions that probe what they are thinking, and I must interview teachers regarding their mentoring roles in teaching and their understanding of what is necessary for students to think historically. I need also to interview teacher mentors to learn more about teachers' actual teaching practices involving mediated tools and actions. Teachers' lesson reflections can add valuable insight into what was expected during lesson preparation, what occurred during lesson presentation, and how teachers analyzed and used assessment data to influence their

future instruction.

Merriam (1998) described qualitative research as "an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible" (p. 5). Data are mediated through the researcher, who, in this case, serves as a human instrument observing and analyzing teacher development sessions and study groups. "Qualitative accounts of education are interpretive, experience-based, situational, personalistic, and diverse in scene and character," reported Stake and Munson (2008, p. 15). Much of the time, qualitative reports concentrate on the ordinary events rather than the extraordinary, which provides readers with an authentic view of what is occurring. My intention in this study was to present the teachers involved and the learning community provided through this professional development program as both unique and as common. I proposed to describe the richness of a community of teacher learners through reporting an understanding of their experiences and reflections.

In choosing a qualitative research design for this project, I thought deeply about what methods of inquiry would produce data to help me understand how teachers are made aware of and develop their own historical thinking. It is important to me, as a current instructor of prospective teachers of social studies, to learn about how teachers develop historical thinking so I might help my own students develop their historical thinking. As teachers settle into their classroom routines, some regard changes as unnecessary or as too much bother and resist learning something new. Changing the way we look at history instruction in schools has occurred slowly, partly, but certainly not

wholly, because of already established teachers' resistance to change. As a teacher

educator, specifically of social studies methods, it is my desire to help students become

aware of and at least begin their own development of historical thinking before they get

into a classroom as certified teachers. This would, it seems to me, contribute to necessary

changes in history education at a more accelerated rate.

To accomplish the goal of teaching my prospective teachers to think historically, I

felt it important to search out teachers who in fact do think historically. From these

teachers, I suspected I could explore an understanding of how historical thinking is

acquired and developed. And from there, I suspected these teachers could help me

understand if and how they have been able to transfer that knowledge and skill to their

own students. To understand this process, I felt a qualitative design could produce the

rich, deep descriptions of teacher learning that I was looking for. As a researcher, I could

take part in the natural learning setting of these teachers, which in this case are the TAH

teacher training sessions.

The Case Study

The qualitative design I chose for this study is a case study as case studies are

"intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system" and "by

concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (the case), the researcher aims to uncover

the interaction of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon" (Merriam, 1998,

p. 29).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), "Every instance of a case or process

bears the stamp of the general class of phenomenon to which it belongs. However, any given instance is likely to be particular and unique. Thus, for example, any given classroom is like all classrooms, but no two classrooms are the same" (p. 378). This case study of a professional development program, as Denzin and Lincoln suggested, bears the stamp of teacher professional development programs in general.

By exploring this TAH project (or case) through participants' experiences, participants' reflections of their experiences, interviews of program directors, instructors, and participants, I provided an intensive description and analysis of this professional development project. Particularistic case studies are characterized by their focus on a particular situation; in this study, the case study took into account the particular way in which this professional development program influenced the learning of teachers, their students, program directors, and the researcher. This design is especially productive in researching practical problems, occurrences, or questions that arise from everyday practice (Merriam, 1998).

Participant Selection

In this study I contacted the project manager of the TAH Grant for a school district in southern Utah to ask for recommendations of three fifth-grade teachers whom he considered high level participants. These three teachers were selected from 20 teachers in their third year of professional development provided through the project. The project manager named several whom he considered strong candidates for my project. I then contacted the project mentor and asked her the same question. She gave me some of the

same names, so I chose three names mentioned by both the project manager and the project mentor. I had previously met all of the teachers mentioned as I had previously worked for the school district before my retirement from the K-12 system. I contacted these teachers to ask for their willingness to participate in this project, visited them in their classrooms, and explained more about the purpose of my project. It seemed that since I already had knowledge of these teachers and they did of me, this created a sense of trust for them to be reflective and share their thoughts with me. Throughout my study, they also seemed to be willing to spend their time with me.

To better understand the level of professional development of this TAH project and the social learning structure promoted, I found a need for a broader picture of the overall structure of the TAH grant, some history about its inception, and to explore what occurred during the teacher training sessions. Thus, I included three additional participants to help me gather necessary background knowledge as a part of the case study. According to Given (2008), in qualitative research, careful attention to selecting participants must be considered because of the inherent notion that these participants may represent the entire population—of teachers, in this case.

The additional participants included in this case study were also teachers, although they were temporarily on special assignments. These participants were one of the writers of the grant, the grant project director, and the project mentor. I gathered data from these three through semi-structured interviews. The interviewees were very open to sharing their experiences with me as well as materials, data collected, and reflections of their roles in the project. The three interviews were audio taped and transcribed, member

checked for accuracy, and read and reread thoroughly with the intent of exploring how

cognitive practices are influenced and internalized through cultural practices. I also

attended a study group session alongside grant participants and a full-day of the summer

training. My participation in the study group and in the summer training session was that

of what Merriam (1998) considerd an observer as participant. My purpose for being there

was known by the participants, and my participation in the group was secondary to my

participation as an information gatherer. I felt I was able to establish an insider's identity

without becoming a core member of the group, because I did not attend every session.

Also, it is important to note that I had met or known some of these participants in my role

as a former school district employee, which had an impact on their reactions to me.

Several were very friendly and wanted to catch up on personal and family news, although

we had limited time to do so.

I have described both the study group session and the full-day training in more

detail in Chapter IV. I aimed through participation in the TAH teacher trainings to enrich

and check the perspectives I brought to the interviews, the observations, and my role as a

participant. In doing so I found it important to have a richer understanding of both the

social structure of these trainings and the kinds of instruction and tools teachers were

acquiring (see Appendix E for IRB approval verification).

Data Collection

The classroom teachers who were subjects of the case studies were each

interviewed twice during the 6-week observation period, mid-March to early May, and

communicated with by email several times. Interviewing is a fairly common form of data collection in qualitative studies. "Interviewing is an active process where interviewer and interviewee through their relationship produce knowledge," suggested Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 17). Rather than simply recording participants' responses or even digging for meaningful nuggets from respondents' answers to questions, interviews provide opportunities for interviewers and interviewees to create knowledge together. Heyl (2008) used Kvale and Brinkmann's metaphor of the interviewer as a traveler rather than a miner, stating that "both the traveler and those met are changed by those relationships involving meaningful dialogue" (p. 374). Heyl also suggested that member validation can be increased through a process of collaboration of interpretation between the interviewer and the interviewee. Interviews, according to Fontana and Frey (2005), are not neutral tools of data gathering but rather active interactions between two (or more) people leading to negotiated, contextually based results" (p. 698).

Fontana and Frey (2005) also noted that interviews are an accepted and respected method of data collection. "There is an inherent faith that the results are trustworthy and accurate and that the relation of the interviewer to the respondent that evolves during the interview process has not unduly biased the account" (p. 698). Thus, semistructured interviews with the three classroom teachers were used to understand the *hows* and *whys* of teacher learning as well as the traditional *whats*. This type of interview allows for the interviewer to obtain specific information from respondents as well as gain an understanding of unique worldviews and interpretations through less structured questioning (Merriam, 1998). The type of interviews I used in this study was a protocol

collection referred to by Smagorinsky (2008) as *retrospective*, "in which a participant completes components of the task or the whole task and then is prompted to reconstruct the process from memory" (p. 396).

Interview Questions

Interview questions (see Appendix A) were formulated for the purpose of probing teachers' understanding of historical thinking as a result of their TAH participation and for exploring the links these teachers were making between their own learning and the historical thinking of their students. I constructed questions I thought would encourage discussion of each teacher's acquisition of historical thinking through active participation in a social learning environment using mediated actions and means. Even though I had conducted pilot interviews a year ago with other teachers, I still found it difficult to construct questions that would yield specific information. A question such as: What tools do good historical thinkers use? falls into the *Ideal Position Question* category developed by Strauss and colleagues (1981, as cited in Merriam, 1998). These questions ask respondents to consider and describe an ideal situation and often reveal the strengths and/or the shortcomings of a program. I found I needed to include more of this type of question in my second interviews.

Interpretive questions are another type that can yield important data. These questions ask participants to provide more information, opinions, examples, and feelings about a topic or practice. One interpretive question I asked was, how have your views of teaching history changed during your involvement with TAH?; this was followed up by

another interpretive question, how have your practices in teaching history changed as a result of your TAH involvement? I found these questions provided more in-depth information about the teachers' perspectives and about their practices. In reviewing my question types after the first interview, I was able to construct more effective questions for the second interview and for further communication with respondents.

The participants were very amenable to my invitation to be involved in the study and I met with each teacher after school in their own classroom. I found sticking to the questions quite difficult because, as teachers responded to a question, they would want to share corresponding stories or classroom examples, which often led the conversation in another direction. During the second interviews I learned from this and designed the questions to be quite specific. Learning in socially situated settings is foundational for this study, so even though I wanted to guide the interviews a little more tightly, I did keep the interviews conversational and encouraged the participants to elaborate and provide examples. The interviews were audiotaped using a digital recording device and transcribed using an audio transcription computer program. Errors in the recognition of words, terms, and ideas made by the computer program were detected and I corrected them as I proofread for accuracy.

At the end of each personal interview I handed each participant a list of topics related to historical thinking (see Appendix B) and asked each to mark the five topics given the most time and emphasis during the TAH trainings they had attended. I felt this additional information would be useful in my data analysis.

Teacher Logs and Reflections

Teachers in this TAH project keep logs and reflections of their lessons. Using documentary materials such as these reflections adds to the stability of the data, that is the data are not altered by the presence of an observer or an interviewer (Merriam, 1998). These reflections were collected in May and read thoroughly; however, I found that I often had to call or email teachers for additional information in regard to the reflections. Even though using this kind of data was an advantage, I also felt it created a limitation. The reflections had been assigned as part of the TAH requirements for receiving additional funding, but they were targeted at specific questions posed by the project director. These questions did not always reveal teacher thinking, or student thinking for that matter, as much as I would have liked. Therefore, I often had to ask for clarity and additional responses. Teacher reflections, teacher interviews, field notes from training sessions, and teacher artifacts were used to triangulate the interview data and will be further explained later in this chapter.

Data Management and Reduction

Managing the data required coding or assigning an organizational heading to specific pieces of the interview data. As I transcribed audiotapes and read and reread interview data several themes began to emerge. I also considered my own thoughts and musings, which I had recorded while reading through the interview data in this coding process as Merriam (1998) suggested. I noticed the participants' definition of historical thinking emerged as a theme that greatly affected participants' comments. Each of the

three teachers had a limited definition of what historical thinking actually entails. This was something I addressed in my second interviews by providing each teacher with the following definition to use as they answered my questions and reflected. According to VanSledright (2010) historical thinkers are

> …careful, critical readers and consumers of the mountains of evidentiary source data that exists in archives and that pours at us each day via the media. Good historical thinkers are tolerant of differing perspectives because these perspectives help them make sense of the past…. They also know what it means to build and defend evidence-based arguments because of practice constructing interpretations rooted in source data. (p. 118)

First interview responses were compared with second interview responses to determine changes in views or in depth of understanding of what historical thinking entailed.

The codes were derived from and influenced by the guiding theory of the study and the interview questions asked. As Merriam (1998) suggested, "Categories should reflect the purpose of the research" (p. 183), and in this study the categories assumed a sociocultural theoretical stance. The types of cultural tools and mediated actions teachers experienced in the TAH trainings were probed repeatedly in the questioning; therefore, responses consistently referred to these tools and actions. According to Smagorinsky (2008), "coding manifests what theory would say about data and makes the researcher's theoretical perspective on the data corpus explicit, without precluding other ways of looking at it" (p. 399). In this regard, the categories I refer to in this study are similar to those employed by Smagorinsky, which are tools, settings, and goals, because he also assumed the theoretical stance of Wertsch. The categories I refer to include the *tools* that are used to *mediate* (learn and understand) historical thinking, the *settings* in which these tools are valuable and used productively to learn to think historically, and the *goals*

towards which participants use them in their own learning and the learning of their students. In categorizing data in accordance with a major theoretical perspective, "Coding establishes the researcher's subjectivity in relation to the data and the framework through which the data are interpreted" (Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 399).

As I read the interview transcripts and studied the reflections of these three teachers, I found these three categories (tools, settings, and goals) provided a framework for analysis and more specific codes emerged within this framework to explain teachers' thoughts and actions. In the category of cultural tools, materials tools and processing tools were most often discussed, with little mention of psychological tools. This category was coded using more specific subsets of electronic tools, writing, reading, source materials, and discussions. The category of settings included the subsets of TAH study groups and trainings, teachers' classroom settings, school settings, reflective time alone, and interactions among students. The category of goals/purposes was coded according to the measurement of student learning, the acquisition of classroom materials, teacher stipends, and student enjoyment.

