Interstitial Encounters With Curriculum: Attending to the Relationship between Teachers' Subjectivities and the Language of Social Studies

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This dissertation offers an account of a participatory action research study exploring the efforts of four male social studies teacher participants, and a researcher in social studies curriculum, to attend to their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, and how they understood these as interwoven with and reflected in the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy.

Teachers' have complex relationships with the language of official curriculum and pedagogy. Those connections to the words, notions, and terms expressing the vision of curriculum designers, and the expressions of teachers, are politicized, context-situated, historicized, geographically and temporally located, and perspective-laden (Banks, 2006; Pinar, 2004; Smith, 1999a, 2006). The multifaceted character of individual teachers, as members of communities, as human beings with life experiences, as speakers of languages negotiating understanding, as residents and citizens of national, provincial and local polities, as believers, or not, in religions and the spiritual, and as story-tellers of past and present to students, is always at play in their pedagogies.

However, according to Carson (2005), Pinar (2004), and Aoki (1983/2005), teachers are often imagined by policy makers as little more than program and policy implementers, and that formal curriculum could be designed to overcome or bypass the idiosyncrasies, biases, and the identifications of teachers. Such an instrumentalist vision of teachers as educational workers diminishes their humanity, denying a role for teachers' identifications, experiences, backgrounds, understandings, and dispositions, in relation to curricular interpretation and pedagogy and further allows little space for modeling

thoughtful and deliberate democratic-mindedness and engagement in the classroom (Carson, 2005; Dewey, 1916).

Over the course of data collection, drawing on philosophical hermeneutics to engage with the language of Alberta's Program of Studies for Social Studies, participants began to attend to the historicity of words and language of official curriculum and their pedagogies and how this might be understood, especially how the idiosyncrasies of language shapes interpretive possibilities (Feldman, 1999; Gadamer, 1975/1989). They set out to find, for themselves and in themselves, meaning in the philosophy, rationale, outcomes, and benchmarks, of the official curriculum document they worked with, exploring how the exercise pedagogic autonomy, interpretive latitude, and collaborative capacities, contributed to the interweaving of the participants with the official curriculum and with pedagogy.

The study approach blended participatory action research and philosophical hermeneutics, allowing participants to attend to facets of who they understood themselves to be, in order to begin to theorize about their teaching, their understandings of the language, and their interpretations of the intentions of the official curriculum (Feldman, 1999; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). In the course of this study, participants began to appreciate that teaching social studies teaching occurred at the nexus of teachers' identifications, backgrounds and experiences, the constitution of teachers as historicized and politicized subjects who share citizenship in the same nation state and the overt and hidden curricula of public education.

The principal insight emerging from the study was that not enough conversation takes place among teachers about the language of official curriculum. Dialogues that

occurred among teacher participants in this study, in the absence of the external curriculum researcher, tended to focus on pedagogic issues, such as assignment ideas, and assessments, and on broader social and political issues. Although the official curriculum was present in those conversations, attention was given to appreciating its broader sensibilities, rather than its specific language.

Preface

This dissertation is an original work by Laurence Michael Abbott. The research project, of which this dissertation is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name “Interstitial encounters with curriculum: Studying the relationship between teachers’ personal subjectivities and democratic citizenship pedagogies,” No. Pro00011164, September 28, 2010.

Dedication

For Brenda and Hannah

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful for the support and feedback of my supervisor, Dr. George Richardson, and my supervisory committee members, Dr. Kent den Heyer and Dr. Carla Peck. I have found each of them to be wonderful, thoughtful, and caring teachers and mentors. I wish to thank Dr. Penney Clark and Dr. James Parsons for their roles as arms-length examiners. I wish to acknowledge the role of Dr. David G. Smith, as well. His teaching and scholarship on philosophical hermeneutics and the role of conversation inhabited my research and writing. I am grateful, too, to the four teachers who participated in this study. The research would not have been possible without them.

I am very appreciative to many of my colleagues who dedicated a lot of their time to conversations about research and scholarship in curriculum and pedagogy.

I wish to acknowledge the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for granting me a Doctoral Fellowship, and I wish to express my gratitude to the Department of Secondary Education for numerous opportunities to teach undergraduate courses in social studies curriculum and pedagogy.

Finally, and importantly, I wish to thank the support of my wife, Brenda, and my daughter, Hannah, and my family and friends. They have been patient.

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I. Introduction

It took until the third year of my doctoral program to figure out what I was really interested in coming to better understand, and why I committed myself to spending further time in the academy: developing deeper insights into the complex interweaving of teachers' identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, with social studies curriculum and pedagogy. In particular, I wanted to explore ways that these were at play, pedagogically, in teachers' interpretations of Alberta's Program of Studies for social studies (POS), particularly in relation to the program's constructivist language and its focus on active, responsible citizenship (Abbott, 2007; Alberta Education, 2005; Gibson, 2004). I was interested in appreciating the role of teachers' national, linguistic, religious, and ideological identifications, as well as their educational and professional experiences had in shaping personal and subjective interpretations of the mission and outcomes of the POS. Further, I wished to invite teachers to give more personal attention to their identifications, attending to ways they have become constituted as subjects through their education and professional experiences. I wished to better appreciate how such attention impacted social studies teachers' understanding of what it means to teach for democratic engagement and "active and responsible citizenship at the local, community, provincial, national and global level[s]" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1) in social studies.

In this dissertation I have provided an account of a participatory action research study exploring, through conversation, efforts of four male social studies teacher participants, and myself, a male doctoral student in social studies curriculum, to attend to

our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, and how we understood these as intertwined with the language of social studies curriculum and with our pedagogies. Together, we looked at the interplay of our identifications, our interpretations of Alberta's POS for social studies, and our conceptions of our own pedagogic practices. Data collection took place over the course of six months from December 2010 to May 2011 at a public high school in a large urban centre in Alberta.

In addition to the five of us, Alberta's social studies POS was always present in each conversation. The current iteration of the POS began its rollout in 2005. Yet, four to five years on, it seemed that this program was still in an implementation phase. We each were still working out our respective relationships with the program's front matter content outcomes.

As a teacher educator and educational researcher in Alberta, I have continued to revisit the program's rationale, vision, and outcomes. In particular, I have maintained an interest in better understanding the program's emphasis on multiple perspectives, especially those associated with Francophone and Aboriginal communities and nations, and on multiple ways of thinking. The program's language invites teachers and students to explore unfamiliar epistemic and ontological territories, marking a departure from the previous program's inattention to the situatedness of its perspective and voice (Clark, 2004; den Heyer, 2009b; den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Shields & Ramsay, 2004).

Teachers' relationships with formal curriculum documents, like Alberta's POS, are complex, politicized, context-situated, historicized, geographically and temporally located, and perspective-laden (Banks, 2006; Pinar, 2004; Smith, 1999a, 2006). Complicating this further, but often excluded from multicultural discourses on teacher

identity is the interplay of teachers' religious identifications and commitments with their pedagogic practices (K. White, 2009). The multifaceted character of individual teachers, as members of communities, as human beings with life experiences, as speakers of languages negotiating understanding, as residents and citizens of national, provincial and local polities, as believers, or not, in religions and the spiritual, and as story-tellers of past and present to students, is always at play in their pedagogies. So, who teachers are in relation to their teaching practice and the curriculum matters. However, according to Carson (2005), Pinar (2004), and Aoki (1983/2005), teachers are often imagined by policy makers as little more than program and policy implementers, and that formal curriculum could be designed to overcome or bypass the idiosyncrasies, biases, and the identifications of teachers. This instrumentalist vision of teachers as educational workers diminishes their humanity, denying a role for teachers' identifications, experience, background, understandings, and dispositions in relation to curricular interpretation and pedagogy, and further, allows little space for the cultivation and practice of democratic-mindedness and engagement in the classroom (Carson, 2005; Dewey, 1916).

As a teaching context, Alberta's classrooms are increasingly ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse (Johnston, et al., 2009). While Alberta's demographic character has been changing in terms of ethnicities, nationalities, and religions, and while the province has also seen an increase in the population of people with Aboriginal ancestry, "Canada's teaching population remains predominantly white, with a majority of teachers of European heritage" (Johnston, et al., 2009, p. 2).

With consideration to the demographic character of the province and the profession of teaching, I was curious about how social studies teachers might invite their

identifications, their backgrounds, and their experiences into their teaching. Alberta's current social studies program offers a vision for the subject area fostering "the building of a society that is pluralistic, bilingual, multicultural, inclusive, and democratic" (Alberta Education, 2005). Yet, for me and for the four teacher participants, the question emerged of how our own identifications and accompanying cultural baggage might be at play in our teaching practices in insufficiently interrogated ways, especially in regard to the vision expressed in the POS. So, how might we, as social studies teachers in Alberta, make the making and telling of 'our' stories the site of our inquiry? Further, how might we come to understand that when we ask questions of our students, of ourselves, and of the texts we engage with, we inevitably draw in the historicity of what we know? Such inquiry implicates our subjective and situated relationship with the past, present, and future, making this a central issue of this research (den Heyer, 2008, 2009a; Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989; J. W. Scott, 2001; Tupper, 2008; Tupper & Cappello, 2008; VanSledright, 2008).

Carson (2005) noted that there was little in the scholarly literature on curriculum change exploring the role teachers' identifications and subjectivities play in fulfilling the mission and vision statements of formal curriculum documents like the POS. He referenced Dewey's notion that schools 'create a public,' emphasizing the role of public education in the identity formations of students and teachers, but Carson acknowledged that Dewey's sense of public did not attend to diversities, multiplicities, and complexities of modern plural nation states like Canada. In light of the vision and mission in Alberta's social studies POS, the diversities of Alberta's population, the limited diversity of the teaching profession in Alberta, and the need for teachers to be attentive to their

historicized and subjective relationship with curriculum, teachers' should be engaged in thoughtful and reflective consideration of who they are in relation to their teaching. Teachers' identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments constitute their prejudices, influencing their interpretations of official curricula, and their use of language, impacting students' curricular encounters and how they might come to understand and live in the world (Banks, 2006; Banks & Nguyen, 2008; den Heyer, 2008, 2009a; Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Richardson, 2002; Tupper, 2008; Tupper & Cappello, 2008). The POS articulates an ethic of building society together. Social studies teachers' sense of their personal and subjective role in cultivating such an ethic should matter more to the scholarly and research community, and to curriculum and policy makers. This is because 'creating a public' in the pedagogic context of the school occurs through dialogic engagements among teachers, students, and the texts they encounter (Carson, 2005, 2009; Dewey, 1916; Feldman, 1999; Gadamer, 1975/1989).

Drawing on census data from 2011, only 1.5 million of the 3.5 million people who resided in Alberta at the time identified themselves as having some ancestry in the British Isles, and approximately 700 000 Alberta residents claimed some ancestry outside of Europe (Statistics Canada, 2013). Understanding diversities, complexities, and multiplicities in relation to nationality, ethnicity, languages, cultural identifications, religion and spirituality, geographic origins of ancestors, in the context of social studies curriculum and pedagogy, only scratches the surface of the challenge for teaching for such an ethic. Gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, and ideological orientations beyond the narrow readings of liberal and conservative, are further facets of identity that need attention in social studies, as well (Loutzenheiser, 2006; Macintosh &

Loutzenheiser, 2006). Further, Aboriginal peoples also have dimensions of complexity that need to be considered, as well (Donald, 2009; Saul, 2008). Teaching with such multifaceted attention, in light of the ethic expressed in the POS, demands that regard for the complexities, diversities, and multiplicities of identity be more that than 'add-on' or 'contributions' pedagogies, and that attention must focus, concurrently, inwards an outwards (Banks, 2001, 2006, 2008; Loutzenheiser, 2006). Yet the challenge of articulating a stance or perspective reflecting positions apart from a teacher's own perspective is exceedingly difficult (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011).

Why should teachers' identifications, experiences, backgrounds, perspective, and commitments matter in teaching social studies? Carson (2005) argued that when it comes to curriculum implementation, little consideration is given to role of teachers' identities and how they have been constituted as subjects, and the role this plays in classroom practice. He pointed to the limited success of multicultural education in subject areas like social studies, as an example, to draw attention to why teachers' identities should matter to curriculum developers and policy makers.

> Although multicultural education is often included as a topic in school subjects, like social studies, literature and the fine arts, and despite the fact that certain schools in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods have worked conscientiously to accommodate and honour cultural difference, many other schools and most curriculum subject areas largely ignore the relevance [of] cultural difference for teaching and learning. (Carson, 2005, p. 4)

Who teachers are and who they understand themselves to be in relation to the POS and their pedagogic choices impacts the 'what, how, and why' of students encounter with

curriculum in their classrooms (den Heyer, 2009a). Teachers bring into the classroom linguistic, sociopolitical, and geospatial relationships with the world, what Gadamer (1975/1989) called 'productive prejudices.' Teachers need to cultivate in themselves reflective dispositions that invite attention to interrogate these prejudices, helping them to better understand how these are at play in pedagogic practice.

1.1 Conversation and Self-Understanding

For this dissertation research, I drew on Gadamer's writing on philosophical hermeneutics to engage with the language of all the participants, myself included, and with the POS, attending to the historicity of words and of language and how this historicity might be understood, especially how the idiosyncrasies of language shapes interpretive possibilities (1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). For me, the study offered an opportunity to better understand myself as a social studies teacher, while inviting other teachers along for the journey.

> The conversational quality of hermeneutic truth points to the requirement that any study carried out in the name of hermeneutics should provide a report of the researcher's own transformations undergone in the process of the inquiry, a showing of the dialogic journey, we might call it. Underscored here is a profoundly ethical aspect to hermeneutic inquiry in a life-world sense, namely, a requirement that the researcher be prepared to deepen her or his own self-understanding in the course of research. Other people are not simply to be treated as objects upon whom to try out one's methodological frameworks (Smith, 1999a, p. 39).

In the quote above, Smith emphasized that hermeneutic inquiry involves social relationships between participants built around the sharing of words and language, contributing to understanding. Dialogue, as opposed to monologue brings with it an implicit possibility that each party to a conversation can be changed by the exchange of ideas and knowledge (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999a).

In the course of my graduate studies I have had the opportunity to read far more about social studies curriculum, content, and pedagogy, than I had during my entire tenure as an undergraduate in the Bachelor of Education program and as a practicing high school social studies teacher. It has been an eye-opening experience. It has taken time to unpack my teaching practice and my subject area. I found the body of scholarship in social studies curriculum and pedagogy and in related topics, in particular citizenship education and history education, vast and deep. My encounters with scholarship and conversation on collective memory and historical consciousness in the early days of my doctoral program served as an important turning point on my journey. They led me to engage with who I am, and what I know and understand. My readings and my dialogues within and outside of courses were invitations to attend to the intertwining of my identifications and the multiple ways I am constituted as a subject in relation to my pedagogy and the ways I understand curriculum documents like the POS.

For example, as a teacher I can speak to my experience as a politicized subject living in a nation state with a governance model I have always taken for granted as normal. All other modes of governance, for me, involve implicit or explicit comparison to the system with which I have deep familiarity. I may be able to imagine living in an

authoritarian state, but such an understanding is abstract and outside my experience. It would be shaped by my subjective encounters with authoritarianism through text and other media, education, and conversation, filtered, hermeneutically, through my shifting and evolving understandings of the language of ideology, and political discourse (Gadamer, 1975/1989). Likewise, as a teacher attending to the ways I am a socially constituted subject, I could engage in inquiry exploring nomadic cultures and their subsistence strategies, giving consideration to the nature of extended family communities in relation to my experience as a member of a nuclear family and a lifetime resident of large urban centres.

Gadamer told us that language "is the fundamental mode of operation of our being-in-the-world and the all-embracing constitution of the world" (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, p. 3). Language is, necessarily, a social exercise for sharing understandings between human beings; it is dynamic, and it evolves, carrying with it a genealogy of its past into the present (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989; Given, 2008; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999a). Language serves, for example, to allow for cooperation and collaboration among human beings to secure their common interests for survival. Language, in this sense, is fundamental to human beings building and sustaining communities, and for passing on knowledge, wisdom, and stories from one generation to the next (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989). That intergenerational transmission is teaching, and it is a key function of formal curriculum (Pinar, 2004).

The principal public context where teaching takes place in our own communities, and the primary institutional space for cultivating 'a public' of citizens who can be actively engaged in the community in the present and for the future, is the public school

(Callan, 1997; Dewey, 1916; Feinberg, 1998, 2012). Through language, teachers and students encounter the world and themselves (den Heyer, 2009a; Pinar, 2004). In this study, I encouraged teacher participants to attend to our common language, and the ways it intertwines with our culture, institutions, with our relationship with land, nation state, and the world around us, because when we seek to see it, we may unveil facets of ourselves, our shared past, and our current situation, that might otherwise avoid interrogation (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 2006). What is the place of teachers in relation to the development of students' dispositions towards engagement in their polity and community? I begin taking this up in the next chapter, connecting social studies, including the teaching of civics and history in public schools in relation to participation in the polity and the practice of democratic participation and engagement.

The roots of the modern notion of 'public,' according to Feinberg (2012) reach back in the Western historical metanarrative to the Athenian 'agora' – the marketplace. It served as the space for day-to-day deliberative discourses concerning the administration of the 'polis,' the city-state, and the interests and common good of its citizens were shared and debated in everyday conversation. In relation to such political talk, Feinberg noted the presence of both common ground and tensions between Plato and Aristotle concerning a citizen's fitness to make decisions in the public's interest and how citizens arrive, deliberatively, at understanding that interest; the service of the public good. Plato leaned on reason's impartiality to arrive at a conclusion about the public good. Aristotle, though, differentiated the rationality of science and mathematics from human interests and ethics and from the 'politics' of the city. Feinberg wrote:

> [The idea of a public] concerned a shared identity – membership in a polis – as well as a shared fate. Only citizens could be members of this public, not only because only citizens were capable of reasoning but also because only citizens were conscious of shared identity, and only they were able to put private interest aside in deliberating about a course of collaborative action (2012, p. 4).

Aristotle's sense of the relationship between personal desire and action in public was that the former served as an opportunity for reflection, acknowledging that other citizens would also have desires and through deliberation citizens conscious of each other could achieve the goal of arriving at a harmonious, common good (Feinberg, 2012).

The mission of the modern public school has remained situated in this metanarrative. It is a discourse contributing to the politicization of teachers as citizens and as subjects of the democratic nation state. It manifests itself in the tension between the appeal of harmony achieved through universal rational deliberation, and the appeal of harmony emerging from deliberation involving reconciliation of competing personal desires leading to a consensus among citizens concerning the public good (Callan, 1997; Feinberg, 2012; Heater, 2004). The common good for citizens is tied up in the ways and in the extent to which they accept a politics of shared fate, through which they express their consensus concerning how to live together as subjects, subject to their collective decisions that prevail over individual, 'idiotic' interests (Callan, 2004; Feinberg, 2012; Heater, 2004; Parker, 2008).

The public pursuit of the common good is complicated by the evolution of the political self with the rise of laissez-faire liberalism. According to Feinberg (2012), the mode for finding the balance in achieving the public good in democracies changed,

beginning in the 18th Century, from consensus seeking that attends to balancing individual interests with the public good, shifting, instead, to majority rule, with the possibility for accommodation for minority interests. This shift, wrote Feinberg, empowered private interests over what Rousseau referred to as the 'General Will' – the collective deliberative consensus for the public good.

In the conversations I had with the teacher participants in this study, taken up in Chapters V, we began to attend to the ways all five of us used language, often unreflectively and inattentively, expressing how deeply interwoven we were with lexicon of our polity. We all called on these discourses at various points in our dialogues often, but not always failing to appreciate their normative character. Implicitly and explicitly, in the words we used to talk about the political, social, and economic aspects of Canada, as a modern nation state, we accepted that we had roles as citizens, as subjects, and as teachers, working, living and sustaining our situation. Our identifications with our shared geopolitical, social, and economic reality resonated in the terms we used to talk about it and talk about teaching about it. We all, too, demonstrated fluency in the language of a common historical discourse about Canada as a nation state, the familiar and Euro-normative and Anglo-Canadian tropes of immigration and settlement and of multiculturalism and communitarian interests. In exercising our identifications and our fluencies in these discourses, without giving sufficient attention to the language we shared, we implicitly and explicitly self-invoked our historical subjectivities as teachers and story tellers of our 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991; den Heyer, 2009a; Tupper, 2008; Tupper & Cappello, 2008; VanSledright, 2008).

According to Gadamer, language is what enmeshes us in history; that "history does not belong to us; we belong to it" (1975/1989, p. 278):

> Long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society, and state in which we live. The focus of subjectivity is a distorting mirror. The self-awareness of the individual is only a flickering in the closed circuits of historical life. *That is why the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being.* (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 278)

Participants in this study, through language, expressed the self-evident relationships Gadamer pointed to, as each of us came to know who is within and who is without membership in our families and our communities. Such understandings were filtered through our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and our commitments, whether or not we were attentive that such filtering was taking place (Gadamer, 1975/1989; Linge, 2004; Prasad, 2005; Schwandt, 2007).

My intention for this participatory action research study was to employ a philosophical hermeneutic sensibility towards a shared inquiry, helping my fellow participants to begin to attune themselves to how their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and commitments, are enmeshed in our shared language. I wanted to explore how we might understand ourselves as intertwined in our pedagogies, inviting a greater self-awareness of how each of us inhabits our own teaching practices, to enhance students' encounter the curriculum and the world around them (den Heyer, 2009a). In particular, I envisioned the study's action cycles as opportunities for increasing hermeneutic attention to our teaching practices, our identifications, (shared

and otherwise, especially with our 'imagined community,) our commitments, and our situatedness within traditions, with our students (Faden, 2012; Feldman, 1999, 2002; Lee & Fouts, 2005; Niemi & Niemi, 2007).

