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History Curriculum, Standards, and Assessment Policies and Politics: U.S. Experiences

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This chapter traces the long-standing debates over history education and curriculum in the U.S. public school system that took place throughout the “long twentieth century” (1890s to the 2010s), with attention to historical and historiographic contexts as well to contemporary political and scholarly circumstances. The case will be made here that over the long 20th century, a number of recurring and in some cases overlapping debates centered on profound dichotomies in the character and efficacy of history curriculum that were always representative of changing political and social contexts. These curricular dichotomies, addressed in this chapter, are the scope of study (breadth versus depth); the learning outcome of study (transferable skills versus content knowledge and/or heritage); the spatial scale of study (the nation-state, the “West,” or the world); and the disciplinarity of study (history or social studies). California, the most populous state in the United States, and one of the first states to adopt a formal history–social science curricular framework and standards, will receive special focus throughout as an example.

In this chapter a case will be made that the dichotomous curricular tensions of the long twentieth century appear to be abating, that positions are converging, and that broader—though not complete—consensus is being reached. In the vast majority of states, history is now studied as a standalone discipline at least in the secondary grades. In reaction to the expansion of accountability measures, most notably enshrined in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2001, most states had written copious history standards that still privilege a progress-and-nation-building narrative but are more inclusive of the agency of people of color, women, and nonelites than was the case of curriculum and textbooks in the past. In addition, the rapid expansion of world history instruction, and attempts to internationalize U.S. history, represents a significant, if still incomplete, shift away from the curricular prioritization of national history. Moreover, greater curricular and instructional focus on *skills* relative to *content* has surfaced with

contemporary interest in *historical thinking*. The development of what I call a historical thinking movement (Keirn & Luhr, 2012) within history education has significantly informed contemporary curricular change and bridged the false dichotomy between teaching either content or skills that has been articulated since the late 19th century. It will be argued here that the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the recently redesigned College Board Advanced Placement (AP) history curricular frameworks have made a curricular and instructional focus upon the teaching and learning of history with depth and attentiveness to the procedural knowledge of the discipline (i.e., skills) far more sustainable than in times past.

The History of History Curriculum

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the rise of the modern research university was associated with the formation of disciplinarity. The professionalization of history was marked not only by the conferring of the PhD in History but also by the creation of professional organizations such as the American Historical Association (AHA) in 1884 that helped formulate scholarly communities among those tasked with creating historical knowledge (Woolf, 2011). In the same period, education became a newly recognized discipline with the first PhD in Education granted in 1893. The reorganization of the university and its role in the creation and dissemination of knowledge pre-dated the systematic shaping and formation of curriculum and learning in schools. The top-down relationship between the diffusion of scholarly knowledge and its translation into school curriculum is best represented in the sciences but cannot be as easily characterized in terms of the discipline and curriculum of history. Although history curriculum in schools has always been connected to changes in the historiography diffused from scholarly monographs and periodicals into tertiary textbook accounts, unlike most other disciplines this trajectory of knowledge to curriculum is uniquely informed by political, cultural, and social agendas. Indeed, the creation of national historical narratives, and their dissemination through the teaching of history in schools, has been an important part of the historical process of state and nation building since the turn of the 19th century (Anderson, 2006). History curriculum in schools also carries with it the obligation of addressing and representing heritage as well as, in many cases, imparting civic knowledge, dispositions, and values with significant local variation (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Lowenthal, 1985).

Hence, while historical scholarship can be represented with some coherence across time and scholarly settings, school history curriculum in the US—where a national history curriculum has never existed and the role of the federal government in education was limited prior to the 1960s—demonstrates tremendous variability between states and local districts within them. Curricular decisions concerning history education were largely made locally, and history teachers had considerable latitude in terms of what and how they taught. This local control makes it difficult to construct a history of history curriculum. The emergence of

curricular history as a research field in colleges of education in the late 1960s, with considerable focus on the study of history curricula, has also remained largely segregated within the field of the history of education (Franklin, 2012; Reese, 2010). Moreover, history education in schools has been poorly served in the historiography of modern U.S. history where American historians paid little attention to the history of school teaching (Goldstein, 2014). Even today the expanding work by historians on historical memory, commemoration, and public history that has had much to say about the role of museums and monuments has had little to contribute to the history of history education (Bodnar, 1993; Lowenthal, 1996; Rozenzweig & Thelin, 2000).

History Curriculum in Elementary Schools

History instruction in U.S. elementary schools was limited in the first half of the 20th century. With origins in geographic and citizenship education deemed necessary for a democratic society in the 19th century, the *expanding environment* curriculum became well established by the 1930s. Popularized through a series of influential elementary textbooks by Paul Hanna, this curricular approach was based on notions that young children learned through a widening geography of experience from the local to the state to the national. The expanding environment curriculum was a social studies—as opposed to a history—curriculum and integrated multiple disciplines, including civics, economics, geography, sociology, and history (Barton, 2008; LeRiche, 1987; Schwartz, 2002). It was associated with notions that success in history and the learning and retention of facts were more appropriate for older learners in later elementary classrooms and beyond. The expanding environment curriculum contributed to the establishment of state history in elementary schools where it is taught in the fourth grade in larger states such as California, Florida, New York, and Texas (National History Education Clearinghouse, n.d.; Wade, 2002). The majority of states still have elementary curricula that vary little from the expanding environment model (Martin, Maldonado, Schneider, & Smith, 2011).