The five essential questions and concepts of historical thinking presented by Levesque (2009) and included earlier in this chapter, guided the interview questions and influenced the data collection. These concepts were included in the coding and organization of data. A sample of data organization is shown in Table 1, indicating how I integrated sociocultural theory with concepts of historical thinking. Not all evidence or data fit neatly into this kind of structure. For example, in the goals section, adhering to state standards, passing district level history tests, marking student progress on report

Table 1

Integrated Historical Thinking Concepts with Constructs of Sociocultural Theory

Concepts	Theory: Tools	Settings	Goals/purposes
Historical significance	Documents Textbooks Competing historic versions	Group discussions Study groups Teacher led discourse	To determine the reasons and consequences that this event may be more important than previously thought.
Continuity and change	Newspapers-past and present Diaries and various historical narratives timelines	Group work Individual work Computer lab Lecture Teacher led discourse	To explore and compare past and current issues. To view issues through the eyes of others.
Progress and decline	Analytic principles Evaluation tools Varying historic narratives Suspended judgments	Open dialogue Thoughtful deliberations Teacher led discourse	To determine a standard for progress or decline relevant to particular time periods.
Evidence	Research questions Critical analysis Original source materials Interpretive skills	Inquiry teams Guided discovery events Teacher led discourse	To determine what sources serve as significant evidence in reconstructing the past.
Historical empathy	Reading and Writing Historical Narratives Historical Fiction Original letters, journals, diaries Suspended judgments Empathetic understanding Awareness of positionalities	Group discussions Book clubs Teacher led discourse Role play situations	To determine one's own positionality and perspectives and understand how this impacts ones views of the past. Also to determine and understand the viewpoints of others.

cards, and other such purposes were included for each concept as well as learning goals listed above.

Validity and Reliability

Merriam (1998) suggested that member checking or "taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the

results are plausible" (p. 204), enhances the internal validity of a qualitative study.

Throughout this study I asked participants to read and clarify the transcriptions I had

made from their interviews. I found participants to verify what had been recorded, and on

several accounts, to add more information in a way of clarification. An example was

when one participant read a transcript of his interview and added more detail as to his

perceptions of his students' understanding of the purposes of the Civil War. I also asked

participants to verify my analysis of the collected data and provide feedback as to the

validity of my conclusions.

Observations, much as interviews, must be "subjected to checks and controls on

validity and reliability" (Merriam, 1998, p. 95). Observations present a firsthand

experience with happenings as opposed to interviews, which present interpretations of the

interviewee. However, Merriam warned that every witness of an event or situation may

recount it differently. Careful, systematic observation includes a trained observer who

can "write descriptively; practicing the disciplined recording of field notes; knowing how

to separate detail from trivia…and using rigorous methods to validate observation"

(Patton, 1990, p. 201). Observational techniques were used with the purpose of providing

a better understanding of teachers' historical thinking through mediated actions in

professional development settings. While attending a TAH study group and a day-long

summer training session, I aimed to carefully observe teachers in that socially mediated

learning setting.

Artifact collection, including personal logs and reflections of teachers, can offer

stability to a qualitative study (Merriam, 1998). Copies of teachers' reflective writing,

classroom photos of materials, lesson plans, and so forth, provide tangible evidence and are generally materials produced independently of the research study. Artifacts can help a researcher "uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem" (p. 133). In this case, the depth of understanding of historical thinking was assessed through written reflections as well as through questioning. Also, the intent of lessons and success of teachers' instruction and students' understanding was studied through artifacts.

In interpretive case studies, as this is, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggested that "terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (p. 24). Thus, the goal of this case study aims to determine transferability among teachers' thinking and learning when involved in similar professional development programs.

Data Analysis

"Data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity in qualitative research," claimed Merriam (1998, p. 151). Upon collecting mounds of data, sorting, managing, and analyzing must occur in order to make sense of data. Researchers consolidate, eliminate and interpret what people have said and what has been observed. Categories are created that link answers to the research questions. Merriam suggested that a researcher's categories be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitizing, and conceptually congruent.

In this study, collecting and analyzing data from all participants occurred. Yin (1994) proposed four tenets of high-quality data analysis, which were followed to ensure

quality and integrity in this study. These tenets include:

1. Attending to all the evidence,
2. Addressing all major rival interpretations,
3. Addressing the most significant aspect of the case study, and
4. Drawing upon the researcher's prior expert knowledge. (p. 137)

High-quality analysis also includes attention to clarifying meaning by using triangulation,

member checking, observation time, peer review, continual participant involvement, and

a clarifying of researcher assumptions and bias (Merriam, 1998).

In creating this analysis, I began by treating each teacher separately in my data

collection. I sorted and organized data from interviews and teacher reflections by hand.

Hard copies of interview transcriptions were printed, with back-up copies saved on my

home computer. Interview transcriptions were cut into pieces and sorted into categories.

Each teacher's responses were clearly marked with their name and date so as not to

confuse the data. Some pieces did not fit into established categories and were set aside for

later consideration. An example of this was the extensive commenting of one teacher

about her students' enjoyment of learning history. These comments were eventually

placed into the "goals of developing historical thinking" category.

While sorting and organizing both interview data and that from teacher

reflections, I continually wrote notes and memos to myself about what I was learning.

Sometimes those notes prompted questions I felt had been unanswered, such as: Do the

participants have a clear definition of what historical thinking is and looks like in

classrooms? As I noted this, I became aware that I did not know what teachers had been

taught in the TAH training in regard to historical thinking and needed to attend the

trainings to find out more. Because I had not attended all of the trainings I needed to

know the perceptions of the participants as to what topics relevant to historical thinking had been studied the most and the least during the TAH trainings. This data were gathered from each of the three teachers (see Appendix B).

In a case study analysis, the researcher aims to discover processes and outcomes that occur, "to understand how these are qualified by local conditions, and thus develop more sophisticated descriptions and more powerful explanations" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 172). In this analysis I considered five categories of information for comparison, those were: teacher's definition and understand of historical thinking, acquisition of tools, learning in the TAH setting, goals and purposes of historical thinking, and teacher's perceptions of their students' historical thinking. These categories strongly emerged through the sorting and analyzing of data. Questions guided by a sociocultural theory of learning provided the interview data as did observations and teacher lesson reflections. Each teacher's data was compiled, contrasted and compared with the others based upon the five categories listed above.

Summary

Understanding the process of both teachers' and students' use of tools to develop historical thinking remains unclear. It is the purpose of this study, through vigorous qualitative research methods, to provide a clearer understanding of how teachers believe they become historical thinkers through specialized training and how they engage their students in acts of historical thinking. This in-depth study of three fifth-grade teachers involved in a specific professional development program adds to an understanding of this

process. The procedural structure of this study has been described and justifications presented for the study's need and purpose. Guidelines for data collection and data analysis were outlined and research integrity and quality were discussed. A depth of understanding was the goal of this data analysis. The overall goal of this study, however, lies in helping teachers to understand their own historical thinking and to realize their role as mentors and facilitators of their students' enlightened historical thinking.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

TAH Grant Structure and History

To learn more about the particular TAH grant awarded to this school district, I interviewed both Mark Gallagher, the project director, and Linda Lowell, the project mentor (all names are pseudonyms). Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was audio recorded. Neither of these two had been involved in the initial writing of the grant. Linda had been a teacher participant during the first year of the grant. She had just made a change from teaching second grade to fifth grade and was looking for support for teaching fifth-grade history. Mark had been asked to direct the project at the beginning of the grant's second year because the original director had been hired to fill a principal position in one of the district's elementary schools.

Mark has spent his entire teaching career as a middle school teacher of grades 8 and 9 social studies. He earned a B.S. in secondary education with a social studies composite endorsement. He does not have a degree in history, even though he primarily taught U.S. History and geography at the middle-school level. He did pass the National Boards for Professional Teaching Standards in social studies, but explained that his certification expires this year and he does not plan to renew it because there is no incentive to do so in Utah. He has also been an ESL coordinator for 10 years, holds both reading and gifted/talented endorsements, and has trained the mentors for new teachers in the school district.

He was not offered a monetary incentive to become the director of the project, but looked at it as an opportunity for change. He believed his involvement with Southern Utah University and the Utah State Office of Education created connections for him to be considered as project manager for the grant in 2007.

Linda described the very first year of the TAH grant in 2005 as including teachers of grades 5, 8, and 12, all of whom were teaching some version of American history in the classroom. Anyone who taught American history in grades 5, 8, or 12 was invited, and she volunteered to participate at that point. "A summer seminar was held," according to Linda, "where teachers received some basic training in thinking historically, constructivist learning, and backward design—some of the basics that would be required to move a student into that way of thinking." She described that year as being a time when teachers discussed good teaching strategies in general, such as document-based questioning, and they spent a lot of time analyzing student work.

> I remember we spent an awful lot of time analyzing student work, but that's where we were as educators almost a decade ago. We had never analyzed data as educators, so it was very foundational for us, necessary. When the next director (Mark) got involved, he instigated study groups; we met together and discussed a topic because the premise of the grant was to increase teacher knowledge. During that time we measured *student* achievement, but we didn't measure *teacher* achievement—isn't that funny? They believed that because of an increase in teacher knowledge, student achievement would automatically increase—but we didn't specifically measure *teacher* achievement.

At the end of that year, Linda was hired to assist the former director in evaluating the paperwork and teacher reflections that had been collected and stacked during the entire first year of the grant. She said it was daunting as neither she nor the former director had history degrees or much history background, so they "kind of grew into the position

together." "Because I had used quick writes with my students," suggested Linda, "I was looking for key words that teachers were using in their writing, and I learned a lot that first year as an evaluator." She felt that because the district had applied early on and received that first grant, they were in a good position to apply again for the second grant. This time, however, the grant was written for teachers of grades 4 and 5, rather than 5, 8, and 12.

When asked if fourth- and fifth-grade teachers were the teachers who needed the training the most, Mark and Linda each expressed very different thoughts. Mark felt that because the number one goal of the project was to increase the knowledge of U. S. history teachers, elementary school teachers were the prime targets. Mark's views were expressed in the following:

> Elementary teachers do not have any background in history, although they are asked to teach history as part of the core curriculum. During their bachelor's degree and teacher trainings, they may have taken one history course—it may have been the history of Japanese culture or a humanities class, it may not have been Utah studies or U. S. history. Then, they are asked to teach Utah studies or U. S. history. So, the primary purpose is to increase their knowledge of U. S. history. The second goal is to work on their pedagogy to help increase and use their history knowledge, like using primary sources and documents.

Linda, however, when asked why the targeted teachers changed to those teaching only elementary grades said something very different.

> Secondary teachers are very busy and they don't want to give up their afternoon times to improve their skills because they have to coach and they have a second job, so it was organized for elementary teachers because the elementary teacher is looking to improve their professional development continually, or at least it seems. I'm not saying that secondary teachers are not, but in order to get the numbers we needed, we had to go with elementary and we required the entire grade level team in a school to come together. It was our precursor to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

Mark's background in secondary and Linda's background in elementary appeared to strongly influence their views of which teachers needed training the most. Their experiences with the previous year's history grant participants seemed to influence Mark's and Linda's perspectives as well.

Linda described the structure of the teacher training provided by this TAH grant, comparing it to other TAH grants in the state. Many grants, according to Linda, base their training around visits to historical sites around the state. Linda pointed out that this grant is the only one that does not travel. "Actually," she commented, "we did go out to Leeds to the site of the CCC camps, but that's the farthest we've been." I asked if this is because of a lack of historical sites in the area and she replied, "No, it's the way our grant was written." The director, Mark, chose to implement study groups, and both Mark and Linda believe it has been quite successful. They believe that the study groups have provided teacher participants with a very solid foundation.

Initially the sessions were set up as Saturday seminars, but according to Linda, "This didn't fly very well because teachers are very protective of their Saturdays, especially in this culture where Sundays are already taken, so now we do a summer seminar." These study group sessions may look somewhat different than what one might consider a *study group,* instead they are lessons taught to the participant group by an expert teacher and/or an authority in the subject matter. Teachers are presented well-structured lessons on historical topics and provided with materials and books they can take back to their own classrooms to use while they teach the same or a similar lesson. The topics are chosen from data received and collected through preassessing future

participants in the spring and posttesting current participants also each spring. The pre-

and posttests were composed of 100 questions about American history. Fifty questions

were taken from the advanced placement high school American history exam and 50

were taken from another nationally normed American history exam. The topics on which

participants score poorly are those considered for study group lessons the following year.

As Linda claimed, "An example is with mercantilism. Every year we've held a study

group as to how mercantilism is different than capitalism and how it came to be in the

U.S." because this tends to continually show up as a topic where teachers score poorly.

Again, the grant writers apparently assumed that if teacher knowledge increases, student

knowledge will naturally increase.

Cathy Stinson, one of the two grant writers for this particular TAH grant, told me

that she could not remember what prompted the writing of the grant. She and another

teacher (on special assignment) were in charge of professional development for the

school district, and at one of the Utah State Office of Education meetings they heard

about the availability of funding through TAH grants. They both had background in

teaching in elementary schools but wrote the initial grant for secondary social studies

teachers because, according to Cathy, "We realized that there was a need to increase

secondary teachers' knowledge of U.S. History and teach them instructional strategies

that would improve student engagement. Lecture was happening more often than not."