1.2 The Research Questions

I was and still remain interested in understanding social studies teachers' interpretive and dialogic relationships with the text of official curriculum documents, specifically Alberta's POS for social studies. My intention in this study was to seek opportunities to enliven and enrich social studies pedagogies promoting engaged citizenship, refreshing and renewing, or building teachers' reflexive relationships with curriculum text. I wanted to develop an understanding of how interpretations of curriculum texts are enmeshed and interwoven with personal and professional senses of self, and how these might contribute to pedagogies enhancing teacher participants' capacities to engage students, thoughtfully and purposefully, with difficult and challenging content, concepts, and notions (den Heyer, 2009a; D. Scott & Abbott, 2012; Segall & Gaudelli, 2007).

In this dissertation, I have offered insights and analysis of conversations I shared with teacher participants as we began to explore the interplay among our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and commitments, and our subjective relationships with the POS and our pedagogic language. Drawing on our developing understandings of these relationships, the teacher participants and I explored, through dialogue, facets of our interpretations of the POS, reflecting on and evaluating our respective interpretations and our pedagogic practices. I wanted participants to attend, hermeneutically, to the ways each of us inhabited the language of the POS, and social

studies discourses and pedagogy, beginning to appreciate the extent to which the official curriculum is malleable. We set out to find for ourselves and in ourselves meaning in the program's front matter, outcomes, and benchmarks, and how each of us might exercise our pedagogic freedom, interpretive latitude, and collaborative capacities, to make the words purposeful in practice.

This study was framed around two questions:

1) In what ways might teachers be attending to the interplay of their identifications, politicized and historicised subjectivities, and educational, professional, personal, and familial experiences and backgrounds in their social studies pedagogies, and how might these influence and shape understandings of the language of official program documents?
2) In what ways might the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy, as each of us interprets it, invite and/or delimit teaching for active and responsible citizenship and democratic engagement?

In my master's thesis study I found, for a few participants, it had been some time since they had looked at the full range of outcomes in the programs of study in their subject area beyond the grade levels they taught, and most participants had limited knowledge of outcomes in subject areas apart from ones they were teaching (Abbott, 2007). In my own teaching practice I know I was only superficially aware of what students were studying in other subject areas. As for my social studies practice, I regularly consulted the outcomes portion of the social studies POS, though I seldom looked at its front matter. For me there seemed to be a hidden curriculum of other-subject-area-content-blindness that offered a convenient boundary that I did not have to

cross, potentially limiting opportunities me to invite students to synthesize knowledge and understandings from other courses into social studies.

I also felt the influence of the provincial diploma exam on my teaching practice, especially in grade twelve courses, and so I focused my pedagogy on the kinds of competencies I knew students would need to do well on the exams. The textbooks I used seemed well structured to support this pedagogic goal. My peers and I developed and used common exams for all social studies courses, and these used diploma exam questions when it came to Grade 12 level courses; other grade levels were modeled on diploma style exams. Although I was a teacher with far less experience than my peers in both of the schools in which I was a teacher, my approach to the POS, at the time, and to my pedagogy, was not unique at either school. Having watched some of my peers engaged in teaching, most with many more years of experience than me, my practice was consistent with the pedagogies of my colleagues.

Alberta's current social studies POS, which I explore in more depth in Chapter V, has a different program philosophy and structure than the one I had worked with when I was a teaching in a high school. For this study, I wanted to get a sense of the nature and richness of the relationship each of us had or could have with the current program document, and I was interested in appreciating whether participants felt they had enough freedom and/or autonomy to teach the way they wished to and thought best in relation to program outcomes.

I wanted to know, too, if pedagogic cultures of constraint (Cornbleth, 2010) were at play at the research site, such as administrator interventions, or parental resistance exercised through power channels, and if those cultures impacted teacher participants'

interpretations of outcomes and influenced their pedagogic practices. Couture and Cheng (2000) wrote that testing in Alberta manifests itself in multiple layers of accountability for students and teachers, and that research has long suggested that standardized exams narrow teachers attention to curriculum outcomes that are tied to standardized assessments. Finally, I wanted to give consideration to the ways participating teachers' understood their pedagogies as contributing to enriching citizenship and democratic engagement for students.

1.2.1 Limitations of the study

As a participatory action research study, the insights are not generalizable to other settings, although they may suggest the possibility that understandings and practices of study participants may be reflective of those at play in analogous situations. Complementing this is the challenges of engaging in a methodological approach to data in light of the role that philosophical hermeneutics played in the research. Further, the community of participants involved in the study, may not have be particularly diverse in terms of language and ancestry, nor gender or sex.

1.3 The Structure of this Dissertation

This dissertation is an expression of my own personal and professional journey exploring how my identifications and attention to ways I am constituted as a subject, shapes my teaching and my relationship with official curriculum. In its pages I explored the challenge of inviting teachers to take analogous journeys. Chapter II focuses on the interplay of teachers' personal, national, and professional identifications, relating them to teaching in a social studies classroom context. In particular, I explored a body of

literature that regarded teachers as politicized subjects, giving consideration to ways teachers' identifications, ideological orientations, and commitments have become intertwined with curriculum interpretation and pedagogy. I provided a survey of scholarship on issues such as: teacher disclosure of political orientation and stances on issues; engaging the issue of social studies teachers as influencers of their students' political sensibilities; and, the possibility and desirability of neutrality as a pedagogic stance in social studies. I complemented this examination with attention to the notion of citizenship, because its promotion is an explicit goal in Alberta's social studies POS, as well as being understood as the overall goal of public education (Alberta Education, 2005; Callan, 1997; Dewey, 1916; Feinberg, 2012). In Chapter III, I provided a personal encounter with scholarship on historical thinking and memory studies. These continue to play a role in my exploration of familial, community, and national stories, and I treated this chapter as a personal exemplar of the challenge of attending to the nexus of my identifications, my educational and professional experiences, and my teaching.

In Chapter IV I explored the nature, structure, and procedure of the study. I included a brief history of participatory action research and the challenges of organizing my study around action research cycles. Complementing this I took up my understanding of a philosophical hermeneutic interpretive frame. Following that, I described the research setting and explained the data collection process. Chapter V begins with a profile of Alberta's current POS for social studies, followed by biographic profiles of each of the participants. Drawing on responses to a series of open-ended questions that guided conversations I had with each teacher participating in the study, I interwove profiles of study participants, exploring identifications, and how each participant came to

teaching, as a way to begin a conversation about participants' relationships with social studies curriculum.

In the latter part of Chapter V, I explored this study's two action research cycles. Those were structured around a series of group and one-on-one conversations I had with participating teachers about their understandings of program text, about teacher participants becoming more attuned to their own identifications, the ways they have been constituted as subjects, and how giving these attention might contribute to pedagogies enriching teaching for democratic engagement and active citizenship. In the course of our dialogues that began in January 2011 and ended in May 2011, we tapped into our relationships with the POS; we gave thought to ways our social studies pedagogies contributed to students' encounters with provincial social studies curricular outcomes. Just as data collection for this study ended, the teacher participants and I began to cross a threshold in our conversations about curriculum and pedagogy. Our final dialogue focused on very human dimensions of teaching of teaching social studies, materializing as very different pedagogic relationships with the same program outcomes. The limited number of cycles helped us develop a better understanding of the situation, revealing a diversity of understandings about social studies concepts, and unveiling challenges to social studies pedagogies that are intermeshed with teachers' identifications, backgrounds, perspective, and commitments. In Chapter VI, I returned to the questions from this chapter, situating findings and insights from the study in relation to the field of social studies teaching, teacher education, and curriculum design and research in English Canada, offering questions and possible trajectories for future research.

II. Survey of Literature

As a school subject domain that includes and integrates history education, civics, geography, and topics from other social sciences, social studies is often associated with preparing students for active and engaged citizenship (Hess, 2009; Nelson, 2001; Osborne, 1997, 2001; Parker, 2008; Sears, 2004, 2011). This sense of the nature and place of social studies in the wider official curricular scheme is echoed in Alberta's Program of Studies (POS) for social studies, the principal official curriculum document outlining program outcomes. According to the front matter of the POS:

> Social studies provides opportunities for students to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge that will enable them to become engaged, active, informed and responsible citizens. Recognition and respect for individual and collective identity is essential in a pluralistic and democratic society. Social studies helps students develop their sense of self and community, encouraging the to affirm their place as citizens in an inclusive, democratic society. (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1)

This opening statement articulates political and social values enmeshing common Canadian tropes such as multiculturalism, pluralism, the tensions between individual and group rights, democratic engagement, and communitarian responsibility (Hardwick, Marcus, & Isaak, 2010; Kymlicka, 1995; Saul, 2008). The POS has defined social studies as:

> the study of people in relation to each other and to their world. It is an issues-focused and inquiry-based interdisciplinary subject that draws upon history, geography, ecology, economics, law, philosophy, political science and other

> social science disciplines. Social studies fosters students' understanding of and involvement in practical and ethical issues that face their community and humankind. Social studies is integral to the process of enabling students to develop an understanding of who they are, what they want to become and the society in which they want to live. (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1)

Social studies pedagogy involves the integration of disciplinary knowledge, inquiry processes, and understandings of current affairs and geography, stretching from the local to the global. But it does not stop there, for the POS expresses a requirement that students learn to be engaged in their society, and exploring and understanding beyond the practical and into the ethical, potentially offering conditions for students to envision their future. "Social participation skills enable students to develop effective relationships with others to work in cooperative ways toward common goals and to collaborate with others for the well-being of their communities" (p. 9). Further, the program requires that students learn to engage in "purposeful deliberation and critical reflection," referring to these as "essential skills and processes for democratic citizenship and problem solving" (p. 10). It is a tall pedagogic order. Teaching social studies in relation to the expectations outlined in this curriculum document involves practicing pedagogies that extend beyond attending to 'knowledge and understanding' outcomes.

Teachers are human beings with subjective experiences and understandings. Their proficiencies and deficiencies are at play, implicitly and explicitly, in the classroom pedagogies of teachers as they interpret curriculum documents and other texts. Who teachers are as individuals, and as members of communities, impacts the organization and structure of student engagement with program outcomes and with assessments of

understandings, all done with the intention of cultivating students' relationship with their communities, and with the world (Aoki, 1993; Pinar, 2004). Scholarly attention to the subjective character of teachers' identifications, life experiences, perspectives, and ways they have been constituted as politicized and historicized subjects matters, because curriculum and pedagogy are political (Apple, 1993; Lund & Carr, 2008). It takes place in an organized community, and it is subject to public policy.

The polity itself, as the organized context of public education, is not a spontaneous thing, but a community with traditions. Public school teachers, as members of such communities articulate the curriculum through shared language, and depend on the mutual intelligibility of their words to foster students' understanding of concepts, notions, and ideas (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Smith, 1999a). The notions, ideas, and concepts arising in teaching, and present in formal curriculum, are not spontaneous, nor universally understood, even by those sharing a common language. Words, notions, disciplines, and traditions have genealogies and historicity (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). What was evident in the scholarship I explored in this chapter was that social studies and social science teachers could be giving more consideration to the politicized and historicized dimensions of public education.[1]

In this chapter I have emphasized empirical research exploring social studies teachers as politicized subjects somewhat more than as historicized subjects. This is not because politicized subjectivity matters more than historicized subjectivity, but because I

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[1] I make the distinction between social studies and social science teachers, because what might fall within the social studies domain in Alberta may be treated as a separate specialty or subject area in other jurisdictions. Such specialties might include history, geography, and citizenship/civics. Further, the distinction was necessary to reflect the populations of teachers who participated in studies cited in this chapter.

have made particular choices about the structure of this dissertation. I engage historicized subjectivity of teachers in the next chapter through a personal encounter between my pedagogy, my identifications, my experiences, and the tensions and confluences of familial and national tropes and narratives. For this chapter I have drawn, principally, from both English Canadian and American scholarship to explore the nexus of social studies and social science teachers' identifications, political and social values and commitments, with the curricular intentions for 'creating a public' of active and engaged citizens (Carson, 2005; Dewey, 1916; Feinberg, 2012; Pinar, 2004).

Research conducted in the United States, cited in this chapter, troubles the supposition that the social studies and social science subject areas serve to initiate the young through encounters with the culture, rights, and values discourses of the United States; empirical research suggested that classroom pedagogies did not typically reflect these discourses in practice. Of concern in this body of literature were pedagogies teachers perceived as safe or neutral, avoiding topics or issues considered politically controversial, contested, ideological, inappropriate, unpleasant, or personal (Cornbleth, 2010; Faden, 2012; Hess, 2008, 2009, 2010a; Kelly, 1986; Levstik, 2000; Niemi & Niemi, 2007). These issues had echoes in empirical research in English Canadian settings too, complemented by identification discourses not present in the American literature, tied English/French language community affiliation, multiculturalism, and relationships with First Nations peoples (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Faden, 2012; Llewellyn, Cook, & Molina, 2010; Richardson, 2002).

The discourses resonant in English Canadian scholarship influenced my initial conversations with the teacher participants in this study and were present throughout our

conversations. In the questions that guided the initial one-on-one conversations I had with teacher participants, issues of national identity, language, religious affiliation, and community involvement were central to the second of six groups of questions I took up with each of the teacher participants. The nature of those questions, as I drafted them, reflected how Canadian identity tropes were front-of-mind for me when I began to reflect on my own identifications and the ways I believed they were interwoven with my pedagogy.[2] The questions I drafted reflected ways I encountered the past, the political, and the social, and how these inhabited (and, in some respects, inhibited) my practice as a public school teacher. I wondered about the extent that these might be at play in other social studies teachers' pedagogies.

Public school education serves to initiate the young into what Anderson (1991) has called an 'imagined community,' weaving narratives of nation with knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and expressing those as official curriculum (Callan, 1997; Feinberg, 2012; Pinar, 2004; VanSledright, 2008). Social studies and social science teachers belong to these 'imagined communities.' They live and teach through language in politicized and historicized contexts; their identifications are shaped and influenced, in varying ways, by their backgrounds, and by their experiences and understandings of the political and social climates of their communities, impacting their curricular understandings and pedagogies (Cornbleth, 2010; Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989; Hess, 2008, 2009; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Tupper, 2007). They have taken on and have come to understood the past and the present in particular ways, reflecting evolving fluencies, interrogated to varying extents and not, in metanarratives of nation and culture (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Richardson,

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[2] Appendix I

2002; Rüsen, 2004; VanSledright, 2008; Wertsch, 2004). The language through which they teach is a lexicon of words and a body of texts that bring with them genealogies of meaning through time (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989).

Reflective pedagogic attention to identifications and ways in which teachers are constituted as subjects, in relation to the subject matter being taught, potentially invites reflexive responses, impacting how teachers might differently understand and, perhaps, reimagine their pedagogy in light of reflective insight. Segall and Gaudelli (2007) drew on the work of critical theorist Peter McLaren to contrast reflective practices that pathologize pedagogy with critical social reflection intended to interrogate and understand the current conditions and future possibilities, by encouraging pre-service teachers to look at broader historical, social, political, and systemic facets of a situation. The reflective practices-as-pathology they described was of a:

> myopic, self-contained variety, [that] may lead to ends that are contrary to the intended purposes of those who simply, though well intentioned, advocate 'more reflection' as necessarily good. Teaching in this vein is implicitly understood as individualistic, self-generative, and socially disconnected. (Segall & Gaudelli, 2007, p. 78)

Teachers are regarded as liberal autonomous subjects; pedagogic problems and deficiencies belong to them. Problems, then, are not manifestations or reflections of current conditions, but a reflection of deficiencies in teachers' efforts to develop practical competencies and content fluencies (Segall & Gaudelli, 2007). The political, social, economic, historical, and linguistic contexts, as manifestations of the historicized and politicized nature of the situation are excluded from consideration. Who the teacher is,

then, matters minimally to pedagogy. Teaching practice and student achievement can be improved through the improvement of pedagogy. Teachers, in such a sense, are instruments of curriculum, educational workers who carry out pedagogy (Aoki, 1983/2005; Carson, 2005; Pinar, 2004). So conceived, teachers follow curriculum rather dialogue with it. Teachers are interchangeable and curriculum can be made teacher-proof.

Segall and Gaudelli (2007) drew on Henry Giroux's 'pedagogy of theorizing' and on Sumara and Luce-Kapler's (1993) 'writerly' engagement with text when they described critical social reflection. They regarded teachers as human beings, as subjects constituted in a multitude of ways, and as temporally and spatially situated in complex, dynamic contexts. Importantly, taking up any critical social reflection acknowledges implication in the situation, inviting thoughtful reflexive responses in pursuit of pedagogic avenues for teachers and students to address or redress injustices, inequities, or imbalances they encounter as they come to know their communities and the world (den Heyer, 2009a; Segall & Gaudelli, 2007). At the same time, teachers engaged in critical reflective and reflexive practice must attend to challenges and risks encountered with students as assumptions are challenged, metanarratives are unpacked, as the status quo gets interrogated, and the socially and historically constructed character of knowledge is revealed (Barton, 2006). Barton argued that leaving students with nothing but critiques is insufficient preparation for the future. Students need guidance to become engaged with their communities and the world, conscious of the critiques, aware that injustice is easy to sustain, but possible to redress. When it comes to preparing students, teachers' identifications, experiences, perspectives, and commitments influence their interpretation of the curriculum, and shape classroom pedagogy. Who teachers understand themselves

to be, individually, and as members of communities, is unavoidably part of teaching, shaping and shaped by encounters with their polity, their identifications, the past, and their language (den Heyer, 2009a; Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989; K. White, 2009).

Does the 'who' and 'why' of a teacher's background, experiences, understandings, and commitments matter to curriculum developers? Carson (2005) noted that little consideration is given to teachers' subjectivities in relation to curriculum. What was evident in the literature on social studies teaching and learning I explored was that teachers are politicized and historicized subjects. The scholarship pointed to the resonance of the political in social studies pedagogy. In particular it revealed the irony that teaching the political and the historical to students, both perspective-laden domains, and both integrated into a liberal democratic tradition, and echoed in documents like Alberta's POS for social studies, seemed to be too-often done by teachers who believed their job was being a neutral facilitator and dialogic catalyst.

2.0.1 Outlining the review of literature

I begin by reviewing literature focusing on research conducted in the United States, attending principally to the role of disclosure of teachers' political values, beliefs, and commitments in relation to pedagogies addressing controversial issues. Then I attend to relationships between teachers' identifications and the social studies curriculum, drawing primarily on research by English Canadian scholars. This is followed by an exploration of democratic dialogic engagement and the notion of citizenship, connecting the cultivation of "engaged, active, informed and responsible citizens" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1), that wraps up the first sentence of the front matter of the program of studies for social studies in Alberta, with participants' pedagogies. At the end of this

chapter I offer a brief examination of 'critical thinking,' a notion the teacher participants in this study and I used as a catalyst to aid our conversation on teachers' identifications, and how these are interwoven into teachers' interpretations of program documents and into their pedagogies.

2.1 Social Studies Teachers as a Politicized Subject in Relation to Curriculum and Pedagogy

Why is such a study relevant and timely? Social studies classrooms have long been envisioned as crucibles for the development of students' capacities for democratic engagement and for cultivation of good citizenship (Abbott, 2009; Clark, 2004; Cornbleth, 2010; Hess, 2008, 2009; Nelson, 2001; Richardson, 2002; Sears, 2004; Sears & Hughes, 1996). However, research in English Canada and the United States has suggested that social studies and social science teachers may be risk-averse, by choice and/or by what Cornbleth (2010) has called 'climates of constraint.' There were echoes of this in the literature – pedagogies that stripped the interesting, provocative, and controversial, from classroom discourse precisely where students find the curriculum interesting, appealing, and engaging (Evans, 2006; Faden, 2012; Hess, 2008, 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Levstik, 2000; Llewellyn, et al., 2010). Such practices limit students' thoughtful dialogic engagement with content that teachers might deem too difficult, too controversial, too contested, or too unpleasant to share with students (Hess, 2008, 2009, 2010b; Miller-Lane, Denton, & May, 2006; Pitt & Britzman, 2006; Segall, 2006; Segall & Gaudelli, 2007). What they described was teaching as risk-management. Teachers perceived job security and the comfort of their assignment as contingent on censoring their teaching (Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006).

Job-impacting risk, appeared, in some of the studies I examined in this chapter, to be one of the most powerful inhibitors to purposeful, thought-provoking, democratically engaging pedagogy (Cornbleth, 2010; Hess, 2008, 2009, 2010a; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006; Parker, 2008). Thus, it came as no surprise that researchers found social studies and social science teachers censor themselves. The prevalence of this in the wider social studies teaching community is difficult to establish. The scale of recent studies in both Canada and the United States exploring these issues has often been small, and the methodologies used may limit generalizability of findings, although insights can suggest where further investigation is necessary. Still, common threads that transcended national boundaries of Canada and the United States.

2.1.1 Teacher disclosure and controversy avoidance

Teachers who employ neutrality in social studies classrooms compromise productive discussion (Hess, 2008, 2009; Kelly, 1986; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006). Further, the invocation of neutrality is at odds with what scholars understand as the spirit and intention of social studies (Faden, 2012; Hess, 2008, 2009, 2010a; Kelly, 1986; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006). In a study with 12 secondary social studies teachers, all from the same community in the United States, Miller-Lane et al (2006), set out to assess the extent to which study participants were willing to disclose their own positions on contested issues and political orientation. They drew on a four-pronged typology from Kelly (1986), focusing on teachers' efforts at impartiality and neutrality. According to Miller-Lane et al (2006), the large majority of their study participants chose to not disclose their stances and orientations to students because they feared community backlash.

Kelly (1986) has called on social studies teachers to express their points of view with students as an exercise in 'committed impartiality.' Teachers should share with students their political stances and positions on controversial issue, allowing a teacher to voice one point of view among many in the class. Doing so might better position teachers as fair mediators of classroom discourse. It is a 'here is where I stand,' disclosure, allowing students to appreciate that their teacher has a point of view reflecting a perspective, inviting, perhaps, students to question the teacher's point of view to better understand how it is grounded. Kelly argued that 'committed impartiality' operates in tension with three other stances concerned with avoiding, privileging, or refusing disclosure of teachers' points of view or orientations. He referred to these as 'exclusive neutrality,' 'exclusive partiality,' and 'neutral impartiality.'