The larger contemporary debate about history education in elementary schools has not been about what is taught but rather if history and social studies should be taught at all. Since 2001 the focus on reading and math accountability measures inspired by NCLB has led to a significant decline in instructional time devoted to history and social studies in elementary schools within the enacted curriculum. Despite little change in their formal curriculum, teachers are pressured to focus upon reading and language arts to increase test scores, and history and social studies are marginalized as a consequence (VanSledright, Reddy, & Walsh, 2012; Wills, 2007). Districts that provide grade-specific curricular reading supports for history and social studies have not witnessed the significant decline in instructional time found nationally (Boyle-Baise, Hsu, Johnson, Serriere, & Stewart, 2008; Hutton & Burstein, 2008). This has also been the case where elementary teachers have more instructional autonomy and demonstrate strong dispositions and content knowledge to teach history and social studies (Fitchett, Heafner, & Lambert, 2014; Lintner, 2006).

History in Secondary Schools Prior to 1980

By the end of World War I, all states had imposed compulsory secondary schooling, and history had established itself as a core discipline in local curricula. In 1893 the National Education Association (NEA) formed the Committee of Ten to suggest a high school curriculum for social education. Dominated by academic historians, the Committee of Ten essentially promoted a form of history teaching in schools that was national and patriotic and that mirrored the teaching of history in universities, with a focus on the reading of foundational documents and texts in U.S. history. In 1899 the AHA, at the urging of the NEA, created a Committee of Seven that was influential in promoting a four-year secondary history curriculum that abandoned a focus on reading primary sources and foundation documents and argued for a narrative- and textbook-driven approach to history focused upon a story well told. This curriculum was highly influential in the first two decades of the 20th century (Evans, 2004). The primacy of history in American social education in the early 20th century was a result of the early professionalization of the discipline of history relative to others in the social sciences and humanities, and also reflected the interest of a generation of historians who often had been schooled within liberal education curricula that predominated in the 19th century and where history was perceived as a core and “civilizing” subject.

The primacy of history in U.S. secondary schools was challenged in the inter-war years by advocates for a social studies curriculum in which history was one of a number of subjects taught that included geography, civics, sociology, and eventually economics. Social studies advocates came from a variety of social and political constituencies but generally were associated with the Progressives, who painted history as an inherently conservative discipline that focused on the past as opposed to training citizens to solve the problems of the present. By the 1920s, a new generation of American historians was much more interested in research than in the role of history in schools. In 1921 the AHA supported the creation of the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) as a professional body for the teaching of history and social studies in schools (Novick, 1988; Townshend, 2013; Watras, 2002). Soon, however, NCSS proved to be an important organization for the promotion of a social studies curriculum at the expense of one centered upon history. From the late 1920s through the 1970s, most states and local school districts adopted a secondary social studies curriculum rather than one centered upon history. This trajectory was accelerated during the turbulent 1930s and again in the 1960s, when a present issues-oriented and problem-solving curriculum was attractive, and diminished somewhat by agendas to promote patriotic history instruction in the 1940s and a focus on the discrete study of different social science disciplines in the 1950s (Evans, 2004; Thornton, 2005).

The teaching of history—especially U.S. history—in secondary schools did not disappear with the prevalence of a social studies curriculum in the middle of the 20th century. Indeed, the so-called “culture wars” concerning the representation of U.S. history had their origins in the 1920s between Anglo-Nativists and European immigrants and their descendants, who promoted a more culturally plural form of patriotism and Americanization. Although fluctuating in the intensity of public interest, these culture wars have continued virtually unabated to

today's controversies concerning, for example, the recent Texas state history standards, the redesign of the AP U.S. History (APUS) and European courses, and revisions to the California History–Social Science Framework (Erekson, 2012; Gambino, 2015; Medina, 2016; White, 2014; Zubrzycki, 2016). Prior to the creation of state curricular frameworks and standards in the late 20th century, much of the controversy about *whose history* should be taught was embedded in conflicts over the selection of U.S. history textbooks. By 1930 the majority of state legislatures had passed measures to regulate and systematize the adoption of history textbooks. This regulatory intervention of the history taught in public schools was an important consequence of the culture wars in 1920s (Zimmerman, 2002).