When asked about the goals of the initial grant, Cathy said the goals of the grant

were twofold from the beginning: (a) to increase teacher knowledge of U. S. History, and

(b) to improve student engagement through the use of instructional strategies and best

practices. These goals did not change throughout the writing of subsequent TAH grants; however, a school district goal at the time was to improve teachers' use of differentiated instruction in classrooms, so a focus on instructional strategies to promote differentiation was also written into the grant. According to Cathy, the second grant was written for elementary teacher participation primarily because it was determined that they had very limited knowledge of U.S. history.

"The TAH grants," Cathy remembered, "required a university partnership to ensure that the *experts* would share their knowledge." She, however, claimed that in every Utah TAH grant, each major university benefitted more from the experience than the school district teachers because the university faculty learned how to better engage teachers and students and became better instructors themselves.

When asked what research data was used in the initial writing of the grant to determine the goals and needs of teachers, Cathy replied, "It was pretty easy to determine what was needed. Neither Dixie State College nor Southern Utah University was requiring U.S. History to graduate." So, the writers felt all teachers, experienced and new teachers alike would benefit from increased knowledge of both content and effective strategies.

Mark, the project director, discussed the application process for participants of the TAH project this past year. Applicants were required to teach in a fourth- or fifth-grade classroom. "Everybody who applied has been accepted," he laughed. "Every year we have slots for 30 people and we always have room in the end." When asked if the low number of applicants was a matter of teachers just not being interested in learning more

history, Mark replied that the requirement of 5 weeks in the summer and 15 study groups throughout the school year with a 70% attendance rate was more of a decision maker for teachers than the matter of interest. However, he did explain that those who meet the attendance and participation requirements are considered completers rather than participants, and that this project generally has 22 or 24 completers every year with only a couple who do not complete the requirements. Grant funding is based on 30 completers, but Mark said they have never had 30 completers since the grant began.

Incentives for participants are substantial. Participants receive a stipend of $100 a day for the 5 week summer session and for each study group session during the school year. Additionally, up to $350 in classroom materials per trimester is available to teachers who meet a minimum requirement of reflection writing. This, shared Mark, is tied to the school district's use of Charlotte Danielson's work encouraging teachers to become reflective practitioners. "Again," replied Mark, "participants have options; a person can attend the study groups, learn about history, increase their knowledge and improve practice and pedagogy. They do not have to do anything else, but if they want to do these other projects and activities they can get lots of materials for their classrooms." His records showed that 75% generally completed unit design and inquiry projects, and almost 100% completed lesson reflections.

A Visit to a Study Group

The human actions necessary for understanding complex issues involved in history instruction require contributions from many theoretical perspectives, according to

Wertsch (2002). In this study, as previously discussed, understanding is developed and analyzed through the interaction between active agents and cultural tools provided in a sociocultural setting. In order to identify the types of cultural tools introduced to participants and how these tools were being used by participants, I attended a study group.

After school on a Thursday afternoon about 20 teachers met together in a social studies classroom in one of the school district's middle schools. The building choice was interesting to me because it is an old, crowded, smelly middle school building with limited technology and all of these teachers were elementary school teachers. Regardless, the participants seemed happy to see each other and ready to spend from 4:15 to 7:15 p.m. together even though they were visibly tired from a day of teaching.

Linda Lowell, the project mentor, began leading the group through a review of the required reading from a text on effective teaching strategies. She quickly, but clearly, gave directions for folding a piece of paper to make a bingo card and urged teachers to fill in the squares from a list of terms written on the board. I noticed that if teachers were not working fast they were left behind. Immediately she began reading statements that described the terms teachers had written on their bingo cards and I could see teachers scrambling to find a match. Prizes were given to the winners of four short bingo games that reviewed the required reading content. The prizes were valued classroom books and materials from which teachers could choose. Linda specifically pointed to this kind of a bingo game as being an excellent strategy for teachers to use in their own classrooms when having students review text content.

Next, Linda called on three teachers to read parts of written reflections of history lessons they had taught since the last study group. These teachers read excerpts from their reflective writings and showed examples of student work to the group. Some members of the group appeared to be engaged while others were not. As in many groups, there seemed to be a couple of participants who sat on the back row and cracked jokes and others who were visibly tired and had disengaged. Others, however, applauded and even asked a question or two.

Linda shared several methods for creating different partner pairs for student discussions and modeled one of these methods she called "clock partners." She paired us using this method to discuss questions she had prepared to assess our background knowledge of tonight's topic—gold rushes in the United States. We paired quickly with several different class members as she kept a brisk pace asking questions, such as: "How did the gold rushes in the U.S. change people? Places? Attitudes? And what might be considered a modern day gold rush?" Discussion was targeted and tightly controlled as we moved quickly from one partner to another.

As she brought us back to our desks, we were introduced to the lesson's objective; we were to understand how various gold rushes in North America impacted the United States. We were given a page and a half of text to read individually about the gold rush of 1799 in North Carolina. Allowing adequate time for reading, Linda then led us through an activity to create a "foldable" to help us organize and interpret the text we had read. This foldable started with a four-inch square of orange paper as we folded the four corners into the center. On one of each of the flaps we were to write one of the following:

North Carolina in 1799, People to Remember, Moral Matters, and Trivia. On the inside of each flap we were to write first, next, then, and finally and record information from our reading that we found pertinent about each topic. Participants were busily folding, writing, and searching their texts. I found the tasks challenging and Linda's pace kept me at a gallop. Linda then asked us to partner with a new "clock partner" and discuss the question—what issues in this gold rush do you predict will reoccur in future gold rushes? After a few minutes of partner discussion, we were brought back together as a whole group to share and form conclusions of the impact of the gold rush of 1799 in North Carolina.

Linda led the group through similar activities for the discussion of six different gold rushes: North Carolina in 1799, Georgia in 1828, California in 1848, South Dakota in 1874, Colorado in 1895, and the Klondike gold rush in 1897. Text was provided about each taken from historic internet sites, history textbooks, and/or various research compiled by Linda. For each gold rush we read and interpreted text, we created a different type of "foldable" to help organize and understand the information we had read, we discussed a pertinent question with a different partner, and we came back together as a group to share and recognize key concepts about the impact on the United States. Finally, we read an article about fast-paced changes in today's technologies that may be creating similar issues and problems as were caused in the past by large numbers of people rushing to one area to find gold.

I must admit that learning can be exhausting. We were all dutifully engaged in learning for two and a half of the three hours. During this time we were asked to read

texts from many sources, watch video clips of actual photographs, read primary source documents, discuss probing questions, write various facts and interpretations on graphic organizers, sort facts into categories, determine cause and effect, and all at break-neck speed. The time flew by and what I learned was intriguing. Linda's preparation and presentation were superb, and she provided books, materials, samples and everything a teacher would need to go back to their own class and teach that same objective, although a fifth grade teacher would want to break this much material into many lessons to avoid the exhaustion we participants felt that evening.

When I asked participants after class if they actually go back to their classrooms and teach the lessons modeled for them by Linda and/or others during the study groups, most said that they definitely do, but they generally need to modify and leave parts out in order to fit lessons into an already too-busy school schedule. Others told me that they do not really do too much in their classrooms with the lessons because of the amount of class time devoted to pull-out interventions for math and reading, but they are excited about what they have been learning and try to teach a history lesson whenever they can. Those who teach fourth grade added that they use what parts of the lessons that connect with the history of Utah, but much of what they learn in TAH sessions deals directly with U.S. history.

Of those participants with whom I spoke, all claimed that they teach much more history than any of the other teachers in their schools, and all participants reported that their own knowledge of U.S. history has greatly increased because of the summer training and study groups. In general, participants felt they were better teachers overall

because of their participation in the grant.

Cultural Tools Used in Study Groups

The cultural tools used within the duration of this particular study group included reading and discussing historical narratives, questioning perspectives, writing interpretations, organizing information and participating in source work. Without these cultural tools we might have learned a particular view of the impact of these gold rushes and likely increased our content knowledge, but as John Dewey wrote, "While all thinking results in knowledge, the value of knowledge is subordinate to its use in thinking" (as noted by Levesque, 2009, p. 27). The thinking opportunities during this study group allowed participants to gain sophisticated insight into the peoples, times, places, and actions of competing versions of the past. It appeared that participants worked diligently together to create meaning through the use of many cultural tools.

Overall Organization of TAH Training

Mark talked about the organization of the trainings. The five weeks of the summer academy give teachers an opportunity to study topics in depth (see Appendix C), and experts and consultants are brought in to help teach about a variety of history themes. He continued:

> We have also built capacity in our own participants who have been involved in state level trainings. For example, Hilary had the opportunity through the Miller grant to learn about the Lewis and Clark expedition, so she came back to talk with us about that. Lance did the Civil War study with the Annenberg project, so we used him to instruct. We have a retired social studies teacher who worked at the state office who teaches for us, and during the summer we bring all sorts of

people in, people from Pepperdine University for the Annenberg Foundation to people from Utah State University to teach us about agriculture.

Mark described the importance of networking to find the best people to teach about U.S. History and also to model effective pedagogy. Many times in the summer it's a 2 or 3 day concentration on one topic (16+ hours). Teachers are required to use the Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) format in their unit and lesson plans so they can see the big ideas and concentrate lesson planning around essential questions. Mark concluded, "When teachers walk out of there, they have an idea of how to teach a history lesson or topic, the materials they need, and they have learned anywhere from 10 to 15 structures that can be used in any content area."

Teacher Training on Historical Thinking

As far as historical thinking, Mark described an 8-hour lesson he teaches participants on the first day of the summer seminar built around the standards for historical thinking written by UCLA. He exclaimed, "It's not an independent thing and then you're done. It's kind of like the life skills curriculum; you're supposed to teach those through everything you do. These are the life skills for history!" Mark mentioned that an expert from the National Archives was coming out to a study group to teach participants to use their system in accessing primary source documents and incorporating them into lessons. He feels that is one thing teachers are missing in their background and education is how to locate and interpret primary sources—how to use authentic tools to create understanding. For example, Mark continued,

Nixon's resignation letter is available to the public, it's in the archives. You start

with that as your hook activity; it's only about two sentences long, with the date and official stationery. What a great way to teach about the executive branch and succession of the presidency. Start with asking, what's going on here? The letter says, I resign, and it's initialed by Henry Kissinger. So, when a president resigns, who does he resign to?

Learning to use these authentic tools to start discussions and lead students to ask questions is what Mark believes to be the big ah-ha for teachers involved in TAH training.

Mark invited me to attend his day-long training on historical thinking during the summer 2012 TAH session. In fact, it was the first topic to be discussed as the summer training began. About 25 attendees were present, some of whom were new to the project, while others were returning participants. I found they all attend on the first day, which is always a lesson focused on historical thinking, thus many had attended a similar training on historical thinking two or more times. From then on, however, those who have participated in the summer sessions previously attend only the days offering topics new to them. About a third of the topics change each summer, Mark told me, determined by the needs of the incoming participants.

Most of the participants knew each other; some were teaching in the same schools, while others had been in teacher trainings together previously. Even though Mark set the norms for professional behavior, some tittered across the tables while others looked up only briefly from their iPads. This did not last long, however. Because of his years of experience in staff development, Mark had us up and mingling with a specific objective for our discussion. We each were given a penny and asked to discuss with a partner the events in our own lives during the year the penny had been minted. The goal

was to get us to discuss our own histories. Mark then shared with us his specific objective

for the day and the essential questions he had outlined for discussion (see Appendix D).

Mark asked participants to complete a pretest of four questions regarding their knowledge

of historical thinking. This was the same as the posttest that was given toward the end of

class (see Appendix D). Next we read a brief piece published in the Readers' Digest,

written by David McCullough. This piece described the lack of historical knowledge

exhibited by today's college and university students. We were asked to participate in a 3-

2-1 activity to help summarize and discuss our reading. This was followed by a small

group assignment focusing on UCLA's Five Standards of Historical Thinking. A

cooperative jigsaw structure was used to give small groups an opportunity to read,

summarize, prepare a poster, and write a 20-word summary of one of the standards.

Groups then shared their findings with everyone. The activity was quick and groups

seemed to skim the surface of these standards. I was surprised that very limited

discussion of how these standards might apply to classroom practice occurred.

    After a lunch break, the session resumed with attention focused on primary

sources. A "closed sort" activity led the group to discuss the differences between primary

and secondary sources. Following that activity, we were asked to choose one of six

stations to begin the task of examining different types of primary sources. There were

documents, posters, photographs, artifacts, a motion picture, and a map, and each had its

own analysis worksheet with questions to be answered about the primary source.

Examples of the sources were a copy of the check for the purchase of Alaska, a copy of

the Amnesty Oath signed by Robert E. Lee, a copy of one of the first maps of the U.S.

dated 1783, a political newsreel encouraging the purchase of war bonds, and a tool used to carry railroad rails and put them into place. The examples were interesting and groups of participants actively examined and posed questions as they filled in the analysis worksheets. Mark explained that many of the sources were from the National Archives website and noted that someone from the National Archives would be spending two full days with the group later in the summer to help them learn more about the process of accessing primary sources. The session ended with a posttest (the same questions as the pretest), which Mark collected, to determine growth of knowledge about historical thinking. Mark also led the group in listing and reviewing the learning structures and activities that had been used during the day's training. Finally, participants were given reading assignments to be completed for the following day's session and names were drawn for participants to choose from a wide array of coveted materials on display at the back of the room.