Hess has a typology similar to Kelly's, with four categories expressing teachers' relationships with controversial issues: balance, avoidance, privilege, and denial. Miller-Lane et al (2006) found that 9 out of 12 of their study participants leaned strongly toward 'neutral impartiality,' refusing to articulate a stance, and avoiding topics perceived as controversial. One participant even refused to share with students whether he thought Thomas Jefferson was a 'great man,' evading and avoiding a conversation with students on whether Jefferson's stance on slavery was hypocritical. The absence of a thoughtful discussion on topics like that shuts down opportunities for students to develop understandings of the past and the present, denying attention to the historicity of the current situation and avoiding consideration of implication of teachers and students in current social arrangements, and failing to interrogate disparities of resources and power (den Heyer, 2009a). Such expressions of neutrality involve seeking safety in the resolved,

and run counter to the deliberative climate that theorists and researchers deem valuable and necessary in social studies education (Hahn, 1998; Hess, 2009; Parker, 2008; Sears, 2004; Torney-Purta, Schwille, & Amadeo, 1999; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004).

The evasion or avoidance of controversial or contested issues as a manifestation of fear of administrative consequences or litigation risks making social studies and social science subject matter non-resonant and irrelevant to students, not-to-mention dry and unengaging. Importantly, such approaches to content short-circuit encounters students want to have with the curriculum (Cornbleth, 2010; Hess, 2009; Levstik, 2000; Niemi & Niemi, 2007; Osborne, 1997, 2001). In two studies concerned with historical significance and the expression of a timeline of American national history, the first involving middle school students, and the second involving teacher candidates and practicing teachers, Levstik (2000) noted that:

> While students, teachers, and teacher candidates all ascribed significance to aspects of the past that promoted social unity and consensus, they did not all respond in the same ways to more divisive aspects of American history. Instead, students expressed interest in exactly those aspects of the past that teachers and teacher candidates found profoundly disturbing. (Levstik, 2000, p. 296)

The teacher and teacher candidate participants in her study were more concerned with offering a conception of the United States as a community "that is at once stable and emancipatory" (2000, p. 296). They tended to believe that students, especially those in elementary or middle school lacked maturity to cope with a rendering of the past that troubled and complicated students' relationships with their national past and present. The teachers and teacher candidates wanted to offer progressive narratives to students, and

tended to use the collective pronoun "we" to narrate the nation state's past, avoiding any facet of 'their' collective past deemed a "negative thing" (p. 294). They wanted to teach history as multicultural, but elected to be silent about parts of the past considered risky, unflattering to the reputation of their nation state, and inconsistent with an idealized sense about the United States. Instead, teachers and teacher candidates in Levstik's study preferred to attend to those facets of the past they understood as consistent with a progressive and emancipatory cultural trope, what VanSledright (2008) referred to as the 'freedom quest' narrative.

What is it about the teachers' and the teacher candidates' sensibility about teaching history that contributed to their different interests in engaging with the past and its relationship with the present? Levstik (2000) noted that they were aware that "their desire for a beneficent national history [existed in contrast with students'] desire to know more about those aspects of the past with which teachers felt most uncertain" (p. 297). The teachers and teacher candidates pointed to their own senses that their history educations had not prepared them for the complexity of the past and issues of diversity. They wished to be inclusive, colorblind, and multicultural, while at the same time staying silent on aspects of their nation state's history that might provoke discussions about race and social inequality in the past and the present. In avoiding such discussions, Levstik argued that teachers and teacher candidates felt that engaging the controversial and contentious would undermine the cultivation of shared identity. She noted that, collectively, the teachers and teacher candidates in her study had a myopic sense of the American polity, rooted in a largely European past. When invoking 'our' in relation to

articulating the national story, they had difficulty explaining the historical role of any individual or community perceived to be at the margins of the nation state and its story.

Teachers' and teacher candidates' relationships with history was at odds with students' desire to learn about United States history, especially when racial categories were at play. The disparity highlights an interesting space in the literature where much more investigation is necessary. Peck (2010) pointed to a substantial body of literature on the relationship between students' identifications and their conceptions of historical significance tied to racial categories, ethnicity, geography, religion, and language. Yet, I had difficulty finding analogous body of scholarship on teachers' identifications, and how these influence the teaching of history, social studies, and related social sciences. If students' identifications are relevant and impact their encounters with history and social studies curriculum, why have teachers' identifications garnered less attention?

Levstik's (2000) concluded that teachers' and teacher candidates' relationship with history, and with their senses of nation and history education, impact classroom pedagogy. Teachers have the power to shape students encounters with the curriculum. Kelly (1986), advocating for committed impartiality, wrote that "teachers' views should be clearly owned, not consistently disguised under Devil's advocacy or compromised with excessive humility or repeated qualification" (p. 130). He noted that a teacher's disclosure of his or her position on an issue may be accompanied by expression of emotion, but he pointed to the possibility that such emotion revealed a teacher's passion for something, potentially drawing students into richer dialogic engagement. Teachers are human beings. Public and administrative expectations that teachers exclude all facets of their private selves from their practice are unreasonable and unrealistic. At the same time,

the public, parents, and administrators should expect teachers to exercise thoughtful, professional judgment about negotiating the overlapping space between the teacher as a community member, the teacher as professional, and the teacher as private citizen.

2.1.2 Disclosure and cultures of suppression

Yet, many teachers do feel pressure to self-censor, sharing uncontested information and resolved questions with students. They show a preference for what Britzman (1998) referred to as 'lovely knowledge,' and that contributes to what Kelly (1986) called 'exclusive neutrality' – the focusing on resolved issues, and the avoidance of anything deemed contested or perceived as controversial. In Larsen and Faden's (2008) study exploring teachers' readiness to teach students a well-supported global citizenship program, they noted that teacher reluctance to deal with controversial and complex material may be impacted by teachers' depth of understanding of content and concepts. The conditions contributing to self-censorship may reflect what Cornbleth (2010) called 'climates of constraint.'

Cornbleth (2010) offered three climate categories, each with two climate types. The first category she described as 'stifling climates', made up of 'bureaucratic' and 'conservative climate' types. In those types of climates, teachers engage in defensive pedagogies such as focusing on informational content knowledge where, in the case of history pedagogy, for example, limited effort is made to connect past events to present circumstance. Her 'chilling climates' include 'threatening climates,' where external pressures limit the scope of pedagogy, and 'climates of judicial restraint', where teachers are directed by boards and administrators in relation to what is to be taught and not taught. In Alberta, changes to human rights legislation requiring school boards to inform

parents when topics of religion and sexuality are to be addressed in class, is an example of a chilling climate.[3] 'Drought-stricken climates' include 'climates of pathology and pessimism,' where assumptions about students' identities and socioeconomic status impact perceptions of student capabilities to learn and understand, and 'competitive climates,' where school rankings tied to standardized assessments operate to limit the scope curriculum outcomes addressed to those that are measured on standardized exams. Cornbleth's descriptions and examples were drawn from American school settings, but find echoes in English Canadian studies by Llewellyn, Cook, and Molina (2010), and by Tupper (2007), both taken up later in this chapter.

Kelly (1986) drew on the work of Jean Anyon and Michael Apple in relation to the hidden curriculum, pointing to the exercise of 'exclusive neutrality' as a manifestation of positivist thinking, that social studies content could be addressed in a value-free way. Kelly, quoting Lawrence Kohlberg, noted that any teaching unavoidably involves teaching values:

> Values are taught whenever an adult stands before children and acts, speaks, and reveals his convictions. Every teacher teaches something about values by the example he sets. When the teacher reveals the measure of his commitment to teaching by the care he takes in preparation, he teaches or misteaches (sic) his students about responsibility. (Kelly, 1986, p. 115)

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[3] http://www.assembly.ab.ca/ISYS/LADDAR_files/docs/bills/bill/legislature_27/session_2/20090210_bill-044.pdf

While troubling the impossibility of neutrality, in the value-free and uncontroversial sense, Kelly did not believe it was impossible for teachers to be impartial, but that doing so involved teachers sharing their position on an issue or topic with students.

Teachers in public education are politicized and historicized subjects, teaching about the world through language (Callan, 1997; Feinberg, 2012; Gadamer, 1975/1989; J. W. Scott, 2001; VanSledright, 2008). In the context of a professional pedagogic practice, teachers work with curricula generated by authoritative entities, inevitably reflecting the political culture. In Canada, provincial governments produce official curriculum. In the United States, federal, state, and local governments, as well as school districts, and schools are variously, from state to state, involved in curriculum writing, but generally adhere to national standards (Hahn, 1999; Hardwick, et al., 2010).

'Climates of constraint' and beliefs about sustaining teacher neutrality do not necessarily keep teachers' points of view or perspectives contained, hidden, or out of play, despite some teachers' resistance or refusal to disclose orientations and stances on political and controversial issues. Niemi and Niemi (2007) listened to six high school teachers in American History and Government classes, attending, specifically, to teachers' in-class speech to determine the extent to which participants' ideological orientations, points of view, and stances on contested and controversial issues came through in teachers' language in classrooms. They were interested in appreciating the ways teachers, who do not share their points of view to students, still expressed stances on political and controversial issues, employing sweeping generalizations or sarcasm, betraying their own undisclosed positions, orientations, or partisan commitments.

According to Niemi and Niemi, teachers in their study used language in the classroom to articulate expertise, while offering ad hominem characterizations of political parties, personalities and institutions that, outside of the school context would be treated as opinion. The teachers in their study employed passive-aggressive form of political discourse, offering perspective-laden points of view without explaining name-calling of political personalities and institutions, or the sarcasm they used, to students. The researchers were concerned about those pedagogic behaviors, especially the message about participation in the polity received by students. Niemi and Niemi wrote, "Teachers are humans and have political selves that they cannot entirely leave at the classroom door. What needs most attention, however, is that teachers' opinions as they are conveyed in classrooms are unexamined" (2007, p. 54). That finding highlights the dearth of research exploring teachers' influence on students, and it also draws attention to the need for research the place of partisan political culture in schools.

Like Levstik (2000), and Miller-Lane et al (2006), Niemi and Niemi (2007) found that teachers participating in their studies did not share positions on controversial issues with students. Niemi and Niemi suggested that efforts to engage students in discussions of controversial issues might offer teachers both the opportunity and conditions for increasing teachers' self-attention to how their stances play out in students' understandings of the political and the controversial. Further, they pointed out that the absence of discussions on controversial issues made social studies and civics boring. Niemi and Niemi also found that participating teachers tended to limit their discourse on the scope of citizen participation in the American polity to voting and letter writing.

There is research showing that teachers make choices to disclose their perspectives. In Hess and McAvoy's study (Hess, 2009), conversations with students about teacher disclosure and its perceived impact on students' perceptions, the authors noted that the majority of students in their study seemed "fine" with teachers disclosing their ideological orientations and political points of view. They pointed to some notable variations between students' beliefs about whether teachers should be neutral, finding it conditional on the extent to which students encounter non-disclosing teachers. Students of non-disclosers tend to favour non-disclosure, and students who encounter disclosers strongly favour disclosure. A near majority of both teachers and students who favoured non-disclosure believed teachers unduly influence students' opinions, but a large majority of all students participating in the study believed that their own opinions would not be swayed by a teacher's stance on an issue.

What was missing from the literature on teacher disclosure was research on the persuasive power of teachers to influence students' positions on issues and topics perceived to be controversial. Niemi and Niemi (2007), Cornbleth (2010), Levstik (2000), and Hess (2009) all carried out research in American contexts; Llewellyn et al (2010), and Larsen and Faden (2008), conducted studies in Canadian contexts, acknowledging the existence of beliefs among teachers, administrators, policy makers, and the public, that teachers exercise a proselytizing power over students. There is a scarcity of research on what appears as a widespread belief that teachers' perspectives on issues and topics in social studies are undesirable and dangerous. To what extent then is an 'ad populum' fallacy shaping the discourse (The Nizkor Project, 2012)? Enough people, including teachers, in studies by Niemi and Niemi (2007), Cornbleth (2010),

Levstik (2000), Hess (2009), Llewellyn et al (2010), and Larsen and Faden (2008), seem to believe it is true. A body of research supports the value of rich democratic engagement in classrooms because it contributes to democratic competencies (Hahn, 1998; Torney-Purta, 2002; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Yet, the power of non-disclosure discourses speaks, powerfully, reflecting a belief held by teachers and the public, that neutrality is pedagogically possible and preferable, whether or not it is desirable, and in spite of its impossibility (Kelly, 1986). What the field needs to better understand is social studies teachers' influence on students' understandings of themselves as politicized subjects. Such research might allow teachers, policy makers, and the public to understand the impact of opening the door (further, in some cases) to controversial and difficult topics in the interest of better preparing the young to be thoughtfully engaged and active citizens.

2.2 Social Studies and Disciplinary Rationality

Social studies as a school subject has its roots in the social sciences, and in the political culture at the beginning of the 20th Century (Nelson, 2001). It is part of public school curricula intended to promote a deliberative democratic ethos to students as young, developing citizen-subjects (Hahn, 1998; Osborne, 2001, 2005; Parker, 2008; Sears & Hyslop-Margison, 2006). Such deliberation emerged from Aristotelian rationality,and was at play, according to Feinberg (2012), in Dewey's thinking about the structure of liberal and democratic debate. The disciplinary social science roots of social studies, such as history, complement democratic deliberation with methodological sensibilities.

In this section I chose to use history pedagogy in the context of social studies as a instance for offering insights into how disciplinary sensibilities influence social studies

curriculum and pedagogy, because scholarship in history education is rich, broad, and deep. In Alberta's POS for social studies, historical thinking is one of six dimensions of thinking named in the program's 'skills and processes' benchmarks. In this section of this chapter, I have focused on historical thinking as an exemplar of a dimension thinking, because students' evolving competencies and understandings, developed through such thinking approaches, contributes to students capacities for active and engaged citizenship (Alberta Education, 2005).

Seixas (2000) offered three categories for articulations about the past students encounter in schools. The first of these was 'collective memory,' such as grand narratives/metanarratives. Disciplinary history was the second category, involving the use of historiography to understand how the past can be examined and understood. Third were postmodern approaches that tapped into Marxian analysis, critical theory, and a range of other postmodern analytical approaches; those attend to power relationships and motivations underlying the first two categories. In a critique of these categories Segall (2006) argued that the 'postmodern' critical can play an important role in classrooms, exposing and rupturing collective memory and disciplinary renderings of the past, particularly because he contended that such articulations of the past fail to reveal interests and power sustaining these narratives. Segall drew on Timothy Stanley's critical theory-informed history work, pointing out that any curriculum expresses a tradition and offers a vision of the world past and present that is epistemologically situated. By extension to other disciplinary domains within social studies, such as geography and civics, a teacher's thinking emerging from a critical theory-inspired stance anchored in a postmodern critique of knowledge could offer students critiques of political culture and

power arrangements, challenging taken-for-granted renderings.[4] The matter, then, is one concerning the extent to which a teacher is willing and able to articulate and share understandings emerging from and reflecting his or her point of view, understanding, and stances on topical issues, adding a thoughtful and informed voice to deliberation.

Hess (2005, 2008, 2009, 2010b) emphasized the democratic value of purposeful deliberation, advocating teacher disclosure tied to teachers expressing and sustaining a balanced relationship among perspectives and stances. Hess noted that research supports the contention that students do not like to be preached at. She recommended that social studies and social science teachers avoid "partisan sarcasm" (2009, p. 108), pointing out that students care about their teachers' points-of-view and are interested in their political stances. That concern about the message of sarcasm was echoed in Niemi and Niemi (2007) and Kelly (1986). They perceived it as a factor in shutting down opportunities for students to express their understandings and points of view in class when they believed their personal stance was incompatible with their teacher's non-disclosed-but-evident-through-sarcasm stance.

Niemi and Niemi (2007) questioned the extent to which deliberation was more rhetoric than practice, noting that while it had not been among their expectations prior to going into schools, they found that teachers in their study restricted in-class discussions. Here, the irony of engagement in the liberal democratic polity comes up against the power of non-disclosing teachers to control classroom discourse about issues relevant to such a democracy; discussion and debate about politics was limited to non-instructional

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[4] Civics focuses on curriculum and pedagogy related to teaching and learning about political institutions and practices. It is disciplinary, in its public school sense, as a domain of comparative analysis of ideology and political culture. It is derivative of the social sciences, such as those mentioned on page 1 of Alberta's POS for social studies, especially political science.

time; once formal instruction began discussion of politics ended. Segall (2006) regarded teachers' disclosure of their stances on issues and topics as an avenue to open up knowledge to interrogation, inviting students to better appreciate how knowledge comes to be, and whether it could be otherwise. Drawing on Henderson and Kesson's (2004) notion of curriculum wisdom, den Heyer (2009a) treated that obligation as an invitation for teachers and students to explore their implication in the curriculum they encountered in school.

2.3 The Relationship Between Teachers' Identifications and the Social Studies Curriculum in English Canadian Scholarship

Historically, according to Clark (2004), social studies as a school subject in schools across English Canada has sustained a long relationship with its American counterpart. The American scholarship, included in this chapter, resonated in the Canadian studies I have cited. Social studies in Canada, though, attends to particular tropes that may be less common in the United States, such as multiculturalism, bilingualism, and communitarianism (Hardwick, et al., 2010). Canada and the United States have different political and linguistic cultures, of course. The narrative templates used in Canada to tell national stories reflects different values and tropes than might be encountered in the United States, so research focusing on English Canadian teachers' as politicized and historicized subjects has invited different attention (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Hardwick, et al., 2010; Létourneau, 2006; VanSledright, 2008; Wertsch, 2004).[5]

[5] I take up schematic narrative templates in Chapter III in section 3.5.

In this section I have provided a survey of English Canadian scholarship, connecting it to the American scholarship I took up earlier in the chapter. In both bodies of literature, substantial attention is given to citizenship and civics education.[6] However, for the English Canadian context, I have included studies that explored teachers as politicized and historicized subjects, sometimes with multiple and overlapping identifications, troubling Canadian national identity discourses, an issue I did not take up in the American case.

Throughout Alberta's current POS for social studies, but particularly in the front matter portion, including a graphic organizer that places citizenship and identity, the program's core concepts, orbiting the globe of social studies, it is evident that the authors of Alberta's social studies POS understood these two notions as interconnected and interdependent. In that organizer, all program strands and outcomes surround these terms and the social studies globe. The implicit Canadianness of these notions was highlighted in the POS in relation to the strands and outcomes, expressed as maple leafs placed between the two words.

In the literature I reviewed, emerging out of research conducted in English Canada, identity and identifications were common threads in Canadian scholarship. Who 'we,' as Canadians are, as members of communities, (national and/or otherwise,) where 'we' are, why 'we' are, and how 'we' are, came through in the articulation of the nation-state's narrative, especially when collective pronouns like 'we' and 'our' were employed (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Holland & Lave, 2001; Levstik, 2000; Tupper & Cappello, 2008).

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[6] I explore citizenship in greater depth, in this chapter, beginning in section 2.4.

Richardson's (2002) exploration of how to pedagogically address the contemporary ambiguity of Canadian identity teased out multiple tropes and tensions at play in taking up with students what it is to be Canadian. In Richardson's action research study, participants encountered elements of their own identities that were at once congruent and at odds with the nation state identity they tried to define. Tupper's study considered how a provincial examination culture in Alberta contributed to citizenship pedagogies she described as 'care-less,' while offering a glimpse of 'care-full' citizenship pedagogy (2007).

Evans' (2006) study engaged in a comparison of citizenship education specialist teachers' descriptions of their teaching practices, contrasting what teachers said about their teaching with observations of their pedagogic practices. He had 17 Canadian participants based in Ontario, and 16 English participants based in Yorkshire. The observation phase of his study focused on three teachers from each population. He sought to better understand how progressive conceptions of citizenship pedagogy materialized as transmission and transactional in classroom practices. Llewellyn, Cook, and Molina's (2010) study, which involved both teachers and students, took place in Ottawa. While they expected high schools in the national capital to be sites of democratic deliberation, the found, instead, transmission and transactional pedagogies, and teachers afraid to share their own points of view, echoing findings from the American body of literature (Hess, 2008, 2009; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006). Faden (2012) and den Heyer and Abbott (2011) attended more directly to exploring encounters with facets of teachers' identifications and how their perspectives, shaped in part by their politicized and historical subjectivities, impacted their understanding of the past and present. Faden participants were practicing

history teachers in Ontario and Maryland, and den Heyer and Abbott's study participants were pre-service social studies teachers in Alberta.

2.3.1 Tensions and intentions: Identity, citizenship, and overt and hidden curricula

Richardson (2002) traced shifts in Canadian identity discourses over 120 years, exploring those in relation to official curricula, especially in Alberta. He pointed to dramatic demographic shifts in the national origins of immigrants settling in Canada from the latter decades on the 19th Century, and into the middle of the 20th Century, particularly to the west of Ontario. He argued those demographic shifts fostered conditions for revising and reimagining Canadian identity. His action research study engaged a group of social studies teachers in a conversation focused on "whether classroom teachers can take advantage of the opportunity that indeterminacy and ambiguity provide to reimagine the Good Canadian" (2002, p. 88). That indeterminacy evolved from an effort to conjure a transcendent national identity as a modernist project, challenging the articulation of a consensus expression of Canadian identity in an era where postmodern and post-structural analyses expose and trouble metanarratives, power relationships, and other transcendent national fantasies. Participants in Richardson's study understood terms crosscutting contemporary Canadian identity discourses in different ways, especially notions like multiculturalism. They revealed, through conversation, the subliminal ways their identifications (which fell into complex and overlapping categories) were differently perceived by Canadians, each identifying with one or multiple communities, imagining and romanticizing otherness through racialized, nationalist, and modernist tropes.

In Alberta, the ambiguity at play in Richardson's study, potentially impacted how social studies teachers might engage with the curriculum, and that co-existed with a standardized assessment culture that Tupper (2007) argued constrained opportunities for exploration of the complexity of Canadian identity and thoughtful participatory citizenship. In Tupper's study, teacher participants expressed how a hidden curriculum focused on students' diploma exam performances, because those exams carry a 50% stake in students' final grade. According to Tupper, social studies teachers expressed that they felt pressure from administrators to make content in their subject area an information mastery exercise, foreclosing on teachers expressed, but tempered desires to make it more engaging for students and contribute to developing dispositions and understandings the could contribute to engaged citizenship. Tupper's participants spoke of teaching to the test, explaining that they pointed out to students specific content likely to be on the exam, rather than "the information that would better help students to live in and understand the complexities and inequities of the world" (2007, p. 266). One of her teacher participants told her that maximizing performance mattered enough that she felt pressure to move students from one stream to another to maximize higher exam scores.