Mirroring the politics of the New Deal, U.S. history textbooks in the 1930s were preoccupied with issues of class (and immigrants) as opposed to race (Kliebard, 1995). In Northern states, some African Americans entered into history textbooks and curriculum, but in Southern states neo-Confederate history textbooks were published for segregated White schools. In Southern Black schools, textbooks for a Black history curriculum were developed and published such that completely distinct histories were taught in racially segregated schools (Meier & Rudwick, 1986). These distinct history textbooks and curricula continued through the 1940s and were reinforced by U.S. conservatism during the early Cold War era, when anxiety about collectivism and communism surfaced more general support for Southern White textbooks that were perceived to support free enterprise and patriotism whilst rejecting racial integration (Zimmerman, 2002).

The 1960s and 1970s were important turning points in the development of history curriculum in the US. The preoccupation with contemporary issues, such as the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, the Cold War, and the economic and social transformations engendered by challenges to U.S. industrial supremacy, meant that the majority of states maintained social studies as opposed to history-centered curriculum. The *new social studies* of the 1960s and 1970s was characterized by an issues-orientated curriculum and a focus upon discipline-based social scientific study (Byford & Russell, 2007; Evans, 2004). However, U.S. history remained a core subject in all states. Inspired by the Civil Rights Movement and the Immigration Act of 1965, histories of people of color were also integrated into most textbooks and curriculum. By the 1970s, textbooks had expanded in size to include multicultural heroes of U.S. history; these heroes were, however, incorporated into textbooks and curriculum in ways that reinforced, as opposed to challenged, a progress narrative of U.S. history, nation building, and liberty. Although Black history courses increasingly lost ground to integrated U.S. history courses in public schools, the representation of minorities—and gender issues—in textbooks and curriculum was still encapsulated in separate sections or lessons and detached from the main narrative of American historical development (Zimmerman, 2002).

Creating History Standards in the 1980s and 1990s

While history, particularly U.S. history, had never lost its distinctive place in the school curriculum, it was supported by the growth of the conservative political movement and cemented its place as a stand-alone secondary school subject in

the 1980s—a trend that has continued to the present. Led by educators such as Diane Ravitch, and states such as California that began to create statewide curriculum in response to perceived failures in student performance and concerns about curricular coherence for large numbers of students who moved between school districts, history made significant inroads in the secondary curriculum at the expense of social studies. History-centered curricular reform was also associated with the *back-to-basics* movements that periodically became influential in the late 20th century. The 1987 Bradley Commission on History in the Schools—which became the National Council for History Education—made the case for teaching history through narratives and themes as a way to engage students in the study of the history and heritage of the past and to introduce concepts from the social sciences, such as economics and geography, through a history-centered curriculum (Barton, 2012; Evans, 2004, 2015). The publication and implementation of the *History–Social Science Framework for California Public Schools* in 1988 was influential in that other states created similar history-centered curricula, and educational publishers created textbooks aligned with the California framework. Based on this framework, in 1998 California adopted the *History–Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools* (Fogo, 2011, 2015; LaSpina, 2009).

Anxieties about the global competitiveness of the US led to the publication of the influential *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* by the Reagan Administration in 1983. Followed by federal educational program goals such as *America 2000* in 1991 and *Goals 2000* in 1994, the 1990s witnessed a funded cooperative effort of national and state governments to create curricular standards and accountability measures to evaluate student learning (Evans, 2015). In the 1990s the federal government recognized history, geography, and civics as distinct subjects and provided funding to create national standards for each to serve as guidelines for the states. Academic professional organizations published national standards for geography (1994) and civics (1995) with little public fanfare; however, those created for history—and in particular those for U.S. history—reignited culture wars over whose history was to be represented in schools. Representing the currency of historical scholarship on race, gender, culture, and class, the national U.S. history standards inspired public criticism from conservatives for failing to focus upon the core nation-building developments, achievements, and canonical figures of U.S. history. In 1995 the national history standards were defeated in the U.S. Senate—ending not only the creation of national standards in history but also diminishing political enthusiasm for creating a national curriculum in general (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 2000; Symcox, 2002).

Despite the defeat of the national history standards, the movement to create and revise state-level history–social science curriculum and standards has continued unabated to the present. This trend was further exacerbated by the passage of NCLB that tied federal educational spending to state testing of articulated learning standards (Evans, 2015). Although only 10 states specify history in the title of their standards documents, the majority of courses taught in history–social science in U.S. public schools are now in history, and half the states require a minimum of four years of state and U.S. history from fourth grade onwards

(Martin, Maldonado, Schneider, & Smith, 2011). Reflecting a move from a general social studies requirement to one centered on history or individual disciplines, approximately 40 states now mandate U.S. history as a graduation requirement—a figure that has risen over the past decade. Although in some decline due to budgetary restraints and the implementation of the CCSS, currently about half of all states engage in mandated testing of history in secondary schools (Martin et al., 2011). Demonstrating this trend in the growth of secondary history instruction, the expansion of test-takers in APUS has more than doubled since 2000. In the early 21st century, the teaching of U.S. history in schools also received federal support of close to \$200 million dollars in Teaching American History grants that funded professional development for teachers (Ragland, 2015; Ragland & Woestman, 2009). Given the expansion of history as a mandated course of study, coupled with demographic expansion, the number of U.S. secondary students taking history courses has increased markedly since the 1980s (Barton, 2012).