Questions Revisited

Having this additional background information about TAH and some personal experiences within the training sessions, I felt I could now better approach the research questions and analyze the teacher interview data I had already collected. As previously stated, the questions this study attempts to answer are:

1. How did three teachers who participated in a TAH grant project for 3 years' experience changes in their own historical thinking?

2. In what ways do these teachers report their TAH participation has influenced

the historical thinking of their students?

To study this more in depth I interviewed three of the participants of the TAH training in their third year of involvement. These teachers were interviewed separately, each in their own elementary school and in their own classroom. The three interviewees were chosen from names recommended to me by Linda Lowell, the TAH project mentor as well as from Mark Gallagher. Linda had spent many hours in each of these teachers' classrooms mentoring them, observing lessons, and asking questions to probe reflection. From these recommendations, I chose three teachers from three different schools to interview in an attempt to learn more about their own experiences in developing historical thinking and to explore how these teachers have changed their classroom instruction because of the training. Through a sociocultural lens focusing on mediated action, I explored the thoughts, decision making, and tasks in which these three teachers engaged while teaching history in their classrooms. I did this to better understand the complex processes involved for teachers in the adoption of new learning and the transfer of this learning into practice. A better understanding of how we can achieve "a closer fit between proposed pedagogical innovations and lived classroom environments" (Rockwell, 1999, p. 126) is important in determining effective teacher training. It is my belief that the practice of teachers becoming more adept in using cultural tools in adaptive ways in their classrooms is essential to teaching historical thinking.

Teacher Interviews

After transcription of the interviews, much rereading, coding, and analysis of the

data, I chose to organize each teacher's data into the following categories: Teacher's background with history, *Tools* used in learning to think historically, *Settings* in which learning took place, *Goals* for learning to think historically, and their students' historical thinking. These categories are integrated with evidence of the five essential concepts of historical thinking as presented by Levesque (2009) and reported as such.

David

David shared rich teaching experiences from his 15 years in the school district during the interview. Having taught first grade, he claimed, gave him a greater understanding of how students learn to read, which in turn has helped him in his teaching of fourth and fifth-grade students as they approach difficult texts. He was a full time staff developer in a school for several years and taught part-time while conducting staff development for several years more. This experience, he stated, gave him a better understanding of how teachers learn and develop their own pedagogical skills. He has also taught fourth grade and currently teaches fifth grade where he has been for the past 4 years. The desire to teach with and learn from excellent teachers has led David to teach in two schools in the district and in several different grade levels. He thrives in schools and teams where teacher learning is paramount, he explained.

Now in his third year of participation with TAH, I asked him if he teaches history more than he used to. "No," he exclaimed, "because I've always liked history. I teach more social studies than anyone else in the school or on my team at least. I'm further ahead in the Core than they are, and I think it's because I like it more so I make the time for it." He also described the influence of a colleague who had been a participant in the

TAH grant when it first began, who shared many great resources with him during his first years of teaching fifth grade. David has found literature that is content-based and regularly includes writing lessons in his teaching of history so that he can fit more history topics into his literacy block.

Definition of historical thinking. David's idea of historical thinking is getting kids to realize that we have a past and a lot of the issues that face us today are the same as those issues that faced citizens of this country in the past. He explained, "I want them to examine how people dealt with those problems in the past, so they can be more aware of what's going on today both politically and economically, and how it relates to past decisions." David believes that elementary school-aged children are capable of thinking historically. He suggested that with scaffolding and support, his students have been able to grasp broad concepts and move to an understanding of more abstract concepts. When prompted as to what skills students need to think historically, he replied:

> Students need a wide variety of information and some sort of interactive activities. If students are involved in active learning, the drive to increase their knowledge grows. Activities such as role-play, interactive computer activities, and writing from a variety of perspectives helps students gain a broader perspective of history and move from making general assumptions to more informed comments.

One helpful website he described allows his students to become an original settler of the Jamestown Colony by making a variety of choices using a map and figures about where to settle, what to plant, how to divide the work, and how to interact with native peoples in the area. Students reference the original charter and can ask other members for advice. At the end of the activity they are shown data that helps them decide whether their choices would create a successful settlement or not. They can repeat the activity to adjust their

choices in order to create a successful settlement.

Acquisition and use of tools. As David reflected on changes in his pedagogy the TAH grant has afforded him, he readily pointed to the tools he has learned to use on a regular basis. Some of these are historical texts, both informational and fictional, websites such as the Smithsonian, the History Channel, and PBS, interactive websites that help clarify and organize historical facts and trivia into a format that is both educational and informative, and the websites of many historical sites. "Probably the most valuable tools I have learned to use," added David, "are the vast number of primary sources I can access through sites such as the Smithsonian."

David explained that he teaches his students to use a lot of contextual clues as tools to interpret difficult texts. "Sometimes," he claimed, "primary source documents are so confusing that I tell students to ask me or to ask their parents for help because some of it just has to be put into kid language." And in helping students understand political cartoons from the past, he admitted to explaining many of the cartoons for the students rather than teaching them to use necessary tools. "The amount of research and the complexity of finding the meaning and nuances of the political issues of the past can be too daunting for fifth-grade students," he explained.

He described using a SMART Board or interactive whiteboard as a tool to pull up primary source documents that everyone can see and read together. Again, the tools of contextualization must be modeled when students are reading and interpreting documents. Through David's thinking aloud he leads students through documents together to help them build their skills in finding and interpreting evidence. He explained

that it is difficult for him to find many sources that his students can read and interpret without a fair amount of adult modeling and assistance. In that regard, he admitted, he still uses a lot of secondary sources such as textbook excerpts for his students to read.

David discussed his use of writing as a tool in promoting the historical thinking of his students. Since his involvement with TAH, he has his students write from different perspectives. He described part of the unit he teaches on the Revolutionary War where students write newspaper articles from different perspectives on topics such as taxes and the responsibilities of the individual colonies. "This is important," he stated, "because it's a good way to teach persuasive writing. Also, when I teach about Valley Forge, students have to form an opinion about whether the colonists should stay or go home. They write newspaper articles from these different views." David suggested that his students have shown substantial gains in their overall writing abilities because of using the tools of writing for persuasion and writing to represent different perspectives. These classroom examples with writing support students' learning of historical significance and historical empathy.

Students' historical thinking. When asked how many of the lessons from the TAH study groups and trainings from the summer session he has actually used in his classroom, David replied, "I have used almost all of the lessons taught through TAH in my classroom, but I have had to make some adjustments to each one to fit in with time limits, availability of resources, and depth of concepts. Each TAH lesson has been valuable in helping me construct and plan my lessons." He shared an example of the most recent social studies unit that he taught in his classroom, which was on immigration.

Students were assigned to write an essay on the Statue of Liberty to explain the meaning of the Emma Lazarus poem and explore how and why the Statue of Liberty became a symbol of freedom. Students were being asked to determine the historical significance of the symbol. Each student also constructed a picture book explaining immigration including written information as well as illustrations to share with their second-grade buddy class. He explained that information for the picture books was gathered through research on the computer, video, and various books and magazines. Students listened to the evidence of firsthand accounts read by people who had immigrated to America and to stories told by children of their parents coming to America. They also watched video clips of original photographs of immigrants coming through Ellis Island as students explored concepts of continuity and change. David encouraged his students to then research an ancestor who had immigrated to America and be prepared to share this with the class. "This was very effective," he said, "because I have students who themselves are immigrants or their parents are immigrants." "Through this I was able to point out the similarities and differences between the late 1800s, early 1900s, and today. I really feel that students were able to practice historical empathy and realize that some attitudes in America don't change while others do," he concluded.

As mentioned previously, David described the benefit of active learning for his students in the form of role-play as they acquire a sense of historical empathy. His students take on the roles of soldiers, farmers, family members of soldiers, and government officials in their study of the Civil War. He claimed these experiences allowed his students to understand some of the different perspectives of the people of that

time period.

He also provided his students with the opportunity to author a book about an ancestor immigrating to America. Giving his students assignments to find evidence about someone from the past through researching, reading, writing, interviewing, and creating visuals provides them with opportunities to use the skills of contextualization, he explained. David purchased video cameras with some of his incentive money through TAH so his students could interview each other acting as historical characters and present news reports.

Goals and purpose. David uses the district-created assessments to mark his students' report cards as does Nora. "The assessments that the district uses focus more on details, which do not really help students understand the causes and effects of different events," he said, "yet it is important for students to understand the details because it does provide a more complete picture and their historical experience is richer for it." David creates his own assessments as well to help drive his instruction. Sometimes these assessments are completed with a partner or within a small group. He admits that he did not know if the assessments tell him if his students are thinking historically or not. "To me," he suggested, "thinking historically is where students are able to relate to the thoughts and feelings of that time period and to notice patterns and how some attitudes have changed while many have not." This, David shared, is difficult to judge and he is still working on how to develop assessments that tell him how well his students are using their thinking skills.

Anne

Anne worked as a teacher's aide for several years until her youngest child started school, and it was then she decided to return to college for a degree in elementary education. She taught fifth grade in the school district's most at-risk school for 8 years, then moved with her principal to open a new elementary school in a more affluent neighborhood. The contrast between the two schools, she suggested, has been an education in itself for her. "Both socioeconomic groups of parents and students present challenges in the school setting," she told me. Anne has taught fifth grade now for 7 years in her new school and enjoys the cohesiveness of the faculty and staff. She has also been a participant in the TAH project for 3 years.

Definition of historical thinking. When asked what is involved to think historically, Anne explained that one must be able to put events in a time sequence and explain why events happened to truly understand the concept of continuity and change. She told me that elementary students have difficulty thinking outside the box they live in. "They can be pulled into thinking historically if they get involved and emotions become strong," she suggested. Anne said students will also think historically if they can connect the happenings of today with some event of the past. In order to do this, Anne explained, "Students need to be able to infer and predict. They need to gather facts, assemble the facts with their background knowledge, and formulate the reasons for events and determine what was learned from these events." These skills help students to evaluate progress and decline as well as sequencing events.

Learning in the TAH setting. As Anne reflected on changes in her pedagogy

because of her involvement in TAH, she noted that she has always used a variety of good structures in her teaching, but claimed her historical knowledge base has grown tremendously due to TAH. "The lessons have filled in holes that I had in my history content," she explained. In her view, this in itself has made her a much more effective teacher of history. Anne added that she does use many more graphic organizers as a result of the trainings, and her courage to search for better ways to help her students learn has increased. This, she suggested, comes from the confidence she has gained from being an actual participant in finding and using sources and materials.

Acquisition of tools. Anne stated that the most valuable tools she personally has learned to use as a result of TAH are multiple sources and multiple media. "I think the resources I have been given and the knowledge that there is more out there beside the textbook has been important for me and my students," she related. Her students, she told me, have learned to think historically by searching for evidence through photographs, discussion, movie clips, newspaper articles, and teacher directed instruction.

Anne described her students' use of writing as a tool with examples from the most recent social studies unit she taught. The unit topic was the 1950s to today and students were asked to write about where they thought the U.S. would be in the future in light of current issues. To explore the concepts of progress and decline, topics such as energy production and consumption, water rights, civil rights, gun laws and such, were suggested as choices for students to consider in their assignment to write about the past, present, and future of debatable issues. "Tools such as writing reflections, writing about different stances and perspectives, and organizing different written pieces were used in teaching

and performing these tasks," Anne reflected.

Anne described each of her units as concentrating on three types of actions:

lecture, hands-on and reading and writing. "With the lecture the students build their

background knowledge, and with the hands-on and reading and writing the students use

their skills to determine historical significance in thinking about the *whys, hows*, and

what ifs of the time period," she said. She suggested that her class activities with books

showing various perspectives helped her students to understand the concept of historical

empathy, such as in this example:

> My students read the book *George vs. George* together in small groups. This book
> compares King George to George Washington. Throughout the book the students
> are asked to see similarities and differences in these two men. They are asked to
> understand why each did what they did and to analyze why the outcome was what
> is was.

Students' historical thinking. Another example shared by Anne exhibited her

students' opportunities to find evidence through the use of sources to understand past

events and explain how they might connect to the present.

> We were reading documents that discussed the Indian Removal Act, which
> resulted in the Trail of Tears. My students were upset that Andrew Jackson who
> was president at this time would let this happen. (They are always amazed at the
> horrible things we did to people who we now accept as citizens and equals.)
> While we were discussing Andrew Jackson in class, the Republican presidential
> candidate debates were taking place. One student reported watching the debates
> with his dad and hearing one candidate mention that he wanted to be a president
> like Andrew Jackson. (He was referring to the case that Jackson had run a debt
> free government.) My student turned to his dad and asked, "Why would he want
> to be like Jackson? He was **not** a nice man." At that time my student was using
> historical thinking.