Tupper suggested that the message about citizenship passed on through such pedagogies reinforced compliance behaviors as a hidden curricular goal. She contrasted her teacher participants' wishes to make citizenship pedagogy more 'care-full,' with understandings of citizenship held by pre-service teachers in a Canadian province without a social studies diploma exam, making her case that citizenship education could be more complex and rich in the absence of diploma exams. The pressure on students and teachers in relation to exam performance yields, according to Tupper, "an understanding of

citizenship that is self-interested, individualistic, and disciplinary" (p. 268).

It is important to note the temporality of the curricular context Richardson's (2002) and Tupper's (2007) studies. They share the geographic and jurisdictional context with the study in this dissertation, although the provincial POS for social studies has changed since Richardson and Tupper carried out their studies. The former POS was characterized by a more conservative tone in relation to civic engagement than the language found in the current POS.[7] In the former POS, "Responsible citizenship is the ultimate goal of social studies… The "responsible citizen" is one who is knowledgeable, purposeful and makes responsible choices" (Alberta Learning, 2000, p. 3). In the current POS, program outcomes contribute to students becoming "active and responsible citizens engaged in the democratic process and aware of their capacity to effect change in their communities, society and world" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1).[8] That change in tone could be read as inviting teachers to consider a different relationship with program outcomes, enriching pedagogies concerned with promoting community engagement beyond responsible citizenship.

Evans (2006) looked at the relationship between conceptions of citizenship and citizenship pedagogy in the practice of secondary school citizenship education specialists in Ontario and in Great Britain. His study assessed the extent of discontinuities and dissonances between what teachers said they did in the classroom in relation to teaching for citizenship, and what he observed teachers doing in their classroom. His findings

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[7] I write more about the current and former POS for social studies in Chapter V.

[8] In the study reported on in this dissertation the front matter text figured, significantly, in the conversations I had with teacher participants. Teacher participants in this study, too, were very familiar with the previous iteration of the POS for social studies. The front matter of the POS speaks to all grade levels and program streams.

suggested that teachers in his study held sophisticated and progressive understandings of citizenship, extending its teaching beyond an information transfer. Evans wrote that the data from interviews and from questionnaires suggested that:

> [The] preferred learning goals of teachers in both [Ontario and Yorkshire] extended well beyond more traditional civics perspectives and were reflective of certain liberal/civic republic tendencies represented in many contemporary conceptions of citizenship education and in the core learning strands expressed in related, official curricula. Data also revealed that teachers talked about their preferred learning goals in four general areas: knowledge acquisition and being informed about civic issues; developing skills required for citizenship; exploring diverse beliefs, values, and notions of social justice; and becoming involved in civic life (Evans, 2006, p. 418).

Canadian teachers in Evans' study emphasized goals such as promoting cultural diversity; British teachers emphasized diversity across social classes. As far as advocating active citizenship, both cohorts of teachers identified service learning as a site of participation-based citizenship education, a practice in official curricula in both jurisdictions. In contrast to what Niemi and Niemi (2007) found in their observational study set in the United States, Evans noted that few teachers in his study talked about voting as the principal expression of the practice of citizenship. Of interest for this study, Evans' Canadian participants emphasized performance-based teaching and assessment strategies, but he observed limited evidence of those approaches in participants' classroom practices.

In a study conducted in high schools in Ottawa, Llewellyn, Cook, and Molina (2010) found that civic education teachers tended to emphasize procedural knowledge and compliance focused codes of behaviour more than pedagogies inviting students to understand and critically evaluate national, provincial, and local political culture as facets of developing students' capacities to participate in the Canadian polity. Interestingly, by situating their study in Canada's capital city, Llewellyn et al believed they might find elevated levels of interest in civic and political issues and events. Instead they encountered pedagogies that did not promote participation in the polity, learning from teachers and administrators, informally, that political discussions in class were not desirable, and that teachers might experience pushback, potentially impacting job security and promotion opportunities. Those were perceived consequences similar to what was found in the study by Miller-Lane et al (2006). Cornbleth (2010) referred to such conditions as 'threatening climates;' the threat limits the scope of pedagogy to the resolved and uncontested. Like Evans (2006), Llewellyn et al (2010) found some degree of heterogeneity among the descriptions of what teacher participants hoped students would learn and take with them into the communities in which they lived. Their participants appeared to be practitioners that wanted to push, to varying extents, beyond the resolved and the non-political, although they may not have pushed that hard, or that far; still, it was not clear how much the of pushing was related to teachers' political identifications, ideological orientations, or community commitments.

It seemed that among the cohorts of teacher participants in studies by Tupper (2007), Evans (2006), and Llewellyn et al (2010) that it was not unreasonable to anticipate a predisposition towards expressing progressive understandings of citizenship

that extended beyond what Westheimer and Kahne (2004) called 'personally responsible citizenship.'[9] What appeared common to the participants in studies by Tupper (2007), Evans (2006), and Llewellyn et al (2010) was that teachers who participated seemed more likely to share predispositions towards progressive conceptions of citizenship pedagogy and were more likely to disclose their orientations and stances to researchers. The caveat was the progressive points of view did not necessarily reach students. There is room for inquiry into the ideological orientations of social studies and social science teachers. To what extent might ideological orientation be connected to disclosure to students of teachers' stances? And, to what extent might social studies and social science teachers' ideological orientations proportionately reflect the ideological orientations of their communities?

Both Torney-Purta et al (1999) and Hahn (1998) suggested that in settings like Denmark, where teachers and students have opportunities to encounter current issues of concern, they come to better understand and express comprehension of complex problems and democratic governance by practicing critical thinking, and learning to recognize and exercise avenues of participatory engagement. But, in contrast to international studies that showed deliberative citizenship pedagogies fostered students' understanding of complex problems, and that teachers could help students to appreciate multiple approaches to civic engagement, the pedagogic culture of the schools in the study by Llewellyn et (2010) was threatening to teachers:

> [They] avoided interrogation of political and social difference. Teachers believed it was imperative for them to take a journalistic approach, namely, objectively

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[9] There is more on this in section 2.4.2 of this chapter.

> covering the either/or of an issue without revealing their biases or leaving room for ambiguity. This partly stems from official curriculum guidelines that find safety in student knowledge of technical 'truths' and 'accepted' Canadian values. (Llewellyn, et al., 2010, pp. 804-805)

The journalistic approach that "objectively [covers] the either/or of an issue" (p. 805) fosters conditions for a reductively binary treatment of issues, potentially ignoring complexities, nuances, and perspectives existing outside of the principal tensions that teachers posits. The sense that teachers and journalists exercise positivist objectivity has resonance in my own study.

Llewellyn et al found climates in school that cultivated fear among teachers in relation to job security, pressurizing the school and classroom climate, pushing teachers to censor themselves and their pedagogies. Llewellyn et al (2010) argued that this school culture functioned as a hidden curriculum, reinforcing value-neutrality practices when teachers perceived they were treading into unfamiliar, contentious, and uncomfortable territory. It is manifestation of neutrality foreclosing on pedagogies that invite students to engage in deliberative discourse on issues meaningful to them. It constrains opportunities for teachers and students to draw on such discourses to deliberate about how to act in their communities (Parker, 2008).

Faden's (2012) study looked at conceptions of good citizenship expressed by 13 history teachers; six English Canadians in Ontario, and seven Americans in Maryland. Faden sought to understand the character of history teachers' perceptions of their own roles as citizenship educators. Public schools' mission is the induction of children into the discourses associated with what Anderson (1991) called 'imagined community,'

sustaining and reinforcing community cohesions through shared narratives articulated in ways that maximize and sustain comprehension, retention, and loyalty (Callan, 1997; Feinberg, 2012; Heater, 2004; Sears, 2004; VanSledright, 2008; Wertsch, 2004). Faden (2012) asked her participants to describe characteristics of good citizenship and consider what skills students needed to acquire and develop to practice good citizenship. Responses ranged from information mastery to understanding injustice. Faden grouped her participants in relation to their responses, aligning them with Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) citizenship framework, from 'personally responsible citizen,' to 'participatory citizen,' and finally to 'justice-oriented citizen.'[10] While some participants' responses in Faden's (2012) study resisted categorization in that framework, she placed only one participant, a Canadian, in the justice-oriented category.

Interestingly, in relation to the role nation state identifications played in conceptions of good citizenship, five of seven American participants in Faden's (2012) study did not mention American national identity in describing good citizenship. She attributed this to two possibilities: that these teachers "did not have [a] particular vision of the United States that they wanted to pass on to their students, or they saw US identity as an 'unmarked' category, an identity so normalized it need not be identified" (p. 182). The latter possibility is interesting in contrast to the challenge and ambiguity Richardson's (2002) participants had in expressing a coherent, shared sense of Canadian identity.

Drawing on a comparative study by Hardwick, Marcus, and Isaak (2010), Faden (2012) noted the role of mythologizing tropes of communitarianism, peacekeeping, and

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[10] See section 2.4.2 of this chapter for a more detailed explanation of this framework

multiculturalism, as descriptive exemplars of key elements of national identity her Canadian participants' mentioned in relation to the practice of good citizenship. Those tropes resonate in English Canada as part of an identity discourse reflecting a struggle to articulate Canadian identities as different than American, and intra-nationally differentiated (Hardwick, et al., 2010).

The national myths and tropes identified by Hardwick et al (2010) resonated, too, in Alberta in similar ways to Ontario. Participants in den Heyer and Abbott's (2011) study, all pre-service teachers specializing in social studies at a research university in Alberta, struggled with expressing any story of Canada that was not enmeshed in the English Canadian metanarrative. Alberta's POS requires that teachers address curricular outcomes through Aboriginal perspectives, and Francophone perspectives, complementing and counterbalancing the implicit expectation that outcomes will be addressed from an unnamed and unacknowledged Anglo-normative perspective (Alberta Education, 2005; den Heyer & Abbott, 2011). The program's language does not define the nature, complexity, and diversity of any perspective, leaving teachers with the invitation and the challenge of practicing multiple perspectives pedagogy absent of guidance, and absent of a definition of perspective. That ambiguity could be treated as an opportunity to explore the complexity of a perspective community by imagining that members of such a community are, for example, gendered, educated to differing extents, and that members of a perspective community may identify with different socioeconomic strata.

The pre-service teachers in den Heyer and Abbott's study were tasked with producing a video as part of a major assignment, using Internet-based resources to

temporally, geographically, or thematically entwine two accounts of Canada's past. The caveat was that neither of the intertwined stories articulates the English Canadian metanarrative. From the beginning, study participants found the encounter troubling, citing issues of entitlement to tell the stories they were researching and generating, because the stories did not belong to them. Such encounters served as cathartic moments; the realization of how silence and absence from mainstream school curriculum and pedagogy reinforced marginalization. But, for many pre-service teachers in the study, the effort to work through the difficulty of finding a story to tell and sharing it with their audience in a way that treated its subject matter justly left them ambivalent and frustrated. Their collective gaze, they discovered, had little room for stories of Canada holding the nation state in an unflattering light; the horizon of that gaze being limited by the tropes and myths much like those found by Hardwick, et al., (2010) in Canadian social studies textbooks. Their encounter with their resistance to implicating themselves and their nation state in stories of injustice echoed Levstik's (2000) findings, where her pre-service and practicing teacher participants also resisted analogous stories about the United States.

Their encounters with stories of Canada's past with which they did not identify revealed, to some participants, aspects of their own identifications that might otherwise go unrecognized, unacknowledged, and unengaged, in their future practice. Drawing on what Wertsch (1998, 2004) called a 'basic narrative,' a fantastic synthesis of authorless myth and specific facts articulated through a narrative template, participants' self-identification as Canadians was often interwoven with a collective 'we' in the present fusing them to a historical 'we' in the past (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Levstik, 2000; J.

W. Scott, 2001; VanSledright, 2008).[11] A further dissonant element contributing to participants' ambivalence was tied up in confronting the narrative template with which they were familiar. For many participants how the past gets storied was not universal nor a culturally transcendent practice (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011). Drawing on the work of Rüsen (2004), Wertsch (2004), and Letourneau (2006), den Heyer and Abbott (2011) found that their study participants struggled with reconciling the power of the narrative with which they identified in relation to the expectation in the POS that other ways of knowing and sharing the past were alternatives to their own (Alberta Education, 2005). Interestingly, participants' expressed frustration and ambivalence about differently storying Canada, revealing an unacknowledged chasm between the stories to which they were accustomed to hearing and telling, and unfamiliar, difficult knowledge stories exposing dissonances in national myths and fantasies (Britzman, 1998; den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Hardwick, et al., 2010; J. W. Scott, 2001; VanSledright, 2008). The encounter was important, because those pre-service teachers were preparing for careers in public education. Rendering their politicized and historicized identifications and facets of how they have been constituted as subjects visible, was intended to provoke a reflective and reflexive relationship with curriculum prior to the beginning their professional practices.

Segall and Gaudelli (2007) argued that social studies teachers should engage in reflective practice attending to their subjectivities, and that should begin while they are in their teacher education programs. Segall and Gaudelli based their approach to reflective and reflexive pedagogy on Giroux's notion of pedagogy of theorizing, and Sumara and

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[11] These concepts are addressed more deeply in Chapter III.

Luce-Kapler's (1993) 'writerly' approach, calling on teachers to theorize about their own teaching practice. I found a hermeneutic sensibility at work in a pedagogy of theorizing, because it insists on a dialogical relationship between a teacher, at a particular moment in time, and the text, and its author as teacher, as they move, together, through time (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989).

2.4 Citizenship in Curriculum and Pedagogy

The word 'citizenship' occurs three times in the two paragraphs that constitute the vision statement for the POS . Along with 'identity,' it is one of the two core concepts for the program. The normative character of the term 'citizenship' resonates through the multiple ways it is used in the program and in social studies discourses, meaning that when it came up in the conversations in this study it was being used to express different facets and different understandings of citizenship.

The notion of citizenship is complex and its normative character makes it challenging to unpack and teach (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Sears, 2004). It is, concurrently, a possession and a way of living and being with others. It is rooted in the Latin 'civitas,' the city, tying together the delimitations of boundaries with the epistemological and ontological nature of being-with-others in communities, and being in the world (Heater, 1990, 2004; OED Online Version, 1989; Sears, 2004). The word, evokes 'civilization,' that is the community organization and labour specializations of cities and city states around which hierarchical taxonomies of difference shape human interactions (Diamond, 2012). It is a loaded concept, bringing with it a mythology transmitted through language, structuring assumptions about social relationships, political power, economic organization, and freedom (Willinsky, 1998).

Citizenship's complexity has been teased to render a range of typologies, frameworks, and representations, each capturing specific facets and functions of belonging and living in particular contexts, and reflecting, for example, relative relationships among affiliation, community engagement, and participation. In articulating that complexity to an intended audience of pre-service social studies teachers, Sears (2004) used a biaxial graphic representation of citizenship by Gagnon and Pagé, expressing the range of possibilities present in the tensions between a national identification and other identifications, and between enjoyment of rights and civic engagement. This representation has long been at play in multinational and multicultural settings like Canada (Banks, 2001, 2004; Banks & Nguyen, 2008; Kymlicka, 1995).

In another example of how citizenship can be articulated, Heater (1990, 2004) offered five conceptions, all operating within a nation state system; and, with the exception of the final conception, absent of multicultural and multinational diversities: classical citizenship, liberal citizenship, social citizenship, national citizenship, and multiple citizenship. Classical citizenship is an inherited status where citizens willingly place the interest of the state over their own interests. Liberal citizenship places the interest of the individual ahead of the nation state's interests, extending to the citizen the choice to serve the community. Social citizenship requires that the state maintain a financial capacity to ensure citizens can participate regardless of wealth. National citizenship reflects a powerful state setting responsibilities and duties of the citizen to serve state interests. Multiple citizenship reflects a reality that as a status, individuals may hold citizenship in more than one nation state, enjoying rights, and perhaps, tied to commitments in each nation state to which a citizen belongs.

There are multifold layers of complexity to citizenship in a multinational and multicultural liberal democratic nation state like Canada (Kymlicka, 1995). The fair enjoyment of rights and privileges often comes with accommodations connected to difference, but it is in the perception of accommodation that the seeds of tension, misunderstanding, and discrimination, might be sewn and sustained (Banks, 2004; Callan, 1997; Kymlicka, 1995). Tupper noted the dangers of universalized conceptions of citizenship that ignore difference, arguing that such positions are usually expressed by individuals and groups enjoying the full benefits of citizenship without accommodation (Tupper, 2008). Schools, according to Tupper, reinforce a

> normalized vision of good citizenship which constructs students as basically the same. The creation and implementation of standardized curriculum outcomes in social studies, uniform content, and common exams further reinforce the false universalism of citizenship embedded in education and promote an egalitarian conceptualization of education. (Tupper, 2006, p. 48)

Tupper expressed concern that teachers take up a curriculum shaped by standards and standardized exams in a way that sustains a notion of universalized citizenship, and such an approach fails to acknowledge structural and institutionalized inequities. She argued, too, that students find that "it is often safer to accept knowledge that is disseminated to them in social studies rather than engage in a critique of exploration of the complexity of the information they are presented" (2006, p. 51). In a sense there is an implicit and not-necessarily involuntary conspiracy by teachers and students to limit the scope of dialogue around citizenship. Keeping it in the abstract is safe for teachers and easier for students to cope with on exams.

Citizenship's political dimensions are intertwined with its historical, social, linguistic and geographic dimensions. Engaging it in the classroom potentially opens it to critical understanding of its implicit and explicit aspects. In the modern world of nation states, citizenship and civilization tie a multitude of discourses together, including Hegelian knowledge-of-freedom/ignorance-of-freedom dialectic, social contract consciousness, Judeo-Christian ethics and morality, and economic, religious, and linguistic imperialism (Heater, 1990, 1992; Smith, 2003; Willinsky, 1998). 'Nation,' rooted in Latin, ties birth to community membership, and to the sharing of a common language and history (OED Online Version, 2003a). When bonded with the word 'state,' derived from 'estate,' the notion of 'nation state' expresses a modern notion of union of nation tied to specific territory (OED Online Version, 2012c). Citizenship, when employed in relation to membership in a nation state community by birth or by naturalization, is a term concerned with possession of status. As a status reflecting inclusion, the holder benefits from enjoyment and protection of the nation state, invoking some sort of contractual relationship between citizens and state (Heater, 1992; Kymlicka, 2001; Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Osborne, 1997; Sears, 2004). But citizenship is far more complex (Heater, 1992; Kymlicka, 2001; Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Osborne, 1997; Sears, 2004). According to Heater (2004), "citizenship is not just a matter of status, rights and duties, but also of commitment, loyalty, and responsibility – of being a *good citizen*" (p. 195). Good citizenship as an educational goal is common in curricula all over the world (Hahn, 1998; Lee & Fouts, 2005; Torney-Purta, et al., 1999).

Yet, the nature of 'good citizenship' evades easy description for good reason. Its normativity, just like that of 'citizenship,' invites superficial expressions of consensus

and informational treatment (Heater, 1990, 2004; Osborne, 1997; Sears, 2004). Its multifaceted complexity, accompanied by the heavy-lifting demands placed on the word, can render it an empty signifier. For teachers, regardless of whether they teach in the social studies, or more specific social science courses, schools prepare students for citizenship as status and, importantly, as a domain of thoughtful, living practice (Abbott, 2007; Barton & Levstik, 2004; Heater, 1990, 2004; Osborne, 1997; Sears, 2004). Yet, in spite of citizenship's seemingly transcendent transdisciplinary function as a goal of public education, it has long held a special position in social studies and social science curricula and pedagogy tied up in political education, but too often stripped of the political situation, "equating," according to Osborne, "good citizen with good person" (2001, p. 34).

Citizenship has taken on new meanings, understandings, and dimensions, reflecting social, political, and economic shifts in the world since the Second World War (Banks, 2004; Lee & Fouts, 2005; Marshall, 1950/1973). In Canada, the United States, Great Britain, and Australia, for example, these shifts have eroded assimilationist and conformist models of citizenship (Banks, 2001, 2004). These have been displaced by citizenship discourses transcending modern nation state constructs, yet continuing to be inhabited by the legacies of 'civitas,' and Western civilization constructs for organizing the polity (Lee & Fouts, 2005). Important among these is global citizenship education. Its addition to an already multifaceted notion further complicates teachers' and students' understandings (Banks, 2004; Larsen & Faden, 2008; O'Sullivan, 2008a, 2008b; Pike, 2008a; Richardson, 2008; Richardson & Abbott, 2009; Sears, 2004).

2.4.1 Global citizenship in curriculum and pedagogy

Global citizenship is notionally different from nation state citizenship, speaking more to a cosmopolitan commitment and sentiment that extends beyond nation state boundaries; increasingly, it is an important but challenging space for public education and for teachers (Appiah, 1996; O'Sullivan, 2008a, 2008b; Pike, 2008a). That citizenship can be expressed as commitments both within and beyond the boundaries of the nation state is complicated and somewhat paradoxical, requiring teachers and students to contend with an already amorphous yet normative notion's shifting and elastic meaning (O'Sullivan, 2008a, 2008b; Pike, 2008a). In an essay on cosmopolitanism, American political philosopher Martha Nussbaum (1996) used Jeffersonian language and sentiments from the American Declaration of Independence to criticize American citizenship curriculum for its parochial character. Nussbaum wrote:

> If we really do believe that all human beings are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights, we are morally required to think about what the conception requires us to do with and for the rest of the world. (1996, p. 13)

Nussbaum's troubling of this ethic captured the hypocrisy of invocations of national values because the language of the sentiment appears to transcend nation state boundaries; but, in practice, it remains a sentiment held in check by those same boundaries, limiting the state's obligations to expressions of rhetoric, offering selective critiques of the world beyond its borders. Citizenship's complexity and ambiguity, especially when it can be applied to the transcendence of national boundaries, and the inevitable intersection of one community's values with the values and sovereignty of another, is complicated and challenging to understand. Pike (2008a) pointed to

globalization's impact on education as a range of forces diminishing global action, but also diminishing local engagement. Factors, such as an absence of a feeling of national connection to others, and economic globalization, tend to contribute to neoliberal individualism, the privatization of public education, a resistance to global thinking, and young people's sense of powerlessness. It also contributes to limiting and eroding students' efficacy and sense of efficacy as global citizenship actors. If everyone shares global citizenship, then citizenship is not bounded, it is not about belonging, and while it may be about the extension of values, it is complicated by the potential for the imposition of values. It is a domain of contradiction, paradox, and complexity; an easy sentiment that is very challenging to grasp, teach, and learn.