In terms of content, when examining the variety of state curriculums created at the turn of the 21st century, U.S. history has changed only minimally since the “integration” of textbooks and curriculum in the 1970s and continues to support what VanSledright refers to as the “collective-memory project” with a nationalist orientation that renders U.S. history as an exceptional and successful democratic project (VanSledright, 2011). The focus of school instruction remains on the political history of the nation-state, although the historical representation and contributions of women and peoples of color has expanded, and the progress narrative of U.S. history and nation building remains unchallenged in most state curricula (Fischer, 2014; Fogo, 2015; Stern & Stern, 2011). The impact of this curriculum, now established for half a century, is reflected in a recent survey of public attitudes about “famous Americans” (who were not presidents) where the four most popular entries were Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, and Susan B. Anthony (Wineburg & Monte-Sano, 2008). As is the case of the school teaching of national history in most countries, the promotion of national identity and heritage and a *memory-history* (Lévesque, 2008) remains dominant in the US. To some extent this curricular focus has been accelerated not only by political conservatism but also as a consequence of the expansion of history within curricula relative to social studies, whereby the obligations associated with a citizenship agenda have been increasingly foisted upon the teaching of U.S. history. Although the progress narrative remains a dominant paradigm in the school teaching of U.S. history, the NCLB focus on the testing of discrete factual knowledge has meant that few students remember this narrative on entry into university (Calder, 2013).

Global Perspectives in the History Curriculum

One major recent shift in the history curriculum of what is taught in U.S. schools is the rapid expansion of the teaching of world history. World history is a relatively new field within the discipline of history. From its genesis, and unlike any other field of history, writing and research in world history developed in synergy

with the teaching of the subject. In the 1950s William McNeill questioned the utility of teaching Western civilization to undergraduates at the University of Chicago at a time when the decisions of U.S. citizens had global significance within the context and tension of the Cold War. The world history course that McNeill initiated is now firmly established within the university general education curriculum around the US (Allardyce, 1982, 1990; Geyer & Bright, 1995).

McNeill's (1963) *The Rise of the West* magisterially examined and traced the history of the West in global context and in doing so represented a scale of historical investigation that went beyond a focus on the nation, region, or civilization. Into the 1980s, most of the writing and research associated with world history was still preoccupied with addressing the origins, timing, and consequences of the rise of the West. Hence when California was initiating a state K-12 curricular framework that was unique not only in requiring world history but also in requiring it at three grade levels, the representation within the curriculum was to some extent one of "the West in the world" and deviated only slightly from the accepted narrative of Western civilization courses. Some teachers and scholars, however, advocated against a Eurocentric version of world history. Inspired by multiculturalism and the recognition that a Eurocentric world history did not align with the increasingly diverse heritage of students in California public schools, there was considerable energy to construct a more inclusive world history curriculum that represented more of the heritage, culture, and history of non-Western societies (Dunn, 2006; Fogo, 2015; LaSpina, 2009). When the California History–Social Science Framework was implemented in 1988, the California state curriculum added important "non-Western" content in separate units of world history instruction, although the West remained at the center of the study of global development from ancient to modern times (Dunn, 2000).

The scholarship of world history has been radically transformed over the past two decades as historians responded to the contemporary intensification of globalization by investigating and surfacing the *connectedness* of historical development across large spaces and within premodern times. As a result, the integration of the contemporary world is not represented as a new and unique phenomenon but instead as one with origins and antecedents throughout world history. Moreover, in response to the resurgence of China at the end of the 20th century, world historians also resituated the significance of the West in world history relative to that of the East in the world historical narrative (Bentley, 1997; Gunder Frank, 1998; Marks, 2006; Subrahmanyam, 1997). Regarded as the *new world history*, this approach also advocated the teaching of world history with attentiveness to large spatial scales that transcend the nation, region, and civilization and enhanced by comparative forms of historical analysis and inquiry (Bain, 1997; Bentley, 2002; Dunn, 2010; Parthasarathi, 2016; Weisner-Hanks, 2007).

Since the introduction of the California state framework in 1988, the implementation of world history in state curriculums has been rapid. As of 2010, 44 states and the District of Columbia have world history curriculum, and like in California, 25 states begin the teaching of world history at Grade 6. Twenty-three states require world history for high school graduation (Martin et al., 2011). Well over 75% of U.S. students take a secondary course in world history—an increase of more than 125% since the 1980s (Bain, 2012). The Western civilization course

virtually disappeared from high schools with the creation of state history–social science standards and curriculum; however, scholars have shown that the curriculum of world history in virtually all states fails to be framed within the global perspective of current world historical scholarship (Bain, 2012; Bain & Shreiner, 2006; Marino & Bolgatz, 2010). In the few recent cases where the content of state world history curriculum has been modified, there are demonstrated attempts to represent world history from a global and comparative perspective. For example, the proposed Michigan Social Studies Standards pay considerable curricular attention to global encounters and interactions, and the recently adopted California History–Social Science Framework attempts to reorganize instruction with a relative focus upon concrete periods of time as opposed to disconnected regional and civilizational spaces, and in doing so both resituates the history of Asia relative to the West and is attentive to larger spatial frames, such as Afroeurasia and maritime basins (California Department of Education, 2016; Michigan Department of Education, 2015).