Classroom discussions of people and events of the past are common in Anne's classroom,

she stated, and she is particularly pleased when these discussions reach further into the

lives of her students as they find historical significance.

Nora

Nora earned her first bachelor's degree in English Secondary Education and taught middle school for 6 years in a small rural area before moving to this school district. She then earned an elementary teaching certificate and for the past 6 years has taught fifth grade in her present school. She has been involved in TAH for 3 years.

Nora told me she considers herself a real history lover and so do her students, as they tell new students coming into her class, "You need to know that Mrs. Malin loves history and you will too!" Her classroom is stacked with books, pamphlets, student papers, and such on all of the counters and even on the floor. She described her classroom as maintaining a rather loud buzz as students work on a lot of individual projects, many of which involve using a school set of laptop computers. Students often use the computer program *Movie Maker*, she explained, as they produce films regarding different topics of the industrial revolution and such.

The hallways of Nora's school displayed evidence of many social studies' projects, such as a world map marking the ancestry of all of the school's fifth-grade students and student written biographical sketches of U.S. Presidents. Nora's actual classroom walls, however, showed little evidence of social studies learning.

Definition of historical thinking. When asked if her students are involved in thinking historically, Nora emphatically said:

> Yes, they use primary sources in every unit I teach and that's at least every two weeks. When you start to use primary sources it makes you aware that there are primary sources in all areas. I have started using some in math and science. We

> look at historical perspective in math, and in science we go to the U.S. Geologic site to see what sources scientists are looking at today. We see the very maps and earthquake monitoring devices that they are using as their sources for making decisions right now.

She explained that this helps students see that primary source documents are continually being created and can be treated as evidence. In social studies, she continued, she uses political cartoons, photographs, maps, and documents. Nora described a recent lesson in which she guided her students to find the signed document when Robert E. Lee surrendered during the Civil War. She explained, "They were able to find it and it had his name signed on the document and stated what he was agreeing to do. The kids looked carefully at his signature. They were so intrigued."

Nora added that historical thinking also includes her students' own views and perspectives and their ability to look at the views of others and share historical empathy. She described classroom examples where her students conducted open-minded discussions about political parties and elections. One student told the class, "It's a good thing that President Obama was elected, because now everyone in America can feel like they can become president." This was quite open-minded because so many of these students' parents are straight-party Republicans, she explained.

Other topics of investigation in Nora's classroom included radical movements throughout history, with questions of which groups felt for or against issues, and why. She noted that her students have learned to look at where the source is coming from, when the event occurred, and what was the thinking of different groups at that time in order to understand the concept of continuity and change.

Learning in the TAH setting. When asked if her teaching methods have changed

as a result of her participation with TAH, Nora exclaimed:

> Oh, yes. Yes! It's helped me be a better teacher across the board more than
> anything else by far. I've used the best practices we've learned in teaching
> science, reading, everything. It's made my differentiation better. It's not just what
> we read about. We learn it. We do it. We started from the beginning, how to write
> units, inquiry projects, took content classes. We would actually do the projects.

She continued to share with excitement the number of websites she has learned about and

learned how to use successfully with her students during TAH sessions. Nora has

strongly encouraged her team members to apply as participants.

Nora explained that she has used about 95% of the lessons presented in TAH

trainings in her own classroom. The only lessons she had not used, she stated, include

specific events she did not feel she has time to teach in detail, and she runs out of time at

the end of the year when testing becomes the priority.

Acquisition of tools. Nora referred to many of the tools she uses in teaching her

students to think historically. Just as David and Anne, she remarked about the importance

of writing as a critical tool for students to display their understanding of different

perspectives. She described assignments where she uses writing prompts, such as, what

would have happened if…to encourage students to write a different view of a historical

event. "Early in the year they don't have the background to write too much about certain

events," Nora stated, "but later on they do." She uses the following to structure student

writing throughout the year: journal entries, narratives, summaries, reports, graphic

organizers, biographies, letters, and poetry.

Nora mentioned other tools including video clips, atlases, pictures, photographs,

and computer inquiry projects that she uses regularly in teaching history. "I don't use a

textbook," she said, "I don't even have one. We get so much material for each unit from the TAH project trainings, and I have a lot of stories, trade books, picture books, and leveled readers. And for the Lewis and Clark's expedition, I use what I got from Fort Clatsop," she explained. She described students becoming experts on a topic as a tool. They do their own research and then share their findings with others. This becomes a tool for group learning as a lot of information can be gathered in a shorter period of time.

Another tool mentioned by Nora was analysis. She described the need for students to learn skills necessary to search a document for bias, for authenticity, and for perspective according to the time frame during which it was produced. They must understand the importance of evidence in an attempt to reconstruct the past. This requires much time and many resources, she explained.

Students' historical thinking. Nora described how she uses primary sources in the form of documents, photographs, and political cartoons as tools for learning. To aid analysis, which is another necessary tool, she provides her students with analysis sheets for different types of artifacts that prompt questions to be considered for discussion. She explained the importance of these tools,

> My students find the artifacts interesting and are prompted to ask why events happened, when, and who wrote this. They also learn that most of the history written about the United States is from a European background, and that's only one point of view. They learn that other people, events, and cultural ideas are part of the American story.

Teaching her students to read and interpret primary sources requires practice and a great deal of time. The tools she provides to students in their analysis of evidence are essential in her students' learning.

Mastering the use of cultural tools, as all three teachers suggested, requires much teacher modeling and many practice opportunities for students. As Wertsch declared, this focus on "knowing how" to use a cultural tool is an essential function in the cognitive development of children; a child simply being exposed to these tools does not suffice (Levesque, 2009).

Nora creates many opportunities for her students to discover and explore while participating in inquiry lessons in an effort to help them learn the concept of progress and decline, she told me. She has a collection of antique farming and gardening tools, kitchen items, and such that she has on display during their study of westward expansion. She described the students' activities with these antique items.

> Students use a graphic organizer to answer questions such as: What is the item? What would it have been used for? Would it be a need or a want? Would a child use it? Then a research period and discussion time follows. Some items are still not known, even with peer discussion and collaboration. We finally talk about these items as they were used by those traveling west. My students make connections to some of their ancestors and to themselves. We discuss how tools have changed and what they use today to accomplish some similar tasks.

Nora reflected that her students learned to use their historical thinking skills, such as corroboration and inquiry, as they discovered needed information about these artifacts. They learned about the ideas of continuity and change when considering why and how many of these items have changed.

In her classroom, Nora explained, she teaches her students to use computer software programs such as *Moviemaker*. Students are assigned to create a movie about a certain historical event and in it they must present more than one perspective. "They know they can't just take one point of view about a historical event as being the way it

happened," she said. At year's end she puts the movies together to make a timeline of

U.S. History, Nora explained. She feels her students do think historically when involved

in these kinds of mediated tasks because they ask many questions and think about other's

points of view. "If I had time, I would add even more projects such as this, along with

more readers' theatre, book study, and literature circles," she exclaimed.

Goals and purposes. Nora described her use of many formative assessments to

determine the extent of her students' learning. She uses exit tickets at the end of class,

where students are required to answer a question about what they've learned; she uses

graphic organizers so she can see how students actually record what they have learned;

she uses stop and write, or stop, write and draw; and her students self-assess a fair

amount, she said. Nora has made a point to write a reflection of the lessons she's taught

with the purpose of determining whether or not her students have actually learned the

objective. She told me of her concerns with more formal assessments:

> The school district constructed some assessments for each grade level. The ones
> we have concern me because there are a lot of fact questions. On the Constitution
> test, students need to know about every amendment (memorized), and later they
> are tested on specific events that occurred at the end of WW1. I don't want to turn
> it into a bunch of facts. We are required to give these tests this year to use for
> marking report cards.

Nora did not believe that these assessments give her adequate information about her

students' ability to use their historical thinking skills. These assessments allow her to

observe her students' actions which often lead her to understand their thinking.

Nora discussed using foldables that were presented in TAH training sessions as

assessments. In a unit on Westward Expansion her students were asked to construct a

foldable organizing information about the various trails during a certain time period. As

she read through the foldables she felt her students had learned the necessary facts and

understood the hardships and fears of the travelers along these trails.

Nora shared a reflection she had written after teaching a lesson on the Bill of

Rights where her students were asked to read various passages and bring their ideas

together using five key words. She wrote:

> My students all listed what they felt were the five key words they thought were important and completed a paragraph summarizing their thoughts as well. I wanted them to draw a picture about what the Constitution and Bill of Rights meant to them. I wanted them to make a personal connection about what they are able to do, or how they live because of the rights we enjoy. Many students did just fine, but there were some who drew a sketch of the Constitution and left it at that. Next time I will be more specific in my directions and model an example.

This assessment was not as successful as she would have liked in providing her with an

evaluation of the level of her students' thinking. The discussion during the lessons,

however, she found to be more enlightening as she shared this example.

> Two students were personally affected by this lesson. One student belongs to an avid hunting family and realized he is able to hunt with his dad because the Bill of Rights states that we can own guns. He thought this right extremely important. The other student's dad is being sued by the government in a now two year lawsuit about his business and property and his feelings were that the government has grown too powerful and has broken many of the laws. His sketch depicted the Constitution as "just a fading rule book."

Her goal that her students learn about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights seemed to be

successful, Nora expressed, yet some of her students' personal experiences seemed to

trump the purpose of these documents which was to protect the rights of all.

Teachers' Views of TAH Participation

All three teachers viewed their involvement in TAH as advantageous for

themselves and their students. Each commented on having learned to access and use primary sources in their teaching, and Nora discussed her subsequent use of primary sources in other school subjects as well. All three suggested the introduction to various websites as being one of the greatest advantages of their participation, and these teachers valued the modeling of effective teaching structures and the materials that they obtained during the training sessions.

Comparing the first interview comments with the second interview comments proved interesting as teachers became aware of pieces of historical thinking they had forgotten about or had not been aware of. During the second interview participants seemed less assured they were promoting all the thought processes involved in historical thinking. My desire to have them describe their own version of historical thinking appears to be both a contribution and a limitation in the study. TAH participation did not seem to help teachers create a robust understanding of historical thinking, yet it was interesting to note what they each had gleaned from the training regarding historical thinking.

One recurring theme evident in the data was the benefit of TAH participation to these three teachers. Although they benefitted in different ways, the value of the program was widely proclaimed. Teachers reported the creation of a learning community that supported them in sustained professional development as being one of the greatest benefits.

One item of interest appeared in the transcripts of all three teachers. They discussed how often they taught history and how much they liked history and all claimed

to teach it more and like it more than other teachers. This perception remains unmeasured and unstudied, yet reported by each teacher.

Priority of Topics During TAH Trainings

From a list David, Ann, and Nora were asked to indicate the five topics given most attention during the TAH trainings (see Appendix B). Interestingly, *creating assessments* was indicated by two of the participants as getting substantial focus while the other participant indicated the topic received very little attention. All three, in their written reflections and through personal interviews, claimed their students had learned the intended objectives, but did not explain how they knew this. There were also a number of comments about the difficulty of writing good assessments and feelings of inadequacy in this area.

Creating a culture of learners was a topic given a high score for attention during TAH trainings by all three interviewees. Comments were often made about the opportunities awarded the teachers to actually participate in the learning activities and to learn from each other. The three teachers felt this participation prepared them for creating similar opportunities for their students to learn in a classroom community. Active participation and social involvement seemed important in the cognitive learning processes of all of the interviewees.

Another topic given high priority during TAH according to these three teachers was *relating lessons to the real world.* Repeatedly in written reflections and in oral interviews the teachers reported the importance of connecting what students were

learning about the past to their present lives. They felt this was especially crucial for their students to be able to make connections and to understand new information. TAH lessons seemed to have given the teachers good personal experiences in relating lessons to the real world and they, in turn, felt they knew how to do this for their own students effectively.

Other high ranking topics were *accessing primary source materials* and *teaching students to discuss and deliberate.* Lowest ranking among the attention to topics during TAH lessons were *using drills and /or memorization of facts* and *having students write their own interpretations of historical events.* It would have been helpful to have additional information from the grant writers as to their views of the importance of these topics.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I revisit the research questions and draw from the collected data and analysis to explain pertinent findings of historical thinking in the context of a sociocultural perspective. To do this I refer to data collected and compiled in support of Levesque's (2009) five concepts of historical thinking. I propose unanswered questions emerging from this study and other studies exploring the development of historical thinking. I then discuss the limits and the contributions of this study, and finally, I suggest some pedagogical implications for teachers of history.

First, it is important to note that researchers, historians, and teachers alike regard historical thinking as essential to learning and understanding our past (Barton, 1997; Cuban, 2006; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Levstik & Barton, 1996; Sterns, 2008; VanSledright, 2010). History's place in the curriculum remains solid, although NCLB (2001) as well as legislative attempts to define history standards in public schools, have created controversy and uncertainty regarding how much and whose version of history is most important. Dichotomies continue to exist, but it is my view that change is occurring, albeit slowly. Teacher awareness of the varied purposes for teaching history is increasing, allowing the view of history vs. heritage to loosen its grip upon our teaching practices (Barton & Levstik, 2004).