O'Sullivan (2008b) argued that there is far from a sufficient number of socially conscious teachers practicing from a politicized, critical, and transformative perspective, and more are needed to give global citizenship education momentum. Such social consciousness, exercised pedagogically, might be reflective of a teacher who has given attention to how he or she is constituted as a politicized and historicized subject, because he or she recognizes and attends to imbalances and injustices beyond nation state boundaries.

Larsen and Faden's (2008) research accepted, implicitly, the possibility that social studies teachers would be willing to be global citizenship educators, but that willingness would be contingent on substantial support in the form of curriculum-supporting resources and professional development. In their study they worked with 13 grade six teachers in Ontario, investigating teacher participants' experiences with the 'Active Citizens Today' teaching kit in their classrooms. Through questionnaires and interviews,

Larsen and Faden found teachers' expressed concerns and resistances to some aspects of global citizenship education similar to Cornbleth's (2010) climates of constraint. Study participants were uncomfortable with disclosure, uneasy with the political and controversial character of issues, anxious about having a limited depth of knowledge about global issues, and concerned about pedagogic time dedicated to the effort, although these could be mitigated, somewhat, through dedicated support (Larsen & Faden, 2008). What seemed odd was a dissonant relationship between the acronym for the kit, 'ACT!' and the nature of the initiative's goal, the promotion of awareness. Larson and Faden's conclusions brought to mind den Heyer's (2009a) troubling of the ways in which global citizenship education raises awareness, that it fosters pity as the invitation to commitment rather than attends to implication in contemporary conditions. Unquestionably, the move to self-implication is a pedagogically complex and difficult one to make, challenging even teachers who are well acquainted with it (D. Scott & Abbott, 2012).

The pedagogic reproduction of the status quo, the acquiescence to perceived pressure to informationalize rather than interrogate, and the power of exams to set the agenda for social studies, were all threads woven through much of the scholarly literature. What researchers have found in teachers' practices is variously inconsistent with the spirit of social studies (Clark, 2004; Cornbleth, 2010; Nelson, 2001; Parker, 2008; Sears, 2004). The consensus expression of social studies and history education scholars is that social studies must serve as a nexus between learning and democratic engagement. What seemed evident in my encounter with the literature was that information may be the easy and accessible part, but the challenges for carrying knowledge and understandings beyond the boundaries of the classroom are multiple and

complex. Perceptions of external pressures (Cornbleth, 2010; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Niemi & Niemi, 2007), the power of the exams to limit the scope of pedagogy (Tupper, 2007), the proximate and constraining sense of community (den Heyer, 2009a; den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; O'Sullivan, 2008b), the ambiguity of language (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Kennelly & Llewellyn, 2011; Llewellyn, et al., 2010), and the disparity between the identifications of teachers and students (Johnston, et al., 2009; Levstik, 2000), are just some factors impacting teaching for democratic engagement. Other factors include geography, situation, social class, and school culture; all play roles in capturing some of the spirit of social studies in practice, especially in relation to thoughtful democratic engagement.

2.4.2 Social studies curriculum and democratic engagement

To capture nuances of democratic engagement to better appreciate how citizenship pedagogies can sustain, explain, and challenge the status quo, Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) offered a framework for expressing three visions of citizenship. Their work has garnered substantial attention from the citizenship education community. Within this framework, the most limited of the three visions is the 'personally responsible citizen,' whose behaviour in the community and polity is principally narrow and compliant. He or she, according to Westheimer and Kahne, votes, obeys the law, pays taxes, gives blood, and picks up litter. Such a citizen would not be out of place in almost any modern nation state from the democratic to the totalitarian. The ideal manifestation of the personally responsible citizen is being of good character, staying out of debt, and volunteering to help the needy and those in distress. Education for personally responsible

citizenship promotes “honesty, integrity, self-discipline, and hard work” (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004, p. 241).

The ‘participatory citizen’ is actively involved in the polity at one or more levels. He or she understands governance and is engaged in organizing community events and efforts. Educating for participatory citizenship means teaching students to understand and appreciate the organization of governments, and understand decision-making processes. It includes appreciation of the partisan character of politics, comprehension of ideologies, and understandings of how government and community agencies work.

In their research, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) found that teaching for justice-oriented citizenship was the least pursued of the three visions. The justice-oriented citizen, like the participatory citizen, is involved in his or her community, but the character of engagement is different. Teaching students to be justice-oriented citizens involves preparing them to

> improve society by critically analyzing and addressing social issues and injustices. These programs are less likely to emphasize the need for charity and volunteerism as ends in themselves and more likely to teach about social movements and how to effect systemic change. (p. 242).

Westheimer and Kahne (2004) noted that for teachers to engage in justice-oriented citizenship pedagogy they must find space for the political in the curriculum. The space for the political requires more of teachers than acquainting students with structural and ideological information about the political domain, as teachers might do for the other two visions of citizenship. Justice-oriented citizenship pedagogy involves analyzing and understanding situations, and having students engage, dialogically, to consider strategies

and possibilities that address root causes of injustice. In advocating this orientation over personally responsible citizenship, and participatory citizenship, Westheimer and Kahne acknowledge their own beliefs and commitments; research has shown that such attention is insufficiently present among teacher (Hess, 2009; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006). Westheimer and Kahne's advocacy against limiting civic education to personally responsible citizenship is connected to an appreciation that curricula, and pedagogies fostering it, are not necessarily compatible with democratic living because they have the potential to elevate individualism against a communitarian ethic.

In their article, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) compare two out of ten citizenship education programs from a larger study, looking specifically at teachers' articulated program goals, pedagogies, and students' senses of efficacy as a result of pedagogy. These were intended to serves as exemplars of participatory and social justice-oriented citizenship. The goals for the 'Madison County Youth in Public Service' program, a service learning initiative, were expressed in vague outcome-oriented language like "teach students how government works" (p. 249). Questionnaire and interview data collected from students suggested that the programs' goals to promote a participatory citizenship sensibility were successful; but students, while expressing enjoyment of their community involvement experiences, seemed uninterested in systemic issues underlying the conditions necessitating their involvement in the first place.

In the 'Bayside Students for Justice' program, the teacher employed deliberate justice-oriented language in the learning goals, and in her pedagogy. Students, in turn, learned to use the same language to talk about issues. The differing demographic conditions of the students in each program contributed to students' appreciation of their

respective situations – mostly white and middle class for the Madison County group, and mostly non-White and working class or poor for the Bayside students. In both cases students' own sense of efficacy was tied to pedagogies reflecting their teachers' values and gaze. In both cases, the teacher's values and gaze seemed related to and connected with the conditions and situation of the school, its students, and the community where it was situated. This was interesting because it suggested that teachers and the language they use might have influence on students' points of view, although that influence may be contingent on the situation.

In comparing and contrasting these cases there seemed to be an unjust burden on Bayside relative to Madison County. Although the Bayside teacher's language, reflecting a critical theory stance, was evident in students' understandings of the situation, and in how they sought to remedy it, the burden for remediation of the condition of the marginalized fell on the shoulders of the marginalized. An appreciation of a relationship to the situation, and a sense of connection with it, impacts the effective range of the gaze of teachers and students. In each case, teachers were constituted as subjects in different ways in relation to their identifications and their situations; in spite of sharing the same career, and nation state identification, their approach to community engagement was substantially different.

There is something going on between teachers and language that connected these teachers to their pedagogies and to their students' sense of efficacy that may be tied to a lesser extent to the official curriculum authority, reflecting, instead, who the teacher understands himself or herself to be in relation to the intention of the teaching and learning. Engagement-focused pedagogies, according to Westheimer and Kahne (2004),

work when there is a pedagogic commitment to give them meaning. In the cases they offered, program language could be read as an invitation and a demand for thoughtful and deliberate community engagements.

Tempering the promise of language, Kennelly and Llewellyn (2011) employed a discourse analysis of English Canadian social studies and civics curricula, pouring cold water on whether active citizenship pedagogy possibilities are present at the level of official text when not explicitly spelled out, as in Alberta where there is no service learning component in the POS. They argued that while the language of 'active citizenship' was present and promising in curriculum documents in Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario, the potential for critical theory-inspired social engagements was impacted by neoliberal language connecting active citizenship with reasonable, rational, responsible and rights-based participation. Kennelly and Llewellyn suggested that in Alberta, for example, the development of plans of action in Social Studies 10-1, the upper stream course at the Grade 10 level, the program language is ambivalent about where action takes place. Action could remain entirely in the abstract. The challenge for teachers then, based on Kennelly and Llewellyn's analysis, becomes one of contending with their perception of the power of the language of official curricula to shape and perhaps limit the pedagogic possibilities in relation to planning and classroom practice, departing from more conservative performances and tasks. That perception was shaped, in part, by other discourses already identified in this chapter, such as Cornbleth's (2010) climates of constraint, teachers' lack of depth of knowledge (Larsen & Faden, 2008; Levstik, 2000), the slipperiness of the notion of citizenship (Osborne, 2001; Sears, 2004), and a willingness to contend with difficult knowing (den Heyer, 2009a; Hess, 2009;

Levstik, 2000). Counterbalancing the language of a conservative citizenship discourse requires teachers to extend pedagogies into the latter two visions in Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) framework that invite deliberate connection between the classroom and the community.

Limiting students' opportunities to engage in purposeful and democratic dialogue, such as that noted in Niemi and Niemi (2007), and in Llewellyn et al. (2010), runs contrary to what Parker (2008) has argued should be happening in schools. According to Parker, schools serve, potentially and ideally, at the crossroads of a community, allowing students to encounter other students that may come from the same or from different circumstances. Public schools "have two essential assets for cultivating democrats: diversity and shared problems" (p. 70). Feinberg (1998, 2012), Callan (1997), and many others echo this sensibility. For Parker (2008), it is the 'public' of public schools that offers conditions for students to avoid 'idiocy,' the over-elevation of the interests of the private domain. Parker quoted curriculum theorist Joseph Schwab to address the value of purposeful discussion that can take place in schools. "Discussion is not merely a device, one of several means by which a mind might be brought to understanding of a worthy object. It is also the *experience* of moving toward and possessing understanding" (Parker, 2008, p. 70). Parker took up purposeful discussion by dividing it into two classes of conversation, seminar and deliberation. In seminar, students and teachers work and learn together by interpreting a text. 'Text' could be understood to include "any semipermanent or non transitory cultural product" (2008, p. 70), an understanding consistent with Dilthey's expansion of 'texts' that could be subject to hermeneutic analysis; that includes art and other human-made objects (Gadamer, 1975/1989).

Seminar serves as an opportunity to model democratic dialogue as students share interpretations and, in turn reevaluate what they believe in light of what others might infer. By comparison, deliberations "provide opportunities for discussants to think, speak and listen together, with and across their differences, about a chosen topic" (Parker, 2008, p. 71). The intention is to decide on a collective course of action in relation to a topic, informed by interpretations of text. Deliberation invokes measuring and balancing (OED Online Version, 2013a). It is a social exercise; it is done together with others. In schools it serves as both model and avenue of democratic engagement. Deliberation need not attend to an abstract resolution, but, importantly, can speak to an issue with currency and meaning to students, inviting action as a response, strengthened by a communitarian ethic (den Heyer, 2009a; Feinberg, 2012; Osborne, 2005; Segall & Gaudelli, 2007; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004).

2.5 Curriculum and Critical Thinking

Discussion in social studies must be informed by knowledge that contributes to understanding. The deliberate character of discussion both invites and demands that students and teachers engage ideas, concepts and information to develop understandings that can contribute to decisions about engagement and action in the community. Alberta's POS for social studies identifies six dimensions of thinking that contribute to students developing capacities for active and thoughtful engagement with knowledge, developing competencies and fluencies that can contribute to thoughtful citizenship engagement. Among these is critical thinking. In the research project addressed in this dissertation, teacher participants in the study were interested the notion of 'critical thinking.' It was part of an effort exploring their relationship to the language of outcomes in the POS.

Critical thinking is implicit in the first sentence of the front matter of the POS. "Social studies provides opportunities for students to develop the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that will enable them to become engaged, active, informed and responsible citizens" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1). That language speaks to offering students thoughtful and deliberate encounters with knowledge. Echoing Case and Daniels (2008), the words of the program intertwine attitudes, skills, and knowledge with responsible citizenship, which is teased out in the text of the POS as a complex notion demanding critical engagement from students. The front matter of the POS has three sets of broad program outcomes transcending all grades and streams. Under the heading 'Skills and Processes,' the program places engagement "in active inquiry and critical and creative thinking,"(Alberta Education, 2005, p. 2) first, among eight outcomes. Many other outcomes in the same set also reflect aspects of critical thinking.

The invitation to teachers to weave thoughtful and purposeful inquiry with critical thinking was evident in my reading of the language of a section of the front matter titled: "Issues-focused approach to teaching social studies" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 5). The program focuses on a deliberative treatment of issues more than information competence, describing the former as "intrinsic to the multidisciplinary nature of social studies and to democratic life in a pluralistic society… by engaging students in active inquiry and application of knowledge to critical thinking skills" (pp. 5-6). The use of the word 'deliberative' in the program is an explicit expectation that teachers will work with students to transition knowledge-acquisition into deliberation, and, as Parker (2008) has explained, deliberation leads to informed decision-making. The program's text connects critical thinking with the development of students' informed points of view, with critical

reflection, and with the consideration of multiple perspectives. The POS defines critical thinking as "a process of inquiry, analysis and evaluation resulting in a reasoned judgment" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 8).

Critical, from the Greek, κριτής (kri'tes) to judge, entered English as a word emphasizing fault-finding or defect, before taking on its most common contemporary meaning as the exercise of careful judgment (OED Online Version, 2011a). As a practice of using judgment in terms of citizenship, critical thinking can have a political flavour tied to making certain kinds of commitments. But critical thinking might involve more bounded conditions for judgment, where pedagogic language and conditions shape processes and constraints for the consideration of knowledge, and how it might be treated and understood by students.

The notion of critical thinking is subject to misunderstanding and narrow interpretation. Among these is the perceived division between teaching the content and learning about processes through which knowledge and understanding of disciplinary knowledge and understanding are applied. Case and Daniels (2008) have suggested that there is a perception that teaching for content acquisition and teaching for process competence are aspects of a social studies pedagogic dyad. They dismiss this as a phony tension; memorization is not learning, and thinking does not take place in the absence of knowledge. They have proposed that critical thinkers all share elements belonging to five sets of attributes: 'Attitudes or habits of mind' are the first of these, and include open-mindedness, empathy, willingness to consider prejudices, and accept complexity and ambiguity. The next attribute involves 'thinking strategies.' These involve application of a method or framework for organizing and representing information and teasing out other

perspectives. ‘Background knowledge’ is a third attribute. Case and Daniels have noted that there is no generic approach to critical thinking, nor are there methodologies that can successfully transcend all disciplines. The fourth attribute acknowledges the importance of ‘conceptual knowledge’ for critical engagement, appreciating the nature of a domain of knowledge or a discipline, and understanding what is relevant. The final attribute is the application of ‘criteria’ to evaluate information and inform judgment; that leads to conditions for thoughtful decisions.

Farr Darling and Wright (2004) began their consideration of the role of critical thinking in social studies by contextualizing it as a feature of curriculum documents across Canada that are deeply intertwined with the practice of citizenship. Like Case and Daniels (2008), Farr Darling and Wright (2004) challenged the sense that critical thinking can be methodological in a way that transcends the boundaries of disciplines and domains of knowledge. There may be congruence in methods and interpretive frames among disciplines, but each has particularities that manifests as distinctions, limiting interchangeability, and troubling generic ways of engaging in critical thinking. Taking on its “commonplace” presence in curriculum documents, den Heyer posed a challenge to the role of critical thinking in social studies pedagogy, arguing that students should learn to employ critical thinking in relation to investigating “conditions shaping their own education” (2008, p. 253). He has advocated that teachers and students first make the curriculum-the-curriculum, evaluating the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of critical inquiry, making “visible the social and political stakes involved in schooling” (p. 253). This sensibility resonated with one of the participants in my study, who believed it was important for

students to have the opportunity to inquire about what it was that someone else had decided was worth knowing.

Summary

What was evident from studies with social studies teachers and social science teachers in Canada and the United States explored in this chapter was that teachers' identifications, experiences, backgrounds, perspective, and commitments, whether these get disclosed to students or not, influenced pedagogy, impacting what was considered, discussed, and what was excluded from classroom discourse.

In research from the United States, teachers participating in studies avoided what they perceived as controversial or contentious in their communities, generally portraying the United States as progressive and emancipatory (Levstik, 2000; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006). Aspects of social studies curriculum dealing with persistence of racial tensions and inequality, and with American domestic and foreign policy, especially when it was dissonant with the America imagined by teachers, influenced what was taught in classrooms and impacted the richness of the engagement.

In research conducted by Canadian scholars, much of which involved Canadian teachers and pre-service teachers as participants, teachers' identifications, along with powerful tropes around identity and multiculturalism, served as filters through which the curriculum was understood (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Richardson, 2002). In both Canada and the United States, researchers found what Cornbleth (2010) referred to as climates of constraint, pressurizing the pedagogic environment to limit the scope of engagement with topical but controversial issues, and emphasizing exam performance

over critical engagement (Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006; Niemi & Niemi, 2007; Tupper, 2007).

In the American research, somewhat more than the English Canadian scholarship, issues around teachers' disclosure of their points of view, ideological orientations, and commitments were important parts of the discourse, especially in relation to the notion of teacher neutrality (Hess, 2009; Larsen & Faden, 2008; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006; Niemi & Niemi, 2007). As a pedagogic stance, neutrality transcends the boundary between the United States and Canada in terms of teaching practice in social studies and in the social sciences. In both nation states, researchers found teachers were among those that believed that their role required neutrality to facilitate classroom discussion. A teacher in the study conducted by Llewellyn et al (2010) even suggested that neutrality emulated what happened in news media reporting.

I had difficulty finding studies that considered the influence that teachers had on shaping students' positions on issues. Hess (2009) pointed out that students of teachers who disclosed their position were preferred over teachers who did not disclose. Further, it appeared evident from the two exemplars provided by Westheimer and Kahne (2004), that a teacher's pedagogic language and approach may impact students' attitudes towards issues in the immediate moment. However, there is a dearth of research on the impact of teachers' disclosure on students' positions on issues.

In general, the scholarly literature I reviewed for this chapter noted that issues such as failure to disclose, limitations to discussions because of real and perceived external pressures on teachers practices, and the illusionary allure of neutrality ran contrary to the spirit of good social studies pedagogy and the provision of conditions to

foster thoughtful, active, and engaged citizens. What was evident from the literature was that teachers who share who they are with students and who share their commitments are the teachers that make social studies and the social sciences interesting and engaging for students.

In the next chapter, the politicized character of social studies curriculum and of pedagogy from this chapter serves as a complement to a more personal encounter with curriculum. The role of identifications, especially that they can be multiple and overlapping is explored. As a teacher well acclimated to the political culture of Canada, and increasingly to its linguistic heritage, I tease out dissonant facets of my identifications that were and still are at play in my role(s) as a teacher, teacher educator, and citizen.

III. Attending to My Identifications

In this chapter I explore the relationship among my overlapping identifications, and my two 'national' narratives, and how my increasing familiarity and fluency with these narratives, potentially, reveals how I have been storied into the communities I identify with, and how my changing understandings of these relationships influences my pedagogic practice. That I have multiple and overlapping identifications is not news to me – I have been conscious of this since childhood. What interests me is attending to how I managed these identifications in my pedagogy and in my relationships with peers. My intention is to offer a personal exemplar of aspects of my effort to focus attention on understanding my identifications and how they are at play in my teaching. By unpacking tensions at play where my identifications overlap and intersect, I have illustrated how a powerful story of structural integration, that is part of my own family's immigration experience, echoes contemporary Canadian multicultural and integration tropes.

Why does this matter? In the previous chapter I included an excerpt of text by Lawrence Kohlberg, cited in Kelly (1986), pointing to the illusory sense that teachers could be neutral; instead, teachers teach values through pedagogy. Niemi and Niemi (2007) also noted that teachers' values, ideological orientations, and points of view of the political, social, and historical, get communicated to students even when teachers believe they are being neutral or impartial, by not drawing attention to or interrogating, with students the views and opinions the teacher expressed. If it is impossible for teachers to not share their values and view points with students and if it seems pedagogically undesirable for teachers to try to filter themselves out of their practice, should it not be

treated as an opportunity for inquiry attending to the relationship among curriculum, pedagogy, and teachers' identifications (den Heyer, 2008, 2009a; Hess, 2008, 2009; Kelly, 1986; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Niemi & Niemi, 2007)?