The growth of world history also can be seen in the development of curriculum projects. World History for Us All (WHFUA) has been developed since 2001 as an open-sourced online world history curriculum (with lessons and materials) that presents a unified chronology and examines the history of human societies through the lens of connectivity and integration. Some individual teachers and school districts have adopted WHFUA as an instructional tool to provide an important global curricular corrective to their state standards that they feel are Eurocentric or present world history in regionally aggregate terms (Dunn, 2007; National Center for History in the Schools, 2015). Inspired by the scholarship of historian David Christian and supported by Bill Gates, the Big History Project is another increasingly popular open-sourced online curriculum that examines human history within the larger and interdisciplinary scales of the universe, galaxies, and the earth (Big History Project, n.d.; Christian, 2011). The Big History curriculum has been adopted by close to 1,500 local teachers in a variety of districts, but the extent to which it is, or should be, replacing state-established history curriculum is debated (Sorkin, 2014).

In terms of the paucity of world history curriculum that is framed from a global perspective, one significant exception is the AP World History (APWH) course that was created and first taught in 2001–2002. APWH has been the fastest growing course ever offered by the College Board, with over 286,000 students having taken the exam in May 2016. Prominent world historians and history educators, such as Jerry Bentley, Peter Stearns, and Robert Bain, were directly involved in the creation and design of the initial curriculum to make it global and comparative in approach (Bain & Shreiner, 2005). The redesigned APWH course in 2016–2017 maintains a curricular focus upon global perspective, and the content coheres around a number of substantive concepts associated with the current scholarship of world history attentive to the significance of trade networks, human migration, state building, and transport and communication technologies in connecting and influencing human historical development across time and space (College Board, 2016).

This “global turn” in historical scholarship at the turn of the 21st century also has informed the study of U.S. history where scholars are increasingly focused on

the “US in the World” (Bender, 2006; Guarneri, 2007; Tyrell, 2007). However, beyond the introduction of a new theme, “America in the World,” in the redesigned APUS course in 2014, this scholarship so far has had relatively little impact upon state U.S. history curricula (College Board, 2014; Reichard & Dickson, 2008; Symcox, 2009). For example, the recent revisions to the California State History–Social Science Framework (California Department of Education, 2016) for grades 8 and 10 provide little if any deliberate curricular attention to an examination of U.S. history in global context. In sum, although history teaching has been revived in one shape or another in the US, the history curriculum is still dominated by a commitment to national history and a version of world history for most students that critics see as largely Western and Eurocentric and still well removed from the historiographic and scholarly trends in the discipline.

Skills, Depth of Study, and Historical Thinking

Debates about the study of history in public schools in the long twentieth century have not been just about the content of the curriculum and the relationship of the discipline of history to the social sciences. There also have been recurrent debates about the development of student “skills” relative to factual content knowledge in the teaching of history that were integrated with similarly dichotomous representations of teaching history with attention to breadth and coverage or in-depth study. As noted above, prior to World War I there was considerable curricular focus on the study of U.S. history through a canon of foundational primary sources. Similarly, during the 1960s and early 1970s under the aegis of the New Social Studies movement, there was considerable advocacy for teaching history through case studies with primary sources in the belief that students learned best when engaged with questions about historical evidence. Between 1960 and 1972 the Amherst Project developed over 70 teaching units on specific cases and topics for the study of U.S. history with primary sources and provided extensive workshops for teachers to write and teach these lessons without the use of the textbook (Brown, 1996; Cuban, 2016; VanSledright, 2011; Weber, 2014). In 1973 the Document Based Question (DBQ) was first introduced and enshrined within the APUS examination (Blackey, 2002; Rothschild, 1999). Accordingly, in the 1960s and early 1970s there was also significant advocacy for the *history laboratory* as opposed to the *history classroom* as the appropriate space of history teaching and learning (Sipress & Voelker, 2011). However, periodic promotion for the study of history through primary sources and in-depth study throughout most of the 20th century was trumped by the perceived need for breadth and coverage of content and the importance of promoting patriotism and a sense of a shared heritage through the history curriculum, all of which were associated with textbook-driven instruction (Sipress & Voelker, 2009).