History educators continue to move from the *gathering and memorizing of historic facts* type of instruction to more of an instructional mode including critical thought and analysis, even though our students' NAEP scores show little change at this

time. Many teachers have shifted from the textbook as being their students' only source of printed information to the use of multiple sources of historic text and other data. As these changes occur historical thinking becomes possible.

Historical thinking does not develop solely within the mind, but rather through actions or discoveries within social settings. The cognitive processes of teachers and students alike are developed through social processes using mediated tools and actions (Wertsch & Rupert, 1993). The important connections created within the social dimensions of learning seem imperative to historical thinking. The use of meditational means creates opportunities for continual transformation of thought and creativity. Using tools in a social setting aids students' exploration and interpretation of the past or in their "doing" history, as Barton and Levstik (2004) referred to the active learning necessary to think historically. Throughout this study it has become evident that this is true for teachers in developing their own historical thinking as well. Teachers in this TAH professional development project have repeatedly stated that their own historical thinking has developed through discussion and inquiry with other teachers in group learning settings. These teachers also believe that the mentoring they received from more knowledgeable others created valuable opportunities for them to learn to think historically.

Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, a requirement for the effective teaching of history (Bain, 2006), can and does increase in socially situated learning settings (Wertsch & Rupert, 1993). Professional development opportunities can lift teachers from traditional teaching ruts by strongly emphasizing both subject content and

pedagogical content, and by providing ongoing follow-up reinforcement and mentoring

(Blank & de las Alas, 2009).

TAH projects have designed professional development for teachers of history

with the purpose of strengthening teachers' historic knowledge and improving their

instruction quality. Many teachers throughout the U.S. participated in these projects since

funding became available in 2001. Three teachers in the TAH professional development

program were participants in this study, which aimed to explore two research questions.

The first research question is this: How did three teachers who participated in a TAH

grant project for 3 years' experience changes in their own historical thinking?

Participants David and Nora viewed themselves initially as being lovers of history

and as teaching it more often than other teachers in their schools. They each perceived

that their students clearly recognized and understood their passion for learning history.

Participant Anne did not share a particular zeal for studying history, but reported she had

always taught the social studies standards included in the state core curriculum to her

fifth-grade students and felt her pedagogy was effective. All three strongly voiced their

belief that because of TAH involvement their content knowledge has grown substantially;

they feel much more confident now as they teach history and are willing to try new

approaches. As project director, Mark Gallagher, reported, these participants scored

higher on the posttests created to test historic knowledge than they had on their pretests.

Whether or not this assessment truly measures history content knowledge can be argued,

but these three individual teachers reported that their own content knowledge has greatly

increased and with it, their ability to think historically.

Anne acknowledged, "I think I was able to learn the concepts of historical thinking through the TAH program. The lessons that were taught and the materials shared made it possible for me to relate the same expressions and lessons to my students. Having an experienced teacher mentor helped me learn to love history and to think historically." These statements support the findings of Wertsch and Rupert (1993) regarding learning through socially mediated situations and the reportings of Van Hover (2008) regarding effective professional development.

The second question is this study: In what ways do these teachers think their TAH participation has influenced the historical thinking of their students, sought to explore the transfer of teachers' own learning experiences to those of their students. These three teachers shared a realization that their students needed to be led through a more investigative approach when learning history, much as they themselves have been in the TAH trainings. This socially constructed learning setting was viewed as necessary for students and teachers alike in learning to become historical thinkers.

Historical thinking to David was defined as making connections between issues of the past and issues of today. Anne's description of historical thinking involved students' acquiring and using good literacy skills to interpret the past. Anne also pointed to the necessary skills of being able to think chronologically. Nora's notion of historical thinking primarily revolved around the ability to read and interpret primary and secondary source documents. Teaching her students to use sourcing seemed the most important aspect to her. A common understanding of historical thinking was not expressed initially. However, when presented with five concepts of historical thinking as

discussed by Levesque (2009), the three teachers concurred regarding three important points: specific tools are necessary for acquiring particular concepts, social learning provided the most productive settings in which these concepts could be learned, and purposes for the concepts being taught were varied.

The three teachers seemed to share common understandings about the importance of teaching students to become historical thinkers and reflected on the importance of themselves being historical thinkers. In differing amounts they focused their priorities on sourcing, active participation, literacy skills, making connections from the past to the present and other aspects of historical thinking. They each shared examples from their lessons where they had included some of Levesque's five historical thinking concepts. During my participation in the day long TAH training session regarding historical thinking, however, I felt the surface of the topic had barely been brushed. There was very limited reading and little depth to the discussion for teachers to actually internalize what is meant by and involved in historical thinking either for themselves or for their students. Thus, as I interviewed these three teachers and read their lesson reflections, I found varying detail and depth regarding historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation. Attention to the details of historical thinking possibly could have been enhanced during the TAH training to help teachers develop a clearer understanding of what historical thinking consists of, why it is important, and how to help students develop this kind of thinking.

However, the three teachers indicated the following changes in their classroom practices as a result of their TAH participation: (a) the amount of history being taught to

their students had increased, (b) both teachers and their students exhibited greater

enthusiasm in learning history, and (c) the teachers had gained greater pedagogical

content knowledge. These factors are essential for effective history education. These

factors alone, however, do not necessarily indicate that students are involved in historical

thinking, or that teachers understand the concepts well enough to incorporate historical

comprehension, analysis, and interpretation into their lessons on a regular basis. To better

address the two research questions and to understand these three teachers' experiences

with historical thinking; I refer to Levesque's (2009) five concepts or procedural tools

necessary for thinking historically: historical significance, continuity and change,

progress and decline, evidence, and historical empathy.

Historical Significance

When asked specifically about their students' acquisition of historical

significance, teachers responded with many similar comments regarding tools that were

most helpful, settings that were most nurturing of that learning, and purposes and/or goals

for learning how to determine historical significance. Most notably, none of the three

participants reported that historical significance is best learned alone, which supports the

value of sociocultural learning as proclaimed by Wertsch and Rupert (1993). All three

included group work and teacher-led discussions, including plenty of modeling and

mentoring, as necessary tools for learning to consider historical significance. They

reported this depth of thinking is best explored and acquired with guidance. Table 2

shows examples found within data collected from both interviews and teacher reflections.

Table 2

Participants' Evidence of Teaching About Historical Significance

Historical thinking concepts	Theory: What *tools* are necessary for students to learn this?	In what *settings* is this concept most effectively learned?	What are the *goals/purposes* of learning this particular concept?
Historical Significance	David: Role play Newspapers Symbols Websites	David: Partners Small groups	David: Teacher made assessments District made assessments Mark report cards To assess student thinking To help students organize important facts from trivia.
	Anne: Inferring and Predicting Graphic Organizers Texts	Anne: Class discussions Family discussions	Anne: Students can learn the whys and how of history. They are able to see cause and effect and problem and solution.
	Nora: Researching w/internet Writing scripts Making movies	Nora: Discussions w/questions Coop Learning structures	Nora: Understand issues. To gather and gain a lot of information. Teacher made assessments District assessments To create foldables to organize info. Graphic organizers to help remember info.

The use of mediated means (both in the form of tools and settings) was very evident in both the study groups and general training session I attended. Using tools such as reading and writing, graphic organizers, foldables, text samples, videos, and historical artifacts was repeatedly demonstrated, and participants actively took part in the learning opportunities offered in this social setting. The knowledge of how to use such tools as well as the realization of the importance in doing so seemed to transfer to actual teacher practice, as David expressed his sudden awareness of the value and availability of primary source documents and photographs. He further described using these documents

with his students as well as using role play, maps, and interactive computer programs as tools for learning. Anne and Nora also expressed a new awareness of primary source documents.

Examples of tools accommodating the learning of historical significance in Table 2 indicate that processing text is an extremely important tool, but text can be introduced in many different forms other than textbooks to help students distinguish significant history from trivial history. Providing students with only textbook versions of the past that remain unquestioned and unexplored does not lend students sufficient skill to reconsider a collective view in light of other significant, durable, and/or relevant events or ideas (Levesque, 2009). These three teachers seem to understand this practice well.

A wide variety of purposes for teaching historical thinking as noted in the National History Standards (Evans, 2010) were communicated by the three teachers. Assessment aimed at state and national standards through the use of district-created and teacher-created tests presented a purpose for learning historical significance, albeit, not the major purpose noted by these teachers. This may be true because social studies is not a tested subject area according to the NCLB (2001); however, the teachers did refer to the necessity of marking student progress on trimester report cards. Students' acquiring background knowledge and their understanding of the importance and relevance of historic events tended to drive the instruction of these teachers, which supports reform efforts in history education as noted by Alleman and Brophy (2006).

Continuity and Change

Levesque (2009) suggested teachers should present their students with opportunities to construct colligatory concepts in order to understand continuity and change. "Colligation can be a useful tool for constructing logical, coherent, and intelligible interpretations of historical change, as it can reveal pervasive themes, ideas, or phenomena to historians (such as terrorism, revolution, and transportation)" (p. 85). Thus, teachers help their students learn to "map the past with certain orders, sequences, and relationships" (p. 80). Levesque (2009) and Parker (2010) challenged teachers to construct and write their own historical narratives based upon their reading and studying of varying accounts of historical events. These narratives can be very meaningful when woven with a common theme involving change.

Examples of the purposes of teaching students about continuity and change are listed in Table 3 and exhibit a level of complexity shared by these teachers. The tools and group settings revealed here appear to be those commonly used in teaching other historical thinking concepts, but the goals listed reflect students' needs to be able to "do" history as explained by Barton and Levstik (2004). Student learning of continuity and change, according to these teachers, must include critical thinking skills such as analysis, interpretation, and conceptualization, which supports the work of VanSledright (2010).

Anne focused on her students' use of higher level reading skills as necessary tools to analyze historical information. Although her instruction seems to reflect rather traditional teaching methods including a fair amount of lecture and attention to the textbook, her reporting of classroom discussions and her example of one student relating

Table 3

Participants' Evidence of Teaching about Continuity and Change

Historical thinking concepts	Theory: What *tools* are necessary for students to learn this?	In what *settings* is this concept most effectively learned?	What are the *goals/purposes* of learning this particular concept?
Continuity and change	David: Interactive computer games Video clips of past Writing essays Persuasive writing	David: Partners on computers Class discussions	David: To understand details of complex situations To understand abstract concepts
	Anne: Timelines Texts	Anne: Class discussions Lectures	Anne: To explore and compare past and current issues. Analyze outcomes. To build background knowledge. Students are able to see how problems were solved and effects led to certain situations.
	Nora: Artifacts	Nora: Discussions w/questions Inquiry activities	Nora: Understand how progress has been made. Summarizing

what he had learned about Andrew Jackson's presidency to the current presidential

election suggests that discussion as well as making connections between the past and

present have become valuable tools in her students' understanding of continuity and

change as well as of progress and decline.

Progress and Decline

Levesque (2009) suggested that the study of progress and decline adds to the

complex understanding of the past in providing "a clearer evaluation of the direction of

change" (p. 91). His claim that few learning materials exist on the study of progress and decline complicate this already complex concept. Making evaluative judgments about past people and practices is difficult and often probes our positionality, as suggested by Drake and Brown (2003), Levesque (2009), Milner (2007), and Wooden (2008).

David, Anne, and Nora reported the use of cultural tools in adaptive ways as students and teachers engaged in the work of learning, much as Erickson (1999) and Barton and Levstik (2004) suggested (see Table 4). These teachers described the need for teacher scaffolding of students at the zone of proximal development (Wertsch & Rupert, 1993). They presented various purposes for learning about progress and decline, which include learning to evaluate progress and learn the significance of progress. How they teach their students to evaluate progress and answer the question (*Did things change for the better or the worse?*) remains unclear, however. More in-depth study is needed regarding this concept of historical thinking.

Table 4

Participants' Evidence of Teaching about Progress and Decline

Historical thinking concepts	What *tools* are necessary for students to learn this?	In what *settings* is this concept most effectively learned?	What are the *goals/purposes* of learning this particular concept?
Progress and Decline	David: Primary and secondary sources	David: Whole class and small group	David: To make more informed comments. To teach cause and effect.
	Anne: Historic journals	Anne: Class debates Teacher led discussions	Anne: Students can learn from the past and hopefully set goals to make improvements for their futures.
	Nora: Inquiry projects Writing prompts Artifacts	Nora: Inquiry activities Opportunities to be participants	Nora: Evaluate progress from different perspectives To lean significance of progress

Evidence

Although the understanding of and use of evidence is key in historical thinking, the process is long and demanding. Are students up to the task? Findings of many researchers have indicated that even young students can understand historic sources through careful teacher scaffolding of appropriate thinking tools (e.g., Barton, 1997; Drake & Brown, 2003; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Levstik & Barton, 1996; VanSledright, 2002). A major issue, however, as VanSledright suggested, was that teachers doubted their own ability to guide their students through this complex process. Barton and Levstik (2004) claimed this complex process is most successfully tackled in the socially constructed learning provided in effective classrooms. Thus, TAH projects and similar kinds of professional development opportunities for teachers are needed across the country to increase teachers' understanding, skills, and confidence in considering historical evidence.