What might a teacher gain by attending to his or her identifications with the past and present and with place? Saul (2008) has argued that Canadians, in general, are a Métis people who need to reevaluate the narratives they use to story themselves as a nation and as people, pointing out an unacknowledged hybridity troubling Canadianness. According to Saul, Canadians erroneously understand themselves to be a globally diverse community that is simultaneously a transplanted manifestation of Europe. In turn, Canadians regard themselves as inheritors of a social and political culture rooted in ancient Athens and Rome rather than as a people shaped by the traditions and the geography of where they are now located. Canadians may use European language to describe their polity, but Canada is not a manifestation of the Westphalia model of nation state predicated on homogeneity, rationality, and clarity of identity. Instead, Canada is complex – constantly in a state of negotiation, and always seeking equilibrium and/or stability rather than uniformity in culture and language. Canada's bilingual constitutional federation, accompanied by an increasing comfort among Canadians with a three founding peoples narrative, has no parallel in Europe.[12] This complexity resonates in the current social studies program in Alberta, although the Aboriginal heritage of this political culture, as indigenous, likely needs more attention from teachers to elevate its visibility. The complexity Saul pointed to was echoed in Richardson's (2002) study

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[12] Certainly Belgium and Switzerland are both poly-lingual federations, characterized by geographic cleavages, but neither has the added dimension of indigenous peoples.

where he noted that among his participants, all practicing social studies teachers, a level of comfort in the indeterminacy of Canadian identity; it persists, in some respects, as our national brand. Participants in den Heyer and Abbott's (2011) study, all pre-service teachers majoring in social studies, were content with ambiguity in terms of national identifications, but that shifted from comfort in multiplicity to ambivalence and frustration when they confronted the difficulty of telling a story of Canada through a lens that they did not recognize as Canadian and that they were unable to imagine as their own. For those pre-service teachers, discovering that who they supposed themselves to be, how they understood current conditions, and what they knew of the past, turned out to be contingent on and constrained by the insufficiency of prior interrogations of their own identifications, interrupted their comfort with the subject area content they planned to go out into the community and teach.

3.1 Avoiding Interrogation and Avoiding Trouble

During my time as a high school teacher I was somewhat attentive to the hybrid tensions I have laid out in the pages that follow, but I seldom invested enough time exploring the dissonances and silences in the sets of stories at play in my own identifications. Further, while I believed I had a sophisticated understanding of the history of Canada and of Western culture, I had given little thought to other perspectives, except where I thought these intersected with specific content associated with the communities to whom these perspectives could belong. When I did invite my background, identifications, and stories associated with these in to dialogues about Canada and the world, I was often very selective about my audience. I would share it with peers but not with students.

Although I had enthusiasm for the subject matter of social studies, I kept certain aspects of myself distant and detached from the content I taught and from the questions I asked students, believing it possible to exclude key facets of who I thought I was, why I believed I was there, and how my teaching mattered, from classroom discourse. I had no problem disclosing my ideological orientation and my political views to students while I was teaching. Like Kelly (1986) advocated, I shared my point of view on current issues in class and I encouraged students to share their points of view in class, exploring, to a limited extent, the conditions that shaped them. In that sense I most closely aligned with Hess's 'balanced' approach to disclosure (Hess, 2005, 2009) and Kelly's (1986) 'committed impartiality.' Still, I was reluctant to share stories with my students and with many of my peers when those revealed too much about my familial, cultural, and spiritual past and present. In that sense, while I was willing to share my point of view, I was not willing to share the source of that point of view. It was complicated and I did not want to explain; brevity has never been my style, so in my practice it seemed better to invoke silence. I had grown up in a community where there were not that many Jewish people, and my experience had been that my non-Jewish peers often had insufficient understandings of Judaism and Jews. Still, I found awkward but humorous moments that had the potential to invite richer reflection and conversation.

For one school year, early in my professional practice, part of my assignment involved working as a counselor at a high school. Late one afternoon in mid-December, as I was leaving the office, I noticed that the head counselor was hanging Christmas stockings. Each of these had the name of a counselor or a member of the support staff from our department. I politely asked for one not to be hung with my name on it. The

head counselor asked me, “are you a J.W.?” “No,” I replied, “I’m a J-E-W.” My explanation was met with a smile accompanied by a facial expression I interpreted as surprise. Consistent with my wishes no stocking hung for me. Still, I received the same gifts and treats as everyone else in the counseling office; these were placed neatly on the corner of my desk since they could not be deposited in ‘my’ stocking. I thought I had successfully avoided a public expression of assimilative acceptance of a practice I associated with a religion that was not my own, but my request to not have a stocking did not impede my inclusion in celebrating Christmas at work. I look back at that as an example of the banality of multiculturalism in the workplace.

I should have taken advantage of that instance to ask some questions about how it was that “J.W.” was the default identification the head counselor was prepared to assign to me in relation to my request not to participate in this common, seasonal, ‘Canadian’ cultural practice. Why would anyone wish to forgo the gift-giving associated with this workplace Christmas custom? The normativity of Christmas as a non-religious set of gift-exchanging rituals must have seemed trouble-free for the head counselor until I troubled it, yet my wish to not participate was treated superficially – I still received the gifts. I was treated equally in receiving, but unequally in terms of my religious community identification and my wish to exempt myself from participation. Unfortunately, at the time the stockings were hung I was on my way to meet up with some colleagues for drinks and so I did not take the issue up. At the time I treated it as just another ‘Merry Christmas’ moment. I have found that ‘Merry Christmas’ moments are seldom invitations to conversation to explore differences in beliefs or worldviews in the interests of fostering understanding among people with a potential to lead to a fusion of horizons

(Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999a, 2006). Gadamer said "a genuine conversation is never the one we wanted to conduct. Rather, it is generally more correct to say that we fall into conversation, or even that we become involved in it" (1975/1989, p. 385). My identifications, instead, had a 'that's nice' or 'good-for-you' character of benign indifference to difference. No further questions were asked and no conversation ensued. In this sense, the comfort that this colleague had with difference not only highlights a comfort with the indeterminacy of Canadianness, it is a regard for (some) difference as banal.

In my high school teaching practice I was aware that I had many students that were not of European descent and many who did not identify as Christians. I know that like my encounters with 'Merry Christmas' moments, I too likely communicated a 'that's nice' message more often than I should have, affording me an opportunity to avoid exploring differences and dissonances. The lip service to difference suited me as a teacher like it had suited the head counselor. Such regard for (some) difference as banal speaks to a form of privilege I enjoyed, too; I could situate myself on the non-hyphenated side of Canadianness. Also, I did not want to put students on the spot as 'ambassadors' of difference, and I did not want to give up too much time to difference if it was not done in relation to meeting a POS outcome.

When it came to talking to my peers, especially in social studies, it was never clear to me how much my own religious identification and ancestry registered on my their 'radar.' On the few occasions when our conversations turned to beliefs, customs, and broader social and historical issues, I encountered understandings among my teaching peers ranging from what I thought was very naïve to understandings I regarded

as very well informed and sophisticated. Those dialogues did not occur that often; when they happened they served as learning opportunities for me, and, I trust, for my dialogic partners, as we came to know and value each other's identifications, beliefs, customs, and points of view, through shared conversation (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989).

My choice to engage or to cloak such difference developed in relation to the personal relationships and contexts I inhabited at different stages in my life. Until I was 11 years old, all my classmates at school were Jewish. But when I was playing with other children in my neighborhood, I was often the only Jewish kid. Most of my peers were, based on their last names, of English, Scottish, or Ukrainian decent. When I was seven years old I came to appreciate that being Jewish and Canadian was somehow different than the 'just Canadian' identity claimed by my best friend. For him, his national identification was unproblematic even while acknowledging that his parents were born in Scotland and mine were born in Canada.

As I grew older, I began to understand that my membership in a minority community coexisted with my national identification as Canadian. I confronted and engaged with the challenge of reconciling complex and sometimes dissonant elements of these identifications, accepting that my minority affiliation seemed largely invisible and irrelevant to my peers and friends. For much of my life I have been conscious that these particular facets of who I am are interwoven with family and community narratives that ignore, conceal, avoid, or silence dissonant stories or parts of stories tied to inconsistencies in community meta-narratives (J. W. Scott, 2001).

3.2 At the Nexus of Stories: Schematic Narrative Templates and National Tropes

So I have come to appreciate the hybrid character of my national identifications; that I live at the nexus of stories. I have made an effort to integrate this sensibility into my current pedagogic practice. It has allowed me to better understand complex notions such as multiple perspectives and to recognize the subtle features that can constitute difference. It has contributed to my appreciation the of the value of concurrently sustaining and interrogating the indeterminacy of Canadianness, and to the possibility that such an identification is dynamic, and, potentially, in the process of being re-storied (Richardson, 2002; Saul, 2008).

I began to recognize hybrid narrative spaces that I encountered in the resonances and dissonances in the stories and specific narratives about personal and collective pasts that I have learned, heard, and read throughout my time in the academy and throughout my personal and profession life in educational, religious, and secular domains (Callan, 1997; Strike, 1998; Wertsch, 2004). Increasingly, I became attentive to what Wertsch (1998, 2004) referred to as schematic narrative templates, the different forms of narrative through which nations, for example, get storied. For Wertsch, the grammar of language offers an analogue to shed light on the ways members of a sociocultural milieu structure and share narratives as cultural tools to organize and articulate the storying of the past, facilitating recognition, understanding, and interpretation by members of that same milieu (2000). In that sense, stories of communities and their narrative frames have a shibboleth quality. In articulating the past, community members belonging to sociocultural milieus with history traditions, such as nation states like Canada or diasporic national

communities like the Jews, offer, within their milieus, mutually intelligible accounts of the past consistent with a shared specific narrative template (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Spiegel, 2002; VanSledright, 2008; Wertsch, 1998, 2000, 2004).

A specific narrative template is, necessarily, complemented by a specific narrative. Wertsch (2004) distinguished between fluencies in a specific narrative template and that of a specific narrative, pointing to the subliminal presence of the former in shaping how knowledge of the latter is articulated.

> Specific narratives are the focus of history instruction in schools and deal with 'mid-level' events that populate textbooks, examinations, and other textual forms found in that context. In contrast, schematic narrative templates involve a much more abstract level of representation and provide a narrative framework that is compatible with many instantiations of specific narratives" (Wertsch, 2004, p. 51)

Schools, teachers, and curriculum play an important role in communicating specific narratives of the past through narrative templates to facilitate students' sense-making (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Létourneau & Moisan, 2004; VanSledright, 2008). This exercise serves to build and sustain national cohesion, cultivating students' deeper understandings of their identities within the context of an 'imagined community,' like a nation state or diasporic community, enhancing bond between citizens and territory, infusing them with the values, customs, language, and traditions of their nation (Anderson, 1991). Such nation-binding stories are referred to in the scholarly literature by a range of terms such as 'grand narrative,' 'master narrative,' 'metanarrative,' 'single best story', and 'mythistory' (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Létourneau, 2006; Lyotard, 1984; Seixas, 2000; Trofanenko, 2008; VanSledright, 2008). Metanarratives adhere to

particular tropes, following particular plotlines expressing an imagined community's cohesive story (H. White, 1992).

In Western Canada, den Heyer and Abbott (2011) noted the resonance of the 'settlement of the west' as a narrative template that their study participants experienced difficulty overcoming or bypassing when trying to offer stories of Canada's past that were not part of the English Canadian settlement metanarrative. Specific narratives such as the storying of the role the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 'unifying' the country were very familiar to their study participants and fitted into the 'settlement of the west' template. In Peck's (2010) study, the participants, ethnically diverse students in the Lower Mainland region of British Columbia, offered three narrative templates through which specific narratives of Canada emerge: the founding nation narrative; diverse and harmonious Canada; and, diverse but conflicted Canada.

In the case of the United States, VanSledright (2008) pointed to the collective resonance of the 'freedom-quest' narrative in the American national psyche that reaches back 400 years. Drawing on the research method and approach used in a study by Wertsch (1998) in the early 1990s, VanSledright (2008) found that a large majority of pre-service elementary teachers in his study rendered accounts of the American master narrative in much the same way as the college students in Wertsch's study done a decade earlier. Those studies pointed to the power of intergenerational story telling in sustaining the collective imagination in the interest of securing national cohesion. In that sense stories serve as a curriculum of community.

However, the specific narrative template of the dominant community articulated through a metanarrative can have a normative character obscuring other perspectives or

limiting attention given to them (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Létourneau, 2006; Trofanenko, 2008; VanSledright, 2008). For students encountering the past in social studies and history classes, who is included and who is absent from the story impacts how it is received by students and the extent to which it is accepted and valued by students (Levstik, 2000; Peck, 2011). If social studies teachers and history teachers give more attention to the ways in which they, themselves, may have unexamined or insufficiently unpacked identifications impacting their relationship with history or with the political, social, and economic order, it might offer such teachers insight into pedagogies that welcome more students into thoughtful discourse and meaningful encounters with the curriculum.

My upbringing, my education, along with my cultural and religious identifications and practices have, throughout my life, presented me with narratives that build, enrich, sustain, and complicate my connections to my two national identifications: Canadian and Jewish. National identifications are complex, multifaceted, and nuanced (Banks, 2001, 2004; Cogan, 1998; Hughes, 1994). 'Nation,' which entered English through French, and prior to that, Latin, is tied to birth, lineage, and family (OED Online Version, 2003a). Nation is a slippery notion. In Canada, for example, it can be used to define First Nations communities, appreciating that their language, traditions, and relationship to territory binds them together, and it might be used synonymously with the word, country, referring to Canada as a nation state, or it may be employed to describe the collective body of Canadian citizens, or a portion of them.

I acquired membership and citizenship in the nation and nation state of Canada at birth and continue to affirm it through practicing my entitlements to exercise the

franchise, and by holding a passport identifying me as a citizen of Canada, and by enjoying and exercising other rights and privileges of citizenship as a possession (Banks, 2004; Heater, 1992; Kymlicka, 2001). I came to learn about, understand, and appreciate my membership in the Canadian nation state community through my encounters with national, regional, and local narratives, principally in educational settings, but also through electronic and print media channels, and through family stories, historical literature, as well as historical fiction. Membership in the Jewish nation is constituted in somewhat different ways than Canadian nation state citizenship, although, for me, it also was acquired at birth. Membership in the Jewish nation is concurrently religious and secular, bound together, in part, through customs, liturgy, and inherited status as a member of the nation, and passed, matrilineally, from one generation to the next. Yet different than Canadian national identity, membership in the Jewish nation transcends modern nation state boundaries. There is no passport, and the rights and privileges are tied to religious practices. And, differently than Israeli nation state citizenship, which does not imply membership in the Jewish nation, Jewish nationality now goes undeclared in many nation states with Jewish communities. I have come to understand my membership in the Jewish nation in many of the same settings through which I came to learn about and appreciate my membership in the Canadian nation state community; in school, through various media channels, and in family stories.

In contrast to the structure of many Western narrative templates that address the chronological passage of time, Jewish national narratives are less concerned with chronology and more concerned with analogy, applying a narrative template drawing of the biblical Exodus story to tell other stories central to the cohesion of the Jewish nation

(Spiegel, 2002). Jewish liturgical narratives reinforce an intergenerational notion of zakhor, remembrance (Simon, 1999). Reconciling how I made sense of stories structured around the Exodus, while concurrently, accepting modern, Western, chronologically organized narratives about Canada, has been central to my curiosity about the nature of the effort required to attend to an unpack aspects of my identifications (J. W. Scott, 2001; Spiegel, 2002; Willinsky, 1998). Certainly, I find some resonance in the ambivalent relationship with concurrent national narratives expressed by some students in Peck's (2010) study, reflecting a contextual, social, and political dynamism to hybrid identifications. It may be a manifestation of an effort to value and sustain hybridity.

Zakhor is remembrance intertwined with redemptive possibilities (Simon, 1999). For Jews, zakhor offers and insists upon promise and hope. In that sense it resembles the American 'freedom-quest,' but differs in acknowledging that freedom is not eternal, once achieved; oppression is always around the corner. Simon wrote, "As an injunction and responsibility, zakhor is a practice that has been central to Jewish life throughout its existence. In its most literal sense … [it is] both an imperative and an obligation: "remember" (p. 10). In religious and secular community practices for Jews, zakhor is an ethical and pedagogic bond that transcends chronologic time and geography, storying each generation into the Jewish existential effort to sustain cohesion, ensure survival, and hold on to hope, using the familiar plotline of the Exodus from Egypt (Simon, 1999, 2004; Spiegel, 2002). "Zakhor," according to Simon, "is inherently pedagogical" (1999, p. 10), and "a deep commitment to attach oneself to a teaching that comes from without *and* the perpetual task of revitalizing this teaching so as to integrate it into the marrow of one's life" (p. 11).

> Jewish existence has depended on this pedagogy of remembrance as a practice that has brought previous generations into presence. Shattering conventional linkages of time and memory, zakhor presumes a transformation of time into something other than the precast continuum through which we move, a specialized rendering of "here" and "there." (pp. 10-11)

Zakhor, as pedagogy, is implicitly and explicitly a social exercise shared very much between generations through language, through story telling, and through the ritual observances occurring through the year. For example, Jews read together from the Hagaddah on the opening nights of Passover. The Hagaddah, a guide to the celebration of the Seder meal; literally means 'the order,' referring to a sequence of symbolic encounters where foods and songs represent facets of the story; the bitterness of slavery, the hastiness of the departure, the promise of redemption, and the gratitude for receiving God's law. Parents are 'commanded' to tell the story of the Exodus to their children the target audience of the Seder. The custom is to tell the story as if the parents, themselves, had fled Egypt and slavery. Inhabiting the story by sharing in its retelling, and engaging in conversations about it, interpreting it, and embellishing it with other stories of oppression and redemption, sustains the story within collective memory even as the temporal distance increases, generation by generation, from the story's original actors and context. Annual repetition with customary embellishments, dialogues, and debates, reinforces the story's currency. Customarily the Seder is a dialogic engagement with family and friends. Participants are supposed to ask questions, explore meanings, and develop new understandings in relation to current conditions, and, in its redemptive character, to imagine a better future.

The Exodus story's role at Passover echoes in the story of the Babylonian exile and return to rebuild the Temple, central to the festival of Purim, and central to the story of the Maccabees and the restoration of the Temple, which is celebrated as Chanukah. All of these follow the same oppression to redemption narrative template. Such stories have served as the glue of shared national identity for many centuries, delimiting, through a deliberate expression of collective memory, community membership and the differentiation between the insiders and outsiders (Anderson, 1991; Kearney, 2002; VanSledright, 2008).

In the undergraduate courses I have taught I have engaged students in conversations about the roles narrative templates, grand narratives, and specific stories about how the past is at play in our lives, interweaving us in the shared story of the nation-state (Kearney, 2002; J. W. Scott, 2001; VanSledright, 2008). Nation-defining stories among my own undergraduate students, like the building of the CPR, and the victory at Vimy Ridge, are so deeply internalized that the socializing, politicizing, and historicizing facets of the stories at play in Canadian identifications have mythological status and become difficult to recognize as stories (Kearney, 2002; VanSledright, 2008; Wertsch, 2004).

As a student in the academy, my encounters with and through critical theory and postcolonial discourses began to reveal ways metanarratives function to focus, constrain, and inhibit gaze, masking, suppressing, and denying space or opportunity in national identity discourses for other stories and different ways of storying community (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Segall, 1999; Trofanenko, 2008; Tupper & Cappello, 2008; Willinsky, 1998). The complexities of identity in modern polyethnic, polyracial, and polynational

nation states become evident in the ways and forms ‘others’ are present in metanarratives, as the power behind control of the story of nation states can be unveiled (den Heyer, 2011; den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Kymlicka, 1995; Lyotard, 1984; McLeod, 2000; Wertsch, 1998, 2004; H. White, 1987). Ethnicities, language, religion, gender, geographic origin, and the perception of being in the grace of God, are all examples of determinants for inclusion and exclusion from national stories. Appreciating their normative value and unpacking their taken-for-granted truth invites possibilities for understanding the nation state and the current situation in other ways.

3.3 The Role of Reflection in My Practice

For me, reflective practice has served to improve my teaching by understanding how pedagogic resistances, reticence, and ignorance are, in part, manifestations of a complex, politicized and historicized polyethnic and polynational social milieu (den Heyer, 2009a; Segall & Gaudelli, 2007). Drawing on the production of writerly text and on Segall and Gaudelli’s (2007) extension of Giroux’s pedagogy of theorizing, I have developed a better appreciation of how writerly engagement offers insight into personal relationships with curriculum and pedagogy, replacing pathologies of teaching practice with informed theorizing about the nature of one’s own teaching (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1993). Reflection, in my current practice, has been further enhanced by my attention to the hermeneutic, attending to the historicity of words, the idiosyncrasies of language, and the challenges of understanding and being understood by others, especially in pluralistic and increasingly globalizing contexts (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Smith, 1991, 2006). This is further evident to me as I learn the value of autobiography in

my own writing and the role it plays in understanding the epistemological situatedness of who I am in relation to others and to the world.

In the course of the past few years I have given particular attention to my identifications. In the course of the development of my own sense of historical consciousness and my personal conceptions of citizenship I have begun to explore the relationship of these to curriculum understanding and to teaching practice. This has involved reconciling familial stories with the metanarratives of the place(s) where I simultaneously live and reside; confronting and revealing to myself and others how the symbolic construction of universalized Westerner manifests itself in a subliminal and seemingly benign fashion, de-storying difference and diminishing inconvenient claims to otherness. It is embracing the invitation to live with the troubling of indeterminacy of Canadianness, rather than embrace the convenience of its ambiguity to mask inequity or to exploit the convenience of banality afforded by it (Richardson, 2002, 2009). This turn has fostered an opportunity to unpack, examine, and contest specific familial and community narratives and metanarratives that celebrate assimilation and structural integration into the dominant society while suppressing and/or ignoring elements of diasporic identities and cultural, religious, and linguistic differences that my ancestors sustained through zakhor for millennia, living in the midst of other communities and nations.

What is fascinating to me are ways in which minority communities struggle for inclusion. It can become a co-opting endeavor with the dominant community, where members of minority communities learn to engage in self-suppression, concealing their manifestations of difference in the interest of securing pride-of-place relative to other

marginalized identifications (Erevelles, 2010). Central to my increasing understanding and appreciation of this phenomenon has been the exercise of coming to know myself as a teacher, and how I have come to relate dialogically with curriculum, conversing with it as a living thing. While the words on paper in official curriculum documents like POS can remain static for long periods of time between revisions, the text continues to inhabit pedagogic contexts and it moves through time (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). Pinar wrote:

> [Curriculum,] as it has been institutionalized in schools today is so highly formalized and abstract, it may not be obvious how we might conceive of curriculum as "conversation," as the term is usually employed to refer more to open-minded, sometimes rather than personal and interest-driven, events in which dialogically encounter each other. (2004, p. 186)

Appreciating that curriculum is shared, lived, dialogic, and dynamic was not something I necessarily grasped during the early stages of my teaching practice. I suspect that in relation to that conception of the curriculum-teacher relationship I was far from alone. What began as explorative reflexivity in some of the papers I wrote in my master's program evolved during my doctoral program into critical theory and postcolonial informed engagements with the identifications I employed in the personal and professional domains of my life. That reflexivity materialized in reevaluations of family stories and my interest in reconciling them with my increasingly complex understanding of historical thinking and increasing interest in historical consciousness.