The recent formation of a historical thinking movement that is now global in scope has had a much more extensive and sustainable impact on history teaching and curriculum in the US than previous drives to promote teaching with primary sources. The larger contexts for understanding the historical thinking movement relate to the cognitive revolution that surfaced the discipline-specific nature of

the construction, dissemination, and learning of knowledge as well as scholarly shifts in the humanities-focused inquiry from “what we know” to “how we know” (Wineburg, 2001). During this time, U.S. history educators became increasingly interested in the scholarship spawned by the 1972 Schools History Project (SHP) in Leeds, England, where teacher-practitioners and researchers began to investigate the impact of organizing instruction around disciplinary conceptual structures such as continuity, change, and causation. The instructional focus of the SHP on the disciplinary and procedural knowledge of history, as opposed to factual content knowledge, was incorporated within the National History Curriculum of England and Wales when initiated in 1990 (Cannadine, Keating, & Sheldon, 2012; Dawson, 1989).

By the 1990s, the scholarship of the historical thinking movement was distinctly Anglo-American, and the focus upon disciplinary thinking was aligned not only with the expansion of the study of history as a standalone subject but also with the growing disciplinarity that had been made possible by larger and more specialized numbers of teacher-education faculty within universities tasked with preparing teachers to meet the expanding enrollments in public schools after World War II (Cannadine et al., 2012; Labaree, 2004; Shulman, 1986). The publication of Sam Wineburg’s *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts* (2001) was an important marker in the development of the historical thinking movement. He argued that when students engaged with primary sources they read them informationally for evidence without considering them historically or *sourcing* them with consideration of historical context, audience, and purpose. Wineburg’s work also had implications for national discourses about literacy, as historical thinking was grounded in ways of reading that are also distinctly historical, and the distinction between historical thinking and literacy has become increasingly blurred and comingled (Downey & Long, 2016; Lee, 2011; Nokes, 2013; Schleppegrell, 2011; Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2013). Indeed, historical thinking currently dominates the scholarly literature in historical education in Britain and North America, is generating a burgeoning body of new research on an increasingly global scale, and has established what may be a canon of authoritative studies dedicated to the subject (Ashby, 2005; Bain, 2000, 2005; Barton & Levstik, 2004; Lee, 2005; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 1994; VanSledright, 2002; Wineburg, 2001).

However, it must be asked, what has been the impact of the historical thinking movement upon curriculum and teaching practice? For one, it has led to the proliferation of various schemes of history standards that specifically address student procedural as well as—or rather than—content knowledge (Andrews & Burke, 2007; Lee, 2005; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas & Morton, 2013). In the US, the National History Standards articulated five specific historical thinking standards (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996). The newly redesigned AP history course frameworks—currently the only national history curriculums in the US—contain nine specific historical thinking skills that frame the learning objectives in the course (College Board, 2014, 2016). The recent 2013 publication of the *College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for State Social Studies Standards* promotes four specific thinking standards to frame inquiry in history. Adopted by the NCSS, the *C3 Framework* aims to guide states and districts in the

modification of their history and social science standards with explicit connection to the CCSS (National Council for Social Studies, 2013). Currently about 10 states, including Connecticut and New York, have modified—or are in the process of modifying—their state standards informed by the *C3 Framework*, and many of these states have been attracted to the *C3 Framework* due to its civics agenda rather than its articulated historical thinking skills (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning, 2015). However, other states, such as California, have adopted CCSS but have not modified their history curriculum to align with *C3 Framework*. The new California History–Social Science Framework does not articulate any specific historical thinking skills and in fact only provides a few pages dedicated to teaching with historical problems within a 985-page curricular document (California Department of Education, 2016). The case of California is extreme, as most states have some articulation of specific historical skills in their curriculum, although standards and assessments (where specified and implemented) tend to focus on content rather than on procedural knowledge.

Historical thinking has had a significant impact on instructional materials—especially in building upon earlier advocacy for teaching with primary sources but doing so with greater concern for the historical and contextual reading of the documents and their reliability as evidence. For example, the 2014 redesigned AP history exams’ evaluation of the DBQ (which had been unchanged since 1973) now requires significantly more sourcing analysis relative to the “flat” use of the documents as evidence in response to a prompt. No longer do students simply group documents but instead must put them in conversation with each other through corroboration, qualification, or contradiction. There has been a proliferation of teacher resources made available for teaching history with primary sources that provide a variety of downloadable templates, cognitive tools, and scaffolds to promote student sourcing of primary materials. For example, the Library of Congress and the National Archives provide these types of sources and resources electronically. The Teaching American History grant program also promoted significant in-service professional development for teachers in using primary sources to promote historical thinking (Westhoff, 2009). The Stanford History Education Group’s (SHEG) *Reading Like a Historian* open-sourced curriculum currently has 110 inquiry-based lessons that focus on sourcing analysis of primary sources, with the majority of these lessons being in U.S. history (Stanford History Education Group, n.d.). Some districts, such as the Los Angeles Unified School District, have adopted the SHEG curriculum as a means to promote historical thinking rather than the factual approaches to learning associated with textbook instruction (Reisman, 2012; Watanabe, 2014).