David, Anne, and Nora reported using a variety of sources as evidence of historical events, including many documents found on internet sites such as the National Archives and the Library of Congress. Their main purpose for sharing these documents with students seemed centered around improving literacy skills. Nora's description of her students' realization that primary sources are not used only in history, but rather in other subjects suggests a deeper understanding of the value and reality of evidence and mediated means in learning to think critically (see Table 5).

The reading and interpreting of primary source documents, according to David, can be overwhelming to students without strong literacy skills. All mentioned the

Table 5

Participants' Evidence of Teaching about Finding Evidence

Historical Thinking Concepts	What *tools* are necessary for students to learn this?	In what *settings* is this concept most effectively learned?	What are the *goals/purposes* of learning this particular concept?
Evidence	David: Maps Whiteboard for primary source documents Textbooks Contextual clues	David: Teacher modeling and mentoring class	David: Better understanding and improved reading skills. To help students make connections.
	Anne: Multiple media Documents	Anne: No comments	Anne: To improve reading and writing skills
	Nora: Internet searches Photos and documents	Nora: Corroboration among students	Nora: Reconstruct the past Analyze sources Determine authenticity

difficulty of helping students understand the documents themselves, which appeared to trump the concepts of questioning authenticity, determining perspective, preparing an argument and enriching students' background knowledge. All three teachers reported using artifacts as evidence in their history lessons. These artifacts, in the form of documents and actual items, were presented with guiding questions to aid students in their interpretation and analysis. These actions support the research of Drake and Brown (2003) who suggested the need for a systematic approach to historic investigations.

The modeling of mediated means during TAH lessons seemed to greatly impact these teachers' use of tools and activities in their own lessons. The lesson reflections of these three teachers showed extensive use of discussion, reading, and writing involving multiple sources of information. Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), as

suggested by Bain (2006), can and should be a major tool for student learning. These teachers' lesson reflections displayed the use of PCK in the materials and sources of evidence selected for their lessons and in the active learning investigations proposed for students. An example is illustrated in one of Nora's lesson reflections where she presented a variety of artifacts for her students to analyze. She wrote:

> I needed an organizer that would allow for choice and explanation for each student as they picked and described items from an old west antique collection. Students had to view eleven antique items and choose four to describe, sketch, and answer questions about. They answered each question, using their own background knowledge. My students were very engaged in this activity. They were discussing with each other about each item, studying the items, and each student in class completed the organizer.

This reflection indicated Nora's use of artifacts as tools for learning as well as her construction of a graphic organizer tool to help her students in their investigations and interpretations of these artifacts as evidence of life in the past.

The subject of evidence and exactly the part it plays in historical thinking is still somewhat murky. It is certainly necessary for teachers to provide informed and steady guidance to their students, but more study must be conducted to provide a clearer picture of how students can and should use evidence from the past to further their historical thinking. They need also to understand how evidence, which is sometimes fragmentary and sometimes unreliable, plays a role in developing historic accounts.

Historical Empathy

As the past's history classes focused primarily upon the transmission of "so-called" hard historical facts, little emphasis was placed on historical imagination, moral

judgment, or historical empathy. Even today, some teachers shy away from discussions regarding controversial topics or any perspective that might "undermine children's sense of national identity" (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 95). The mediated acts of providing students opportunities to probe their own positionalities and engage in historical imagination and empathy can facilitate students' deeper understand and historical thinking (Drake, 2003; Drake & Brown, 2003). Milner's (2007) framework, described in chapter two, provided a systematic plan and pertinent questions for teachers to consider when examining their own ideologies, beliefs, epistemologies and practices. This personal realization is extremely important for teachers as they guide students to probe their own positionalities as well as those of others.

David, Anne and Nora reported using various sources as tools for developing historical empathy, such as biographies, journal entries, and books in general (see Table 6). Their discussion of historical empathy was limited, and it appeared that their TAH trainings had not focused particularly on that aspect of historical thinking. All three suggested that historical empathy was important in students' thinking, but they reported time constraints as an issue. They each read historical fiction books aloud that provided their students with opportunities for some historical imagination and empathy, but they did not seem to have ventured far from the national narrative in providing students with opportunities to make moral judgments.

When Barton and Levstik (2004) discussed historical empathy and the moral stance, they concluded:

Table 6

Participants' Evidence of Teaching about Historical Empathy

Historical thinking concepts	What *tools* are necessary for students to learn this?	In what *settings* is this concept most effectively learned?	What are the *goals/purposes* of learning this particular concept?
Historical empathy	David: Writing stories of accounts Poetry Picture Books Researching ancestry	David: Individual reflections Role playing	David: To understand perspectives of the times and situations. To develop tolerance and understanding.
	Anne: Books showing different perspectives	Anne: No comments	Anne: No comments
	Nora: Journal entries Biographies	Nora: Sharing perspectives and stories	Nora: To better understand others and view other perspectives with respect To develop empathy

> This is a topic students find highly motivating, and history provides a wealth of examples that can prepare them for deliberations over justice in public life today. Such preparation should include attention to difficult and controversial issues, though; students need to be exposed to multiple perspectives on what constitutes justice and how to achieve it, and they need to confront instances where justice and self-interest—particularly for privileged groups—may conflict. (p. 107)

Historical examples provide high motivation and rich discussion for elementary school children. Teachers who, as Reisman and Wineburg (2008) noted, specifically modeled this type of contextualized thinking for their students created effective social learning settings where historical thinking was nurtured.

Historical analysis and interpretation suggest that teachers guide their students in regarding interpretations of history as tentative and thus, withhold judgment. As new information is uncovered, new voices heard, and new interpretations introduced, people and events may be viewed in a different light. Teaching students to assess perspectives

can lead to a dichotomy of who is right and who is wrong if not carefully modeled and mentored. Posing thoughtful questions and guiding discussions can help students recognize biases and exaggerations and can lead students to form their own questions as to what information may be missing (Reisman & Wineburg, 2008).

For the TAH participants, the concept of multiple perspectives seemed to mean looking at two sides of a story or considering how two different groups of people may have viewed an event. David described this in his lessons on the Civil War where his students were divided into different camps, and Anne suggested her students became aware of the mistreatment of Native Americans during Westward Expansion through a video they watched. Nora helped her students pose and answer questions about some of the radical movements in U.S. history exploring why different groups felt the ways they did. Many such examples were shared orally and in teacher reflections. It appears that different views and opinions are being explored in these fifth-grade classrooms, and most of this exploration occurs in a social setting using discussion as a tool.

Detection of bias, however, appears to be lightly touched or even missing in these case studies. The purpose of discussing bias, as Barton (2005) suggested, is to help students discover the relationship between claims and evidence. These important cognitive exercises require well- trained teachers who can mentor students effectively and confidently. The three teachers did not share evidence of classroom discussions or lessons that promoted the questioning of author's motives, constructing arguments through the use of evidence, or analyzing someone else's argument.

In addition to not exploring the positionality of authors, the positionality of

teachers and students remained relatively unexplored as well. Mediated acts such as providing opportunities for students to engage in such habits of mind as historical imagination and empathy occurred somewhat in role play and journal writing in these classrooms, but the frequency and depth are unclear. Opportunities for teachers to explore their own ideologies, beliefs, and epistemologies within the TAH structure were not evident. Lack of this kind of exploration may impede teachers' pursuits to be objective and avoid sharing their own biases, thus robbing their students of this same opportunity. Strong evidence of this kind of historical thinking appears to be lacking among these teachers.

Learning in the TAH Social Setting

Clearly, the three teachers studied in this dissertation have increased their knowledge of and use of tools for themselves and for their students as a result of their participation in TAH. The modeling provided by TAH presenters and the active participation of teachers in socially situated learning settings seems to be a major factor in their growth and change, which supports the work of Harris and Bain (2011).

Sociocultural theory suggests that the connection between the social dimension of the learning environment and human cognition are intimate and necessary for learning (Cole & Wertsch, 1996). Teachers, as well as their students, require a culture or fertile environment for intellectual growth. In developing this fertile environment, cultural tools must be identified and properly used to increase knowledge and understanding. Barton and Levstik (2004) claimed this can most effectively be accomplished through social

interaction and mediated actions.

"Evidence does suggest that effective professional development can lead to teacher learning and improvements in classroom practice" (Van Hover, 2008). Professional development opportunities for teachers vary widely, however, in content, format, quality, and duration. Van Hover, in her meta-analysis of studies on the professional development of social studies teachers, provided evidence of the importance of teachers who learn together as a community of learners.

Written into this TAH grant project was the expectation of at least 75% participation of each participant in the total professional development hours. These professional development hours were exclusively designed to provide interactive learning in a socially situated setting. Independent reading and/or projects, although important, were not considered in the participation requirement for this grant project. The creation of a community of teacher learners sustained by district-based professional development has been a goal of this TAH project since its inception. Therefore, attendance and participation in this sociocultural learning setting were required.

Nora summed up her feelings well as she claimed that her involvement in this type of professional development "has helped her become a better teacher across the board more than anything else by far." When probed as to why this might be, she added that it is so important for teachers to actually learn by doing and sharing. Anne suggested that being able to compare, connect, and interpret cannot be done alone. She claimed her learning has been much deeper because of the learning community provided by the TAH grant, and she has extended these opportunities to compare, connect, and interpret to her

classroom community. David referred to the participation requirements of the TAH project as motivating to him, but the relationships built through the creation of the learning community were what kept him attending and increased both his interest and learning.

During the TAH sessions I observed, the teachers were totally absorbed and connected in learning history, which suggests that this type of learning is extremely valuable. As Wertsch (2002) reported in his support for social learning, "Action and mind are fundamentally shaped by the 'cultural tools' or 'mediational means' that individuals and groups employ" (p. 105). The vast and varied use of cultural tools such as written texts, verbal language, deliberation, hypothesizing, graphic organizers, internet sources, computer programs, group discussion, and contextualizing provided rich learning opportunities for individuals in a group setting. Historical thinking conceptual tools such as determining historical significance, investigating continuity and change, examining progress and decline, seeking and using evidence, and demonstrating historical empathy are extremely important procedural tools to be understood and used by teachers and students as well (Levesque, 2009).

Limitations and Contributions

A limitation of this research is that of any case study design where the findings are idiosyncratic and particular to certain individuals in limited circumstances. The TAH professional development projects differ greatly across the United States and according to the research conducted by Humphrey and colleagues (2005), the internal evaluations of

these projects have lacked the necessary rigor to measure program effectiveness. Some of this was due to the data collected having been primarily self-reported by participants, which is true of this study as well.

Another point worth noting is that the participants in this TAH grant project were generally those already interested in history. Many enjoyed and had read much historical fiction, had already acquired good background knowledge compared to other teachers in the district, and exhibited enthusiasm about learning more about history (M. Gallagher, personal communication, March, 21, 2012). This professional development project was generally reaching those teachers already interested and motivated to be good history teachers. How to reach those with less interest and background knowledge is yet to be determined.

Differing views of what constitutes effective professional development exist within every group of educators. I found it interesting that district level project directors had some negative views as to the contributions, or lack thereof, of university professors involved, and I would propose that university professors may hold yet another view. Cathy Stinson's statement about the local college and nearby university not requiring a history course for graduation is in error. It would seem a more accurate understanding and a more effective partnership could be created in the case of these educational institutions.

During my discussion with Linda Lowell, the TAH project mentor, I asked what recent research in particular was guiding the grant goals and the lesson instruction regarding historical thinking. She referred to national standards, but told me she was

unaware of recent studies and findings in the research field. This appears to be yet another area where a stronger partnership between K-12 school systems and higher education institutions could be beneficial. Sharing updated research findings and keeping each other abreast of accomplishments, as well as challenges, would seem to be the major purpose of such partnerships.

Through this research I have come to recognize the problems created by the lack of a common understanding of how history should be taught in our schools, and specifically I see the lack of an understanding of historical thinking among today's teachers to be especially disturbing. I agree with Bain (2000) that research in history education over the past decade or so has created a complicated picture of how history instruction in schools should look. Researchers urge teachers to stop using lecture and textbooks, to engage students in the "authentic" practices of historians, to immerse students in primary sources, to steer clear of presentism, to present a plethora of multiple perspectives, to probe their own positionalities, and such. Understandably, many teachers lack the ability to make sense of all of this and to create cohesive plans where an understanding of the discipline of history and a substantial knowledge of learners can merge. Engaging students in history projects and activities is not enough—the deep thought processes required for contextualizing, interpreting, and assessing evidence demand great teacher competency, skill, and confidence.

In studying historical thinking, a major concern is a common definition and understanding of the complexity of this process. TAH leaders and mentors involved in this study exhibited a somewhat limited expectation of participants to think historically.

The goal of the grant project was to increase teachers' disciplinary knowledge, which certainly includes historical thinking. It seemed, however, that at times the goal of building background knowledge and providing lesson activities trumped deep thinking and understanding.

I have drawn on the works of Wertsch, Cole, Barton, Levstik and others in suggesting that the teacher knowledge necessary to effectively understand the discipline of history as it is related to the intricacy of learning is more effectively acquired through cultural learning situations rather than individually. Through the mediating actions of mentoring, modeling—including thinking aloud, discussion, and the effective use of tools, professional development can provide teachers with opportunities to grow in competence, skill, and confidence.