3.4 Conversing with the Past as a Historically Conscious Curriculum of Being in the Present

The stories of the past have long played a role in shaping my present and projecting myself into the future, whether I was attentive to how I was historicized in relation to them or not (Gadamer, 1966/2004b). The intergenerational transfer of storied and story-sustaining objects has also played an important role in my appreciation of the character of my identifications. My parents inherited many family artifacts, and some of those have been passed to me. Their retention, and for some objects, their regular use, speaks to a powerful intergenerational sense of economy and remembrance, a lesson in zakhor. Such objects have offered me opportunities to explore multiple and overlapping memberships in the Canadian and Jewish national communities.

A key artifact expressing the confluence of these national identifications hangs in my house. It is a composite portrait of the graduating class of Manitoba College from 1896. It was the Protestant college among the three colleges that together constituted the University of Manitoba at the time (University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections, 1999). Among the sixteen photographs appearing in that composite is an image of my great grandmother, one of five women in her class, and the only one with a last name that is not distinctly Scottish or English. Her graduation marked the first time a Jew received a degree from a university in Western Canada. It is an artifact that has been present in my life for as long as I can remember. It hung in my childhood playroom sharing space with university degrees earned by my great grandfather and my grandfathers. I think of that playroom as a ‘parchmentarium,’ a place to retire educational credentials and a familial monument to the status-conferring-structural-inclusion power

of university education for Jewish immigrants in Canada, echoing, at the personal level, an Exodus narrative of the liberating and redemptive power of education. The playroom/parchmentarium, as a lieux de mémoire, served in my childhood and serves in my memory as a nexus of past, present, and future, prepositioning me in relation to the familial telos of integration and assimilation through education (Nora, 1989). Whether or not this was an intentional effort on the part of my parents, they crafted the conditions for the practice of zakhor, remembering where I came from, while looking towards the rewards of the redemption they secured (Simon, 2004). At the same time my great grandmother earned her degree in Winnipeg, her future husband, my great grandfather, had left Winnipeg, moving, first to Philadelphia to earn a degree in mechanical engineering and then moving to Brooklyn to earn his electrical engineering degree. Both had been young children when they arrived in Winnipeg with their families in 1882. Both were educated in English language schools operated under the auspices of Winnipeg Protestant Schools. Both excelled at school, developing deep interests in Western literature, language, and culture.

For my family, integration into the wider social milieu of the dominant community is what they sought. It was evident in what mattered to them, in the things they collected, in the books they purchased, and in the letters that they wrote. While my great grandfather was away in the United States for about seven years to earn his degrees, he courted my great grandmother by mail.[13] The substance of their correspondence focused on what they were learning in their respective university programs. They wrote a

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[13] A collection of their correspondence, entirely in English, was compiled and transcribed by Harold Abremovich in 1973.

great deal about politics, theatre, architecture, and science. My great grandmother expressed in some of her letters passion about contemporary political issues, especially becoming involved in the suffrage movement. There was very little attention to Jewish themes or issues.

My encounter with this story had always been within the structural integration and emancipation narrative frame. But, unlike the Passover story, I was never invited to question the nature of this family story or the accompanying assumptions about assimilation and integration into the predominantly Protestant English Canadian community. Education-as-the-route-to-integration was at play in most other branches of my family, as well.

The nature of that family story and the messages it conveyed to me growing up, and that it still conveys to me about the role of education in maximizing opportunities for structural integration for minority community members, including social and economic status, reflects similar stories I still encounter from other Canadians with minority identifications. According to Jelin "the active transmission of memory [from one generation to another] requires fostering a process of identification, so that it produces a broadening of "we" (1998, p. 29). Ironically, and necessary to the story, is the retention of the diasporic identification within the story of pursuing integration. A story of assimilation has to simultaneously sustain difference, an ambivalent tension, in order to be alive in both communities at the same time (Bhabha, 1994; McLeod, 2000; Rushdie, 1992; Willinsky, 1998; Young, 1995). In the case of my great grandparents this difference persisted without being invoked in text. They kept a kosher household and did

no work on the Sabbath, but they permitted only English to be spoken in their home as the language of everyday discourse.

The celebratory character of the telling and retelling of integration discourses has been in play in the Jewish community in Western Canada since the late 19th Century (Gutkin, 1980). Further, these sorts of family and community stories of social and structural integration have been reinforced by official multiculturalism discourses for decades in immigrant receiving countries such as Canada and the United States (Banks, 2001, 2006). In public education, the wide acceptance of such discourses as having succeeded in dismantling inequalities tied to national, ethnic, racial, religious, and linguistic difference, diminishes the value of attending to and valuing difference, but also in acknowledges its presence (Banks, 2001, 2006; Johnston, et al., 2009; Richardson, 2009).

I began a far richer dialogic relationship with my family's story of integration and assimilation as a graduate student. In spite of my long-standing attention to the multiple and overlapping character of my identifications, my focus on troubling how I was storied did not come until after my high school teaching practice ended. It was as a graduate student looking at how historical understanding and discourses of citizenship are tied to belonging and inclusion, that I become attentive to how a specific narrative template, reflected in a specific national narrative, could displace more local narrative structures, suppressing or concealing alternative narrations (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Klein, 1995; Simon, 2005; Stanley, 1998; Tallentire, 2001; VanSledright, 2008; Wertsch, 1998, 2004; Willinsky, 1998). Further, I came to appreciate how those structures can hide or conceal discontinuities in historical narratives (J. W. Scott, 2001). If my critical encounter with

my familial story of education and inclusion, with the tensions at play in the role my identifications, and in my understanding of the relationship between historical understanding and identifications did not take place until I was out of the classroom, would it have inevitably taken place? As teachers and as Canadians we live with an embrace of indeterminacy but fail to acknowledge possible hybridity (Richardson, 2002, 2009; Saul, 2008). If I had attended to my identifications and their related tensions when I was teaching high school, might I have engaged the curriculum differently?

Drawing on Rüsen's (1989, 2004) notion of narrative competence and on Simon's (2004, 2005) notion of memorial trace, the progressive and emancipative character of the 'education-leads-to-integration' narrative can be transformed by unpacking its celebratory and redemptive elements, recasting them in the light of historical evidence of anti-Semitism and discrimination in Canada (Abella, 1999; Willinsky, 1998). What seemed absent from the story I grew up with was any expectation that the story demanded anything of me other than to accept its taken-for-granted nature: a university education is intrinsic to integration into Canadian society, and the bar for minorities to enjoy equality requires us to jump higher than the majority of those of English and Scottish descent. In the light of my own deeper understanding of historical consciousness and the role the story plays in shaping who I am as a historicized subject, it is possible to imagine re-storying the narrative as one that may reveal the assimilative power of formal education to suppress difference.

Unpacking my family lays bare traces of facets of familial, community, and national pasts insufficiently examined. It suggests that there is something untold, un-included, and un-discussed (den Heyer, 2004; Simon, 2005). For me the restorying of

family, community, and national narratives has become central to my sense making of who I am as a teacher, parent, community member, and citizen because it acts, reflexively, to re-story the past in a thoughtful and mindful way.

3.5 An opening to re-storying

In imagining where my graduate work might take me as a doctoral student, I began to wonder if there were practicing social studies teachers who might be interested in considering how their own identifications might be at work in influencing their interpretations of curriculum text and shaping their pedagogies. John Ralston Saul's notion of Canada as a Métis civilization opens the door to public and intellectual conversations on the complexity of Canadian identifications and the evolving character of Canadian hybridity, and on the challenge of coming to understand Canadianness, differently (2008). In reappraising national mythology and relocating the locus of origins of Canadianness to North America from Europe, Saul troubled Anglo(/Euro)-normative metanarratives and the sources of Canadian social and political values, identifications, and commitments. By turning the Anglo(/Euro)-normative assumptions about Canadian federal arrangements inside-out, Saul argued that Canadians have assumed elements of traditional Aboriginal governance and conflict resolution, particularly as Canadians collectively come to realize that Canadianness emerged out of an appreciation of the value of membership in a community of communities, all engaged in sustaining a "civilization of continuous negotiation" (Saul, 2008, p. 101). Saul offered a hybridity-based metanarrative, a restorying of the Canadian nation and nation state that allowed for the appreciation of multicultural, polyethnic, and polynational diversity and social complexity that has its origins in Canada, rather than evolving out of wholly European

sociopolitical institutions and traditions. Saul extended an invitation to Canadians to reflect and reevaluate the narrative foundation of national identification, and in doing so he emphasized the importance of all Canadians acknowledging their hybridity. So many of us are connected, diasporically and otherwise, to multiple places, spaces, and communities. For social studies teachers engaged in the work of preparing students for "engaged, active, informed and responsible" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1) citizenship, the notion that our shared polity may be storied otherwise offers the possibility and the invitation to consider that, as teachers, wecould benefit for reevaluating our own stories, as well, and attending to our relationships with language.

In the introduction to 'The Location of Culture,' Homi Bhabha drew on Renée Green's architectural metaphors to tease out the notion of liminal space, offering stairs as the 'in-between' passage for transiting identifications within the context of the poly-identities of the individual and community (Bhabha, 1994). He noted their function as offering the "hither and thither [capacity] of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end from settling into primordial polarities" (1994, p. 4). What might it look like if social studies teachers took up my invitation to reflect on their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, in relation to their respective interpretations of the formal curricula? Might attention to the presence of stairwells of their own be revealed and elevated, developing an awareness of an unexamined or unconsidered hybridity? Or perhaps an encounter with something I cannot anticipate. And, how might attention to the transiting these liminal spaces impact a teacher's relationship with curriculum and with their pedagogic practice?

Although my own sense of hybridity is tied to living with and being located at the nexus of two national identifications and two national stories, my personal sense of liminality need not be seen as the template for how teachers might attend to their own complex identifications and the possible tensions they might discover in their own stories. Instead, I envision teachers working through reflective and reflexive research approaches, recognizing, in attending to their professional, social, economic, and political identifications, beliefs, understandings, and commitments, a pedagogically productive appreciation of the intertwining of teacher and teaching.

3.6 Summary and Conclusion

I began this chapter with the notion that teachers cannot help but teach values through their pedagogy. Teaching comes from the teacher, and teachers are human beings. Since that is the case, teachers in all subject areas, but social studies in particular, should be attending to their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, because aspects of those come through in pedagogy (Kelly, 1986; Niemi & Niemi, 2007).

Is there something to be gained by attending to facets of the complex character of a teacher? To begin with, such attention humanizes teachers, allowing them to begin to unveil the complexity of the situation and inviting them to attend to the ways pedagogy is a reflection of self. That opens opportunities to interrogate interpretive approaches to official curricula and other texts and reflectively and reflexively engage with specific pedagogic approaches. The benefit of such attention may come from insights into interpretive and pedagogic challenges that went unnoticed, appreciation of resistances, and opportunities to imagine or reimagine teaching practice.

I had structured this chapter as an exemplar of my own effort to attend to my identifications, background, experiences, perspective, and commitments, to better appreciate how these have been and continue to be part of my teaching, allowing me to appreciate who I am as a teacher, and why I teach. I explored my hybrid identifications and how I now regard these as an invitation to explore my relationship with history and geography. Unquestionably, that effort has enriched my relationship with social studies notions and concepts.

The approach I took allowed me to appreciate dissonances, resonances, and silences in the stories of my family, community, and nation state. I took up the notion of 'zakhor' as a culturally situated call for attention to the community and to the past, present, and future, and acknowledged it role as a pedagogic sensibility (Simon, 1999). Cultivating this attention to myself and to aspects of my teaching practice has allowed me to re-story myself, and consider my practice differently.

I the next chapter I explore a participatory action research approach that I employed to begin exploring how social studies teachers might come to attend to their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, and how those are at play in their interpretations and understandings of official curriculum and their teaching practices. I also address attending to language of official curricula and social studies pedagogy through a philosophical hermeneutic sensibility as a route to unveiling the historicized character of our language and our understandings, and how the terms, idioms, and notions that we may treat as universal are temporally, geographically, and epistemologically situated.

IV. Research Approach and Interpretive Stance

In this chapter I discuss the research approach and the interpretive stance I employed for a participatory action research study involving four practicing high school social studies teachers and myself. Through conversations we shared we attended to the relationships among our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and commitments, all at play in our interpretations of the text of Alberta's Program of Studies for social studies (POS) and our pedagogies.

Blending participatory action research and philosophical hermeneutics allowed for study participants to attend to facets of who they understood themselves to be, to begin to theorize about their teaching, their understandings of the language, and their interpretations of the intentions of the POS (Feldman, 1999; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). In the course of this study, the teacher participants and I began exploring ways in which teaching social studies occurs at the nexus of identifications, the constitution of teachers as historicized and politicized subjects who share citizenship in the same nation state, and the overt and hidden curricula of public education. Eliciting this kind of data required a qualitative interpretivist approach focusing on developing an understanding of meaning in a particular context and offering a window into the lived experience of research participants (Merriam, 1998). However, it also needed to be an approach that invited consideration of how the situation might be different and how to bring about that difference as part of the research.

Interpretivist inquiry, in contrast to positivist research, is inductive rather than deductive, and hypothesis or theory generating rather than testing. The research for this

study was premised on developing an understanding of aspects of interpretation of curriculum text and the variability of teaching practice, potentially generating and testing interventions not necessarily envisioned at the outset of research (Elliott, 1991; Feldman, 2002; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). The research was conversational, differing from positivist approaches to research because it treated meaning making, like most interpretivist approaches, as a social process (Feldman, 1999).

Participatory action research takes place in context. Understandings developed from such research are not intended to be generalizable, although they can serve as exemplars for transforming other settings (Greenwood & Levin, 2007). Willis (2007) noted, for the interpretivist, the notion of context is very important for interpretation of data. It does not pursue the universal truths of positivism, nor does it seek 'local instances of universals,' as sought by critical theorists. The interpretation of data in context "highlights the concern interpretivists have about the *situatedness* of knowledge. Thus, the goal of interpretive research is an understanding of a particular situation or context much more than the discovery of universal laws or rules" (p. 99).

Talk and text are common spaces of interpretivist work, and drawing on my experience as a teacher I have an appreciation that text and talk are inescapable elements of pedagogy. It was sensible, then, for me to forefront language as both a space for inquiry and as a means of sharing my thoughts and insights. Gadamer wrote that language "is the fundamental mode of operation of being-in-the-world and the –all-embracing form of the constitution of the world" (1966/2004b, p. 3). Language, curriculum, and pedagogy, go hand-in-hand (-in-hand). Much of my writing over the last

decade has been directly or indirectly concerned with coming to understand my own teaching practice in terms of language, and it seemed sensible to me that language would be a prudent channel through which I might come to better understand myself as a teacher and for my participants to do the same.

4.1 Conversation as a Comfortable Medium of Engagement

Data for this study emerged from conversation and from close reading of the POS. For the participating teachers and for myself we found comfort, trust, and opportunities for thoughtful reflection in our dialogues. For Feldman (1999), conversation can serve as a principal mode for inquiry within the context of action research. Conversation is purposeful, suggesting "a connection that is sustained or sustainable, and goes beyond chit-chat or chatter" (p. 131). Conversation is shared, cooperative, relevant, and sincere.

> The sense of cooperation and partnership among the participants of a conversation distinguishes it from argument because conversation is not a competition… [and] because participants in conversations are not necessarily using language to convince others that something is true, right, or better. (p. 132)

Meaning making is characterized by conversation's mutuality. Its impact on participants differs because each one brings particular understandings shaped by prior experiences, and further influenced by previous encounters with knowledge and associated understandings (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989). Each participant potentially gains something from conversation, such as a new, deeper, and/or different understanding of a notion or phenomenon. Importantly, conversation's pedagogic value is not just in new or enhanced understandings, but also in new possibilities, because conversation is not scripted or resolved in advance. Conversation has an inherent freedom of directionality

(Feldman, 1999). Gadamer's sense of ‘falling into conversation’ suggested it discovers, finds, or makes its own path:

> We say we 'conduct' a conversation, but the more genuine a conversation is, the less its conduct lies within the will of either partner. Thus a genuine conversation is never the one we wanted to conduct. Rather, it is generally more correct to say that we fall into conversation, or even that we become involved in it. The way one word follows another, with the conversation taking its own twists and reaching its own conclusion, may well be conducted in some way, but the partners in conversing are far less the leaders of it than the led. No one knows in advance what will 'come out' of a conversation. Understanding or its failure is like an event that happens to us. Thus we can say that it was a good conversation or that it was ill fated. All this shows us that conversation has a spirit of its own, and that the language in which it is conducted bears its own truth within it -- i.e. that it allows something to 'emerge' that henceforth exists.” (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 385)

Participation in conversation, then, is operationally an engagement of the hermeneutic circle, changing the participants with the utterance of each word.[14] Importantly, conversation can conclude without resolution. It is not necessarily shaped or constrained by time and it is not necessarily “a prelude or a postscript to action. Conversation can lead to action, follow action, or be part of action. Through the intermingling of conversation and action, praxis comes about with its growth of knowledge, understanding, and theory of action” (Feldman, 1999, p. 134).

For me, conversation as a form of research was comfortable because of its social

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[14] I discuss the hermeneutic circle further in section 4.3.3 of this chapter.

and shared dimensions. Heron and Reason (2001), writing about participatory action research, troubled other research approaches that sustained distance and interrupted research discourses that differentiated between the theorizing capacities between researchers. They questioned assumptions about experts and the researched, challenging notions that the latter lack qualifications to evaluate their own practices and understandings. They wrote:

> [Research] is usually thought of as something done by people in universities and research institutes. There is a researcher who has all the ideas, and who then studies other people by observing them, asking them questions, or by designing experiments. The trouble with this kind of way of doing research is that there is often very little connection between the researcher's thinking and the concerns and experiences of the people who are actually involved. People are treated as passive subjects rather than active agents. (Heron & Reason, 2001, p. 179)

Teaching, though, like many professions, involves forms of reflection as part of practice. In that sense, teachers are accustomed to evaluating their practices (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2000). I chose a participatory action research because as a research approach it is generative, potentially transformative, and engaging for everyone involved. It offered teachers other sets of eyes and others' understandings through which to look at practice, and through dialogue the opportunity for a fusion of horizons as parties to a conversation come to understand each other (Feldman, 1999; Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). Importantly, participatory action research fit with my democratic sensibilities, offering all participants the possibility of producing something new in pedagogic practice. Complementing this research approach, I attended to our dialogues and our

understandings of the POS through a philosophical hermeneutic interpretive stance.

The democratic character of participatory action research, expresses an emancipatory sensibility, differentiating it from other qualitative research approaches in the social sciences (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Prasad, 2005; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Importantly, participatory action research in education treats teachers as practitioner-theorists, able to draw reflectively and reflexively on their own experience to generate theory and hypotheses (Feldman, 1999; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006).

The idea that theory is somehow divorced from practice, belonging to different communities within a scholarly and professional domain like teaching, has a lot of traction in policy-making circles (Feldman, 1999; Heron & Reason, 2001; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). But nailing down what is meant by 'theory' is difficult. As a term, it straddles the natural sciences and the social sciences. Theory emerges from systemic consideration of an event or phenomenon, offering an explanation, and perhaps predictability (Bhaskar, 2006; Ruse, 1995; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). Among policy makers and some in the research community and some in the curriculum development community, teachers may be regarded, instrumentally, as practitioners and policy-followers (Carson, 2005; Feldman, 1999; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). Scholars, theorists, and policy analysts, usually based out of universities, government departments, and other agencies, are tasked with carrying out research; they follow methodological protocols and operate within traditional and ideological frameworks. It is widely perceived, then that it is from such domains of research, in both the natural and the social sciences, that theories traditionally emerge (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006).

Action research disrupts the theory/practice dyad. It continues to evolve as a procedural approach extending reflective practice into an inquiry spaces where practitioners engage in organized data collection and analysis, identifying and examining phenomena, moments, and/or events in the data, and offer explanations (Feldman, 2002; Heron & Reason, 2001; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). In other words, theorizing. Feldman (2002) explained that the distinction between reflective practice and practitioner-research leading to theorizing is that the latter is a systematic critical inquiry reaching an audience beyond the immediate participants, a sensibility about research advocated by Stenhouse (1975). For this study the initial route for reaching a broader audience is this dissertation, extending through its defense and subsequently through scholarly papers emerging from it, as well as associated presentations.

4.2 Action Research

Action research has built into it a reflexivity that welcomes the possibility that the research in progress can reveal unanticipated or unexamined factors, refocusing the researchers' attention in subsequent iterations of a study (Corey, 1982; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Noffke & Somekh, 2005; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). As a research approach action research has been subject to ebbs and flows in terms of its appeal and credibility in the academy (Adelman, 1993). Elliot offered a provisional definition of action research as "the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it" (1991, p. 69). "In action-research," he wrote, "'theories are not validated independently and then applied to practice. They are validated through practice" (p. 69). Action, in this case, is not necessarily something tied to motion but to process and

transformational practice. The term, coined by Kurt Lewin, involved a spiral of cycles: "indentifying a general idea, [engaging in] reconnaissance, general planning, developing the first action step, evaluation, revising the general plan. From this basic cycle the researchers then spiral into developing the second action step, implementation, evaluation, revising the general plan, developing the third action step, implementation, evaluation and so on" (p. 69). Elliot's provisional definition reflected a sensibility allowing for the revision of research questions and emergent understandings as each cycle progresses through its stages, and on to the next cycle. Action research also reflected this evolution in understanding relative to its own origins in democratically grounded social engineering. According to Lewin:

> Research needed for social practice can be best characterized as research for social management or social engineering. It is a type of action-research, a comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action. Research that produces nothing but books will not suffice. (1982, p. 32)

He suggested that the intention of the research was diagnosis of a social practice within the context of a specific situation and application of his reflective and reflexive cycle was intended to generate specific remedies rather than generalizable explications of a social phenomenon.