Much of the research on historical thinking has revolved around the use of primary sources in history teaching and learning. Almost all of this research, and probably the majority of teacher practice in historical thinking, involves the teaching of national history (Gibson, 2014; Reisman, 2011). Working with primary sources requires the situating of documents in concrete and often local historical contexts, and to do so often narrows the scope and depth of instruction and makes it easier to comply with content curricular requirements within the narrower spatial and temporal scales of U.S. history compared with those of world history (Bain, 2012). Moreover, most of the curricular materials to support

the use of primary sources in world history align with isolated and episodic topics within world history, often associated with Europe as opposed to global historical developments (see for example Stanford History Education Group, n.d.). In doing so, these lessons and sources reflect the problems with the fragmented and/or Eurocentric forms of world history that predominate in state curricula. Barker and O'Brien's (2014) recent quantitative study of state standards also supports the notion that primary sources are far more likely to be named in state U.S. history standards. In addition, the primary sources that are identified in state world history standards are drawn almost entirely from topics in Western history (Barker & O'Brien, 2014).

Teaching world history from a global perspective requires maintaining a consistent focus upon large-scale connections and consequences of political, economic, and cultural interactions that cohere within a concrete periodization. To address this through the use of teaching with primary sources requires an astute instructional shift from connecting and squaring the local depth of study to the breadth of the global. This is one of the greatest challenges in teaching world history (Bain, 2012). There are other historical thinking skills beyond that of sourcing that facilitate student understanding of world history on a global scale. Since its beginning in 2001–2002, the APWH curriculum has required students to engage in historical thinking associated with comparison and continuity and change. These forms of historical thinking promote learning that recognizes the significance of larger historical contexts and forms of connectivity and causation that cannot be addressed in narrower instructional depths of study associated with primary source analysis. Beginning in 2014, all the newly redesigned AP history courses (in European, U.S., and World History) have historical thinking standards such as causation, continuity and change, and comparison that both frame instruction on larger spatial and temporal scales and at the same promote a multiplicity of modes of historical thinking beyond sourcing and evidencing documents. In addition, students must now also grapple with the thinking skills of historical interpretation and synthesis that are associated with the analysis of secondary historical materials. In this regard, historical thinking is better aligned with actual disciplinary practices as historians analyze primary evidence not only in historical contexts but within historiographic ones as well (College Board, 2014, 2016; Neumann, 2015).

Beyond limits associated with the depth and breadth of instructional study, there are many other challenges associated with the curricular expansion of historical thinking. Teaching historical thinking requires a form of teacher subject matter preparation that is grounded in the methodological and epistemological conventions of the discipline of history. State certification policies more often than not do not require a history degree to teach history in a secondary classroom. Assessments of subject matter competency in teacher certification exams, such as the Praxis or California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET), evaluate a candidate's factual content knowledge as opposed to their procedural knowledge of history. To promote historical thinking, preservice programs require stronger institutional connections between departments of history and teacher education. However, in many states, such as California, the institutional distances between the subject matter and pedagogic preparation of preservices are in fact widening (Hutton, Keirn, & Neumann, 2012; Keirn & Luhr, 2012).

Assessment

During the last quarter of the 20th century, history education did not escape the development, expansion, and centralization of accountability measures associated with the political climate that led ultimately to the passage of NCLB in 2001. In the 1980s the establishment of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) created national tests of learning that included the assessment of U.S. history. Beginning in the 1990s, and aligned to the proliferation of state standards, just over half of all states created a variety of testing measures that were applied to learning in U.S., and to a lesser extent world and state, history. With some exceptions, as in the case of the New York Regents Examination, this system of history assessment was mainly implemented through forms of multiple-choice questioning (relative to the use of constructed response items) that assessed student recall of discrete factual historical content knowledge (Martin et al., 2011). More often than not, these forms of assessment were aligned with forms and domains of historical knowledge associated with progress narratives and a collectively memorialized nation-building story that was representative of the conservatism associated with the revival of history education in the 1980s (Grant, 2006; VanSledright, 2008). Students generally have performed poorly on these types of examinations (VanSledright, 1995). Some educators have claimed that teaching with a focus upon historical thinking and substantive concepts supports learners in retaining and remember the content knowledge of history (Lee, 2005; Lesh, 2011). However, until very recently, the move to make student historical thinking and procedural knowledge the focus of assessment has made little headway.

Perhaps the most significant reason why history curricula and standards have focused on the content as opposed to the procedural knowledge of history is because the latter has proven difficult to assess within reasonable parameters of inter-rater reliability, cost, and expense. The assessment of the factual sedimentary knowledge of history through multiple-choice items is relatively cheap. However, in many states the high cost of implementing Common Core language arts and math assessments through consortiums such as Smarter Balance (SBAC) and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), and federal mandates to test science, have crowded out spending on state testing of other subjects, which contributes to the curricular marginality of history (van Hover, Hicks, Stoddard, & Lisanti, 2012). Some states, such as California, no longer test history (California Department of Education, 2014). Many states, including Connecticut and Colorado, are taking advantage of provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) passed at the end of 2015 to shift middle and high school state testing measures to college-entry exams such as PSAT and SAT—neither of which assess history (Gewertz, 2016).