In turn, the students of these teachers benefit from socially situated learning environments in the classroom. These environments provide opportunities for students to grow in the deep understanding necessary to think historically through cognitive apprenticeships and repeated opportunities for inquiry and contextualization.

A TAH grant project in Utah is making a difference in teachers' understanding of the discipline of history and of student learning. Continued interaction among school districts, grant writers, institutions of higher education, legislators, and researchers promises to improve history education in our schools and promote teachers and students who think historically.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Teacher Interview Questions

Teacher Interview Questions

(To be asked in two sessions and after the initial meeting with the participant)

1) What is involved in teaching history?
2) How often do you teach history in your classroom?
3) What is historical thinking?
4) What tools do good historical thinkers use?
5) How do you provide opportunities for your students to develop historical thinking?
6) Do you teach history using a chronological, theme-based, textbook, or another approach?
7) How often do your students read and interpret primary source documents?
8) How do you mentor your students in understanding and assessing primary source documents?
9) What tools do you provide for students in their work with primary source documents?
10) How often do your students use writing to create their own version of an historical event based upon their investigation and interpretation of sources?
11) How do you teach your students to assess bias? Please give an example.
12) What text materials do you use in teaching history to your students?
13) What percentage of your students' social studies class time is spent reading and interpreting:
    _____Textbooks
    _____Trade Books
    _____Primary Source Documents
    _____Internet Site Materials
    _____Historical Fiction
    _____Other Please specify_____
14) How do you use group work in your history instruction? How often?
15) How do you encourage discussion and deliberation among student groups?
16) What type of assessments do you use to determine your students' ability to think historically?
17) What kind of information are these assessments providing?
18) How do these assessments guide your instruction?
19) What opportunities do your students have to display and share their abilities to think historically?
20) What is your perception of your students' view of studying history?
21) How have your views of teaching history changed during your involvement with TAH?
22) How have your practices in teaching history changed as a result of you TAH involvement?

Appendix B

Teacher Ratings of Emphasis of Topics during TAH Professional Development

Teacher Ratings of Emphasis of Topics during TAH Professional Development

Please mark the five topics given the most time and emphasis during the TAH trainings
you attended.

    a. Using drills and/or memorization of facts.

    b. Using open-ended questions.

    c. Using structured cooperative learning techniques.

    d. Relating lessons to the real world.

    e. Accessing primary source materials.

    f. Teaching students to interpret materials.

    g. Having students write their interpretations
of historical events.

    h. Presenting multiple perspectives.

    i. Addressing presentism.

    j. Creating assessments.

    k. Creating a culture of learners.

    l. Teaching students to discuss and deliberate.

Appendix C

TAH Year 5 Topics

UTAAH II: Year 5:
Summer 2012

Week	DATE	COURSE
1	June 4	Thinking Historically
1	June 5	Civil War from a Slave's Perspective
1	June 6	USOE Financial Literacy
1	June 7	Differentiation in the Regular classroom
1	June 8	We the People
2	June 11	Industrial Revolution
2	June 12	Constitutional Convention
2	June 13	Bill of Rights
2	June 14	Promethean
2	June 15	Industrial Revolution
3	June 18	Industrial Revolution
3	June 19	UEN: Technology Training
3	June 20	UEN: Technology Training
3	June 21	Problem Based Learning
3	June 22	The Gilded Age
4	June 25	The Gilded Age
4	June 26	The Gilded Age
4	June 27	Foundations
4	June 28	Agriculture in the Classroom
4	June 29	Agriculture in the Classroom
5	July 16	Utah History
5	July 17	Utah History
5	July 18	National Archives
5	July 19	National Archives
5	July 20	Utah History

Appendix D

Summer Training Posttest on Historical Thinking

Post Quick Write: Thinking Historically

Name: _____   Date: _____

1. How does thinking historically increase my appreciation and perspective of history and current events?

2. Why use primary sources to understand and appreciate history and current events?

3. To what extent can multiple perspectives/sources of history and current events increase my understanding?

4. How does thinking historically prepare me and my students to be responsible and informed citizens?

Appendix E

IRB Protocol Approval

[Protis] - Protocol #4372 - Protocol Approved

☆   Mon, Mar 26, 2012 at 1:32 PM

\<noreply@usu.edu\>
To: sylvia.read@usu.edu, murray.deanne@gmail.com

Reply | Reply to all | Forward | Print | Delete | Show original

HISTORICAL THINKING THROUGH MEDIATED ACTION: EXPLORING HOW TEACHERS INFLUENCE THEIR STUDENTS' LEARNING - #4372 has been reviewed and approved. You may still view this protocol at any time by clicking here

(https://protis.usu.edu/pi/protocol/irb-4372/).

Appendix F

Comparison of Theorists' Frameworks and Research Studies

Table F1

Comparison of Theorists' Frameworks and Research Studies

Title and year	Author(s)	Conclusions
What happens when students read multiple source documents in history? (1996)	Stahl, S. A.; Hynd, C. R.; Britton, B. K.; McNish, M. M.; & Bosquet, D.	Although these students had exposure to many different texts the researchers found that this alone did not encourage the students to contextualize and engage in historical analysis.
What does it mean to read history? Fertile ground for cross-disciplinary collaborations? (2004)	VanSledright, B. A.	VanSledright's (2002) experiences as a teacher-researcher in a fifth-grade class revealed that students of this age can and do benefit from "learning to use specialized investigative processes and critical intertextual reading practices" (p. 134).
A systematic approach to improve students' historical thinking (2003).	Drake, F. D, & Brown, S. D.	In their work in classrooms with both veteran and prospective teachers, they found that using the tools of specific questioning allowed students to make sense of primary and secondary source documents and to compare and contrast positionalities.
The past, present, and future of research on history education (2003).	Epstein, T.	In her study of fifth-grade students Epstein (2003) found that the positionality of the textbook as a tool often affected students' sense of empowerment.
Primary sources in history: Breaking through the myths (2005).	Barton, K.	Barton suggested that too often teachers provide students with very complicated original source documents to read and interpret. Students may lack reading skills that would allow them to critically investigate such a document and may also lack necessary background knowledge to understand the language or content of the document.
Teaching students to think critically using multiple texts in history (1999).	Hynd, C. R.	Hynd found students having difficulty writing about multiple documents; they tended to generalize and failed to represent different perspectives presented in the texts they had read.
Learning to open up history for students: Preservice teachers' emerging pedagogical content knowledge (2011).	Monte-Sano, C.	Monte-Sano (2011) found that teachers' response to their students' historical thinking in the classroom "relies on at least four aspects of teacher knowledge: an understanding of the discipline, an ability to design lessons that represent the discipline accurately and that give students opportunities to think historically, the capacity to recognize students' disciplinary thinking, and the capacity to respond to students in the classroom" (p. 269).

(*table continues*)

Title and year	Author(s)	Conclusions
"I had always thought Lincoln was a good person, but...": A study of sixth graders' reading of Lincoln's views on Black-White relations (2008).	Wooden, J. A.	Wooden (2008) found in his case study of two sixth-grade students, students without careful guidance in using historical tools struggle to view historical events and perspectives other than from their own "frameworks of meaning" (p. 23).
Teaching the skill of contextualizing in history (2008).	Reisman, A. & Wineburg, S.	Reisman and Wineburg (2008), in their work with interpreting student essays discovered three mediated means or tools that can help students improve their contextualized thinking as they read historical documents.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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Education

Ph.D. Curriculum and Instruction. School of Teacher Education and Leadership, Utah State University, Logan, Utah. Dissertation Title: Exploring Three Fifth-Grade Teachers' Understanding of Historical Thinking: A Case Study. May 2013.

Master of Education, Educational Leadership, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Leaders' Preparation Program, Professional specialization: Leadership Theories, School Law and Finance. June, 1993.

Master of Education, Curriculum and Instruction, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah. Professional specialization: Literacy. May, 1986.

Bachelor of Arts, Elementary Education, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. May, 1976.

Research Interests

Research interests include the acquisition and transfer of historical thinking, history education, motivation to learn, adolescent literacy, and leadership theory and practice.

Relevant Experience

2010 to Present   **Instructor,** Dixie State University, St. George, Utah. Teaching the following courses:
- ELED 4400 Methods of Teaching Social Studies for Elementary Teachers
- ELED 4430 Family and Parent Involvement in Education
- ELED 3900 Differentiated Instruction for Exceptional Learners
- EDUC 3110 Educational Psychology
- ELED 4989 Capstone Project for Elementary Education Majors

2008 to 2010	**Adjunct Instructor,** Dixie State College, St. George, Utah. Teaching EDUC 1010 Introduction to Education, EDUC 3110 Educational Psychology, and ELED 4400 Social Studies Methods.
2007-2008	**Elementary Leadership Development Director,** Washington County School District. Guided district principals in professional development and teacher evaluation. Participated as a member of the Elementary Principal Leadership Team.
2006-2007	**Supervisor** of Preservice teachers for Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah.
1992-2007	**School Principal**, Arrowhead Elementary and Dixie Downs Elementary in Washington County School District (St. George, Utah); Altara Elementary in Jordan School District (Salt Lake City, Utah.)
1976-1992	**Teacher,** Grades 3-8 in various elementary schools and middle schools in Washington County School District (St. George, Utah) and in Jordan School District (Salt Lake City, Utah).

Professional Development and Service

Affiliations: National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
International Reading Association (IRA)
Utah Chapter of International Reading Association (UIRA)
Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
Utah Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (UASCD)
National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
Utah Association of Elementary School Principals (UAESP)
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)

Professional Development:

Enrollment and participation in Ph.D. program, Utah State University, Logan, Utah, 2008-2012.
Dissertation Symposium, Utah State University, Salt Lake City, Utah, April, 2010.
Professional Learning Communities, Richard DuFour, Los Angeles, California, October 2007.
Schools that Work Leadership Training, Robert Marzano, Boston, Massachusetts, July 2006.
Teacher Evaluation Training Program, NTS, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, June 2005.
Educational Research on Literacy and Math, WestEd., San Francisco, California, October 2004.
Participation as school principal in a year-long study conducted by Dr. Ray Reutzel, Utah State University, on the effects of teaching

fluency strategies on reading comprehension of third grade students at Dixie Downs Elementary, 2004-05.
Participation as school principal in a year-long study conducted by Ray Reutzel, USU, and Sue Wilson, "Comprehending Information Text: A Test of Collaborative, Cognitive Strategy Instruction to Improve Second Grade Comprehension Instruction." *Newbridge/Sundance Research Foundation/Washington Co. School District* Grant, $91,000.00. 2003-2004.

Utah Principals' Literacy Institute, USOE, Salt Lake City, 2002-2003 school year.

Service   **Dixie State College/University Committee Work**:
Honors Committee, 2012-2013, Committee Member
Hiring Committee Member for Asian History Professor, 2012.
Professional Educators Coordinator Committee, 2011-2012.
Hiring Committee for Director of Student Involvement and Leadership, 2011, Member.
Faculty Workload Committee, 2010-2011, Member.
Information Technology Governance Committee, 2010-2011, Member.
Department Service:
Course Scheduling, 2011-2012, Chair
Capstone Revision Committee, 2012-2013, Member
Principals' Survey Writing Committee, 2011, Chair
Student Service:
Advisor for Dixie College State Democrats Club, 2012-2013.
Practicum Teaching Supervisor and Mentor, 2009-2013.

Presentations

Murray, D. (November, 2007) with Ann Schneider. *Successful Relationship Qualities of Administrators and School-Level Staff Developers,* Utah State Office of Education Conference for Literacy Staff Developers, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Murray, D. (November, 2005). *Effective Staff Development.* Presented at Utah Association of Elementary School Principals' Summer Conference, Park City, Utah.

Reutzel, D. R., with Sue Wilson, Dee Murray, Ann Schneider, and Lisa Dewey, "Knowing is growing: Helping young children gain content knowledge through the application of multiple reading comprehension strategies." Micro-workshop #34. International Reading Association Conference, Orlando, FL, May 6, 2003.

Reutzel, D. R., with Mona Haslem and Dee Murray, "Developing Fluency in Classroom Settings: Practice, Practice, Practice—But Where is the Instruction? , Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association, San Antonio, TX, May 5, 2005.

Publications

Carlton-Murray, D & Cottam, N, (2007). *No More 'One is the Loneliest Number': Principal Teams at Work,* The Leader (UAESP publication), 13-15.

Carlton-Murray, D., (2001). *The XYZs of Parent Involvement in Schools,* The Leader (UAESP publication), 16-17.

Honors and Awards

Finalist for Teacher of the Year (Rising Star), Dixie State College, St. George, Utah, May, 2011.

National IRA Recognition for Reading Excellence, Dixie Downs Elementary, 2004.

State Recognition, Utah Chapter of IRA, for Reading Excellence, Dixie Downs Elementary, 2003.

Utah PTA Outstanding School Administrator 2002-03.

Washington County School District Distinguished Elementary Principal, 2004-05.

President, Washington County Association of Elementary School Principals, 2006-07.