The high cost of assessing constructed responses, coupled with the marginalization of the state testing of history in general, has been a significant barrier to the furthering of the curricular advancement of historical thinking. I find this unfortunate because there have been many very recent innovations in history assessment that open the opportunity to assess historical thinking in ways that are both reliable and relatively cost effective (Breakstone, 2014; Ercikan & Seixas,

2015; VanSledright, 2014). Many of these new instruments also serve as important formative assessments and pedagogic tools for enhancing historical thinking. For example, History Assessments of Thinking (HATS), produced and open-sourced by SHEG, are useful measures for assessing student sourcing skills (Breakstone, Smith, & Wineburg, 2013; Stanford History Education Group, n.d.).

The new redesigned AP history examinations have created a mixed constitution of new assessment items that target nine distinct historical thinking skills across a variety of content themes, periods, and domains. The new Short Answer Questions contain sets of three short spiraled writing prompts that relate to a single topic or text, visual, or item of data and that address multiple historical thinking skills, such as historical interpretation, periodization, causation, and sourcing. The new Long Essay Question and format for the DBQ address and evaluate a specific historical thinking skill, and the scoring guides require that students engage in appropriate historical analysis (e.g., describing and explaining both similarity and difference in a comparative question) and do so with appropriate factual evidence, historical context, and attentiveness to sourcing with primary documents. The new multiple-choice items on the redesigned AP exam also evaluate historical thinking by assessing a student's ability both to interpret a stimulus and to apply that interpretation to the content and conceptual knowledge that is associated with the question (College Board, 2014, 2016; Charap, 2015). A recent study of piloted forms of these new assessment items demonstrated that they measure and elicit complex historical thinking with cognitive validity as opposed to surfacing test-wiseness, literacy, and historical content knowledge that has hampered efforts to measure historical thinking in the past (Ercikan, Seixas, Kaliski, & Huff, 2016; Reich, 2009). Indeed, many of the multiple-choice items on the current NAEP exam for history also engage students in the interpretation of primary sources of stimulus within the context of demonstrating content knowledge (Lazer, 2015). These assessments demonstrate that the traditional dichotomy between assessing content or skill is a false one (Counsell, 2000).

Conclusion

It has been argued here that the revival of history in the 1980s as an independent course of study in secondary schools brought with it a reassertion of the survey model that privileged breadth in the scope of instruction as well as the continued promotion of national progress and nation-building narratives in U.S. history and a tendency toward Eurocentric representations of world history. However, the promotion of historical thinking in history education provides an opportunity for history students to ponder how these narratives (and curricula) were constructed and to what purpose. Indeed, one of the strongest points of advocacy for historical thinking is that it surfaces critical approaches to the reception of information in what is an "information age" (Lévesque, 2008).

While historical thinking has made limited headway in state history and social studies curricula, I conclude that it nonetheless has provided an opportunity to end the cycles of recurring debates in history curriculum and education that

were common across the long twentieth century. The scholarship concerning the teaching, learning, and assessment of historical thinking has shown that the distinction between teaching historical content and teaching skills is a false one. So too is the perceived dichotomy that teaching in-depth is antithetical to teaching and covering the breadth identified in the curriculum. The new AP history frameworks have provided a model that squares the content of a survey course with historical thinking skills (such as continuity and change over time and comparison) that frame large temporal and spatial scopes of study, while also providing illustrative examples with narrow scopes of instruction that provide teachers and learners opportunities to engage in sourcing and contextual analysis. Furthermore, the introduction of historiographic analysis—identified in the AP framework as historical interpretation—provides students the opportunities to investigate and understand the disciplinary means by which all historical knowledge is constructed. Moreover, the innovative mixed constitution of assessments to be found in the redesigned AP history exams also provides an inspiration for assessing historical skills, and to do so at scale, and thus diminishing one of the principal impediments to expanding historical thinking within state curricula.

Teaching historical thinking can provide students with abilities to critically evaluate evidence, information, and arguments and, I argue, contribute to the development of skills and dispositions aligned with active civics agendas that converge the teaching of history and the teaching of social studies. These skills and dispositions need not be limited to AP courses. These same potentially transferable skills from history instruction are in alignment not only with the CCSS but also with the recently published College and Career-Ready Standards (CCRS) and Assessments put forward by the U.S. Department of Education as part of the ESSA rollout. It would seem that CCSS and CCRS, in conjunction with the model provided by the redesigned AP history courses, provide an opportunity for historical thinking to have a larger and sustainable curricular presence in the future in the US.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Linda Symcox for advice on this chapter, as well as to the audience for an earlier version of this manuscript presented at the American Educational Research Association Conference in Washington, DC, in April 2016.

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