Adelman (1993) described the origin of action research as rooted in Lewin's organizational behaviour research, which sought ways to help minority groups and communities overcome exploitation and the legacies of colonization; he believed that the social sciences offered means to resolve social tensions and problems. Lewin's affinity

for social sciences, evident, according to Adelman (1993), in his use of scientific language in publishing the outcomes of his studies, did not leave room for readers' interpretations. Further, Lewin sometimes cleaved the workplace domains where his participants were employed from the social domains where his participants lived, attending to the former and giving far less attention to the latter. From both a philosophical hermeneutic and a critical hermeneutic stance, such a practice contributes to obscuring the complexities and nuances of participants' lives beyond the immediacy of their practices, failing to appreciate historicizing prejudices at play in the human makeup of the workplace (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Given, 2008; Schwandt, 2007).

Teachers are human beings. Their work involves negotiating the complex social milieus of schools, conversing with peers, engaging in pedagogy and social interaction with students, and generating, interpreting, and assessing various forms of text. Teachers, though, are not one-dimensional instruments of education. Each teacher brings to his or her practice identifications, multifaceted backgrounds and experiences, a perspective emerging from those facets of identity, both shaped and shaping commitments and intentions. Teachers belong to polities, and for those in this study, as citizens of the province of Alberta, and the nation state of Canada, they enjoy rights, have responsibilities, and they have sensibilities about participation and social engagement, justice, and governance, influenced, in part, by ideology (Feinberg, 2012). For some, try-as-they-may to exclude or neutralize their influence on students, empirical research has shown that the politicized dimension of teachers is difficult to keep out of the classroom (Miller-Lane, et al., 2006; Niemi & Niemi, 2007). They have dispositions shaped by their backgrounds, perhaps by religion, by language, education, and, for two of the

participants in this study, by professional experiences prior to teaching careers. Teachers have home lives and they travel; some are associated with social causes, ethnic communities, and recreational organizations.

In the previous chapter I explored how attending to some facets of who I am allowed me to better appreciate my subjective relationship with my pedagogy, and understand how 'who I am' has been a part of my teaching. Teaching cannot be cleaved from the human being who is the teacher. In this study, participants brought more than specific pedagogies into our conversations; they brought themselves, as complex subjects, into our dialogues.

4.2.1 Action research in education

In educational settings, action research has appeal because it involves practitioners working together to understand issues, challenges, and possibilities for their professional pedagogic practices. Further, it offers a flexible model for evaluating a situation and assessing change, through its reflective and reflexive moments. Stephen Corey, a pioneer of action research in education, believed the approach was valuable for defining, understanding, and ameliorating problems in schools through the application of scientific principles to the decisions of teachers and administrators (1954). Corey believed that action research was one of the few research avenues leading to transformation of practice, because practitioners inquired about their situations and envisioned changes they could test (Corey, 1954, 1982).

Adelman (1993), describing the evolution of educational action research, argued that it gained traction in the emancipative ethos in the West following the Second World War. It went in and out of vogue until the 1970s, when British scholars John Elliott and Lawrence Stenhouse began to advance collaborative action research as part of the Ford Teaching Project and the

Humanities Curriculum Project. In those studies, teachers inquired into their own practices; they recognized where resistances and impediments to curriculum implementation lay and reframed their teaching as a form of research (Adelman, 1993; Noffke, 2009). Further, Stenhouse (1975), noted that for teachers' to regard for their own pedagogies as research, potentially informing the emancipative practices of other teachers, they must share their research. An important impediment to doing so, though, was the gap between teachers' actions and their ability to record and describe those in language intelligible to researchers.

Action research involves more than revising procedural practices. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2005), participatory action research is rooted, historically, in liberal human rights activism. The eclecticism of action research works to reveal systemic and embedded discourses and practices tied to the dominance of instrumentalism and individualism. Important for this study was its potential offer opportunities for participants to better understand their own practices and how their practices connected the research participants with their situation, attending to who they are as teachers and interpreters of curricular and pedagogic language.

According to Kemmis and McTaggart, teachers using participatory action research, could come to understand that "… their social and education practices are located in, and are a product of, particular material, social, and historical circumstances that *produced* than and by which they are *reproduced* in everyday social interaction in a particular setting" (2005, p. 365). That is, what teachers do deliberately and unconsciously in everyday teaching connects them with their situation.

4.2.3 The action research spiral

Action research involves a spiral of cycles (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2000;

Corey, 1954; Elliott, 1991; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Noffke & Somekh, 2005). Elliott (1991) described the elements of the action research spiral as:

> identifying a general idea, reconnaissance, general planning, developing the first action step, evaluation, revising the general plan. From this basic cycle the researchers then spiral into developing the second action step, implementation, evaluation, revising the general plan, developing the third action step, implementation, evaluation and so on. (p. 69)

The 'general idea' or setting for action research is a current practice or situation that researchers have identified as improvable or changeable. 'Reconnaissance' is the effort to describe the situation as thoroughly as possible. Researchers begin to analyze the situation, attending to factors that researchers believe shape the current situation, developing hypotheses that are integrated into the study's 'general plan.' It is at that stage that the first action step is planned and 'implemented,' and it is followed by 'evaluation' of leading to decisions being made about subsequent steps (Elliott, 1991).

The number of cycles in an action research study can vary significantly (Elliott, 1991; Noffke & Somekh, 2005; Somekh, 2006). Many factors can impact study momentum, including the commitment and dedication of research participants, chronological frame available for the study, the passage of time, and the perceived continued relevance of the research to participants. These were all factors in this study, and they are explored in greater depth in Chapter VI.

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2005), the success of an action research study is not measured on how long it is sustained or on quantitative measures of how

much change took place. Kemmis and McTaggart wrote that the "criterion of success is not whether participants have followed the steps [of the action research spiral] faithfully, but whether they have a strong and authentic sense of development and evolution in their *practices* their *understandings* of their practices and the *situations* in which they practice" (2005, p. 563). Action research invites the human dimension of teaching practice into research, acknowledging the pliability of a method that respects the complex and dynamic conditions of pedagogy.

Teachers are complex and dynamic human beings; their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, whether they had given them much attention in the past or not, are multiple and multifaceted, and played a key role in our conversations. The extent to which attention to the role of teachers' own identifications as a facet of reflective practice was certainly at play with all of the participants in this study.

Allan Feldman's writing on existential approaches to action research was useful in drawing into focus the how participants' complexities came into play in teaching practice. In articulating the sense that human beings are connected by webs that have a spatial and temporal present, human beings are always inhabited by a past that brings a historicity to the present (Feldman, 2002). Drawing on Heidegger, Feldman wrote: "people find themselves thrown into a situation constituted by all that has occurred in the past and from which they project themselves into the future" (2002, p. 235). Given an opportunity to attend to their multifacetedness, teachers might come to appreciate how they are reflected in their pedagogies and how their capacity to change might foster conditions for teaching approaches that promote students' thoughtful engagements with

the understandings they have developed and how to draw on those to improve their communities.

The importance of the examined life was noted by Kemmis (2010) in recognizing how action research impacts pedagogy. He wrote:

> According to Plato, one way by which we come to live well was by living an examined life – by reflection on our individual and collective conduct – our individual and collective *praxis* – and its consequences. I have argued ... that this is how we learn *wisdom* and how we develop what Aristotle called *phronēsis* – the disposition to act wisely and well (p. 421).

Kemmis argued that praxis was necessary for phronēsis: "we learn *phronēsis* by acting as well as possible under the circumstances and by experiencing and reflecting on the consequences of our actions – the consequences of our individual and collective *praxis"* (2010, p. 421). Teachers' and students' capacities to live well and act well in the world are connected to senses of both freedom, autonomy, and community-mindedness, to choose the ways and the extent to which they might act to bring about change in the world, remaining conscious that they live in the world with others.

For Feldman, existentialism offers teachers the possibility of recognizing and acknowledging that they might better enjoy the professional autonomy to act and in the democratizing spirit that they perceive inhabits curriculum documents, finding the latitude for agency in their practice (2002). For him, an existentialist approach to action research counterbalances positivist research dispositions that treat the teacher in an instrumental fashion. Feldman's approach, instead, "takes the position that one cannot separate what a person does from who the person is, and that the teacher must question

who she [or he] is as a teacher in order for action research to be happening" (p. 242). For Feldman, conversation-based participatory action research approach has a sensibility that makes it compatible philosophical hermeneutics.

4.3 Hermeneutics

The word, hermeneutics, connects the playful and convoluting transmission and translation of divine words by classical Greek messenger deity, Hermes, to the ears of human beings (Gadamer, 1975/1989; Prasad, 2005; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999a). 'Playful' is a deliberate word choice. Gadamer used it to characterize the back-and-forth and give-and-take interaction of conversation and the word is echoed in scholarship on philosophical hermeneutics, because play is not resolved in advance; it reflects the humanity of the parties to any playful interaction. Hermeneutics is rooted in the interpretation of liturgical texts (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). Broadly speaking, in the Jewish and Christian traditions, classical hermeneutic interpretation of text was concerned with understanding and harmonizing liturgical language with contemporary tenets of faith (Linge, 2004). More modern hermeneutic traditions arose in relation to Reformation and post-Reformation interpretations of biblical liturgy and gained momentum in philosophical circles with a renewed interest in the literature and art of the classical world (Gadamer, 1975/1989).

Much of modern hermeneutic theory has a German genealogy, evident in its key terms and notions, especially *Verstehen* (understanding) and *Erklärung* (explanation) (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Schwandt, 2007). According to Schwandt (2007):

> What distinguishes the natural sciences (Naturwissenschaften) from the human (mental) sciences (Geisteswissenschaften) [for Wilhelm Dilthey,] was that the

> former aimed at developing causal explanations (Erklärung) from the outside, so to speak, through the use of general laws, whereas the latter aimed to understand meaning (Verstehen) from the agent's or actor's point of view by grasping the subjective consciousness of action from the inside (p. 314).

Gadamer tied the notion of 'Verstehen' directly to language (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). "Language is the medium of intersubjectivity and concrete expression of traditions that give human actions particular meaning. Verstehen is achieved by entering into a conversation or dialogue with those traditions" (Schwandt, 2007, pp. 316-317). Understanding, as Verstehen, is subject to the idiosyncrasies of the interpreter of language rather than transcendent and universal.

4.3.1 Philosophical hermeneutics

Both Habermas and Ricoeur, like Gadamer, played important roles in modern hermeneutic theory. Although I have chosen to work through a Gadamerian philosophical hermeneutic stance I have encountered critical hermeneutic texts that have had an impact on my thinking; thanks to my growing understanding of Gadamer's sensibility towards hermeneutic encounters, I cannot 'unencounter' those texts.

In defining how critical hermeneutics differ from philosophical hermeneutics, Prasad noted that the hermeneutics of Habermas and Ricoeur attend, particularly, to the role of ethics, justice, and morality, in relation to the interpretation of text. "These newer hermeneutic directions, commonly referred to as *critical hermeneutics*, are concerned primarily with uncovering the relations of power and domination that go into the very formation of a text" (2005, p. 34). Habermas was concerned with the ideology of a text

and Ricoeur made a distinction between hermeneutics of faith and hermeneutics of suspicion.

> A hermeneutics of faith aims at carefully ascertaining a text's manifest meaning in order to gain insight into and eventually become aware of its hidden meanings. A hermeneutics of suspicion, on the other hand, does not regard texts as innocent artifacts but as reflections of class interests and power conflicts demanding a more subversive and skeptical approach. (Prasad, 2005, p. 34)

There are elements of critical hermeneutics that resonate with me. As with many critical theory-situated stances and approaches, it is difficult to extricate what I now know and understand. Do I suspect that a governing party's interests and ideological orientation haunt curriculum texts and authorized resources? Is it unreasonable for me to suspect that ulterior and subliminal agendas are at play in public education? Is it likely that there are stakeholders who do not wish to be named who have influenced official curriculum policy? Such questions are present with me in reading curriculum text and interview transcripts; they are products of my encounters with those discourses. I cannot unread what I have read. Official curriculum texts like Alberta's POS have multiple authors, each imbuing the text with their meanings and intentions. The authors brought to their writing, their identifications, backgrounds, and perspectives; those impacted their understandings of the notions, concepts, and content included in and excluded from the POS (Carson, 2009; Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Pinar, 2004)

4.3.2 The road to modern philosophical hermeneutics

Into the 18th Century it was assumed that the full meaning of text could be divined and understood (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Linge, 2004; Schwandt, 2007; Smith,

1999a). Interpretation began to be regarded as a methodological concern. Smith (1999a) noted that beginning in the late 17th Century and the beginning of the 18th Century that such methodological treatments of text began to stretch beyond liturgical and religious texts, taking on texts from the sciences, politics, economics and philosophy. Schleiermacher, who lived from 1768 to 1834, regarded text "complex products of an author's personal history, social location, and specific world-view," and that it was "misunderstanding that [was] more likely to occur as a matter of course in the process of interpretation" (Prasad, 2005, p. 32). Schleiermacher advanced a premise that the dialogue between interpreter and text begins with misunderstanding, and that the purpose of hermeneutics, as a method, was avoiding misunderstanding. "Schleiermacher sees their positive solution as a canon of grammatical and psychological rules of interpretation which even in the interpreter's consciousness are quite distinct from obligation to dogmatic content" (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 185). Gadamer wrote that Schleiermacher worked on developing a 'procedure for understanding,' noting that "whenever such an attempt is made to understand something (e.g., Scripture or the classics), there is a reference to the truth that lies hidden in the text and must be brought to light" (p. 185).

Schleiermacher's method carried forward from Spinoza's attention to an appreciation of an author's experience as central to an objective understanding of a text, positing a place for psychological interpretation to accompany grammatical interpretation. That psychological interpretation was, "ultimately a divinatory process, a placing of oneself within the whole framework of the author, an appreciation of the "inner origin" of the composition of a work, a re-creation of the creative act" (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 186). Understanding of text was transformed from a focus on the subject

matter to an exercise of aesthetic appreciation, treating text as a work of art. Like Schleiermacher, Dilthey refined hermeneutic method in relation to his concern about avoiding misunderstanding (Gadamer, 1975/1989; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999a):

> [Dilthey sought] to exclude by controlled, methodological consideration whatever is alien and leads to misunderstanding – misunderstanding suggested to us by distance in time, change in linguistic usages, or in the meanings of words and the modes of thinking – that is certainly far from an absurd description of the hermeneutical endeavor. (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, p. 7)

Gadamer raised the issue "as to whether the phenomenon of understanding is defined appropriately when we say that to understand is to avoid misunderstanding. Is it not, in fact, the case that every misunderstanding presupposes a 'deep common accord'" (1966/2004b, p. 7). For recognizing misunderstanding must, in turn, mean that the conversation between the interpreter and the text shares sufficient common understanding for misunderstanding to be recognized. Gadamer wrote:

> [The] science of hermeneutics would have us believe that the opinion we have to understand is something alien that seeks to lure us into misunderstanding, and our task is to exclude every element through which a misunderstanding can creep in. We accomplish this by a controlled procedure of historical training, by historical criticism, and by a controllable method in connection with the powers of psychological empathy. (1966/2004b, p. 8)

Gadamer, however, troubled such historical preparation as the route to extricate the interpreter from the perils of possible misunderstanding. Instead, he argued that to understand text the reader must "transcend the prejudices that underlie the aesthetic

consciousness, the historical consciousness, and the hermeneutical consciousness that has been restricted to a technique for avoiding misunderstandings and to overcome the alienations present in all of them" (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, p. 8).

According to Gadamer it was during the Enlightenment that the term 'prejudice' acquired its current negative connotation (1966/2004b, 1975/1989). Reasoning employed Cartesian interrogation; it was contingent on the notion that one cannot be certain until the unknown is treated methodologically to ascertain truth. Enlightenment rationality sought to understand phenomena 'correctly' (1975/1989). It demanded freeing one's self from irrational prejudice. "The overcoming of all prejudices, this global demand of the Enlightenment, will itself prove to be a prejudice, and removing it opens the way to appropriate understanding of the finitude which dominates not only our humanity but also our historical consciousness" (1975/1989, p. 277). What an interpreter must understand about the past is that it is temporally and spatially situated, contextual, and contingent on whom the interpreter is at a given moment in time and space. Histories, then, are already at play constituting the temporal and spatial contexts of the lives of human beings. Accordingly,

> [History] does not belong to us; we belong to it. Long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society, and state in which we live. The focus of subjectivity is a distorting mirror. The self-awareness of the individual is only a flickering in the closed circuits of historical life. *That is why the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being*. (Gadamer, 1975/1989, p. 278)

Gadamer suggested that the ways in which we tend to know ourselves are not necessarily reflective nor attentive to our nature as historical beings. Human beings are connected, relationally, to other human beings and to the communities with which they identify, bound together by languages already in use and histories already in progress, regardless of whether or not community members have given deliberate attention to how they are enmeshed in language and history. Thoughtful and deliberate attention to the ways in which human beings are historicized impacts understanding. "Consciousness of being affected by history (wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein) is primarily consciousness of the hermeneutical situation" (1975/1989, p. 301). 'Historically affected consciousness' is the "condition of being shaped and continuously reshaped by multiple horizons of meaning or traditions and the consciousness of self-awareness of being so effected" (Given, 2008, p. 387).[15] Gadamer (1975/1989), though, alerted the reader to the difficulty of the task, because awareness of the situation is complicated by the interpreter's immersion in it. Because the situation is persistently a present moment and it is always in progress and always changing, the challenge of illuminating it is never completely resolvable. "The fact that it cannot be completed is due not to a deficiency in reflection but to the essence of the historical being that we are. *To be historically,*" according to Gadamer, "*means that knowledge of oneself can never be complete"* (1975/1989, p. 301). The future is immanent and the immediate past has always just been. Being attentive to the dynamic context of being-as-becoming, then, contributes to a

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[15] Weinsheimer and Marshall , translators of Gadamer's (1975/1989) 'Truth and Method,' for Continuum Books, use the word 'affected' in their translation, but scholars such as Given (2008), and Schwandt (2007), use 'effected.' The former I understand as 'influenced' or 'impacted,' the latter I understand to mean 'changed.'

person's ever-growing understanding of the situation, and that might serve as the foundation for imagining other possible futures.

For Gadamer, understanding was also contingent on appreciation of the role that tradition played in limiting and even delimiting horizons (Gadamer, 1975/1989; Given, 2008; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999a). That is, what a person's regard is for what he or she perceives as mattering, counting, and appreciable, is contingent, in part, to a person's embeddedness in the traditions of a community. Given wrote:

> [For Gadamer,] new understanding requires that people allow themselves to engage in all that conversation offers. As language unfolds, it reveals prejudices of both speakers while also concealing areas where contact did not occur. Gadamer argued that a genuine hermeneutic conversation calls simultaneously for engagement in the experience of understanding, one that seeks out the possible meanings in both what is said and what is unsaid, and critical reflection on the structure of understanding that one is engaged in. This need requires a stance of active questioning and reflection that does not rest on first impressions, but seeks to expose and examine understanding's deeper, hidden meanings. (2008, p. 387)

In the context of the texts generated and considered by me in this study that meant opening myself to the assumptions and prejudices that shaped the conversations I had with the other participants in my study, attuning myself as much to what was said by any and all participants, myself included, and what might not have been said.

4.3.3 Hermeneutic circle

Prior to Heidegger and Gadamer, the hermeneutic circle illustrated both the reciprocal relationship between the whole of a text and its constituent parts, and the

iterative cycle of considering the part, then the whole, before returning to the part, again; that was the method for distilling the meaning of a text (Gadamer, 1975/1989; Given, 2008; Prasad, 2005; Schwandt, 2007). In contrasting content analysis with the hermeneutic circle, Prasad (2005) explained that the former assumed that the full meaning of a text was present on the page while the latter was concerned with the spirit of the text, that is that words are situated in a context and that context helps shape interpretation.

Heidegger and Gadamer complicated the hermeneutic circle by regarding hermeneutical understanding as an ontological concern rather than an epistemological one. Self-knowledge becomes a key goal of textual interpretation. Prejudices are at play as the interpreter acknowledges that he or she is a historicized individual, bringing with himself, or herself, the legacy of tradition and experience to any encounter with text (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Prasad, 2005; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999b). The encounter with text, then, is more than a conversation with the author in an effort to coming to know the author's intended meaning, as a classical hermeneuticist would, but, for the reader interpreting text to attend, concurrently and persistently, to his or her own situation, and that of the text's author. Being so attentive is to exercise historically affected consciousness, appreciating that human beings are always becoming and are never resolved; that authors and interpreters have a past and a future and that is always present with the reader in relation to interpreting and understanding text, and further, that in coming to understanding the reader is changed by the encounter.

4.4.4 Hermeneutic imagination, language, and learning to live, teach, and carry out research in the world

As a teacher I live and practice through language and in relation to text. As an educational researcher who is attentive to interpretivist traditions, I appreciate the social side of qualitative research. Taking a philosophical hermeneutic disposition towards research acknowledges that encounters with participants in, for example, a participatory action research study, often take the form of conversation. For Gadamer, such conversations, as dialogues among participants open to the ideas and understandings of others, serve as the conditions for a fusion of horizons, inevitably changing the participants. In sharing research findings with others, as Stenhouse (1975) insisted, serves as a necessary facet research. According to Smith, the researcher who employs hermeneutics must report on his "dialogic journey" (1999a, p. 38), and is obliged to treat his research participants as human beings rather than objects. Tapping into the writing of Gadamer, Smith troubled the orthodoxy of research methodologies, insisting on human being-to-human being research relationships. That is a sensibility echoed in participatory action research by Feldman (1999), Kemmis and McTaggart (2005), and by Heron and Reason (2001).

As a research sensibility, philosophical hermeneutics resonated with me because it recognizes the humanity, complexity, situatedness, and dynamism, of each participant; that human beings are always in the process of becoming and aware that such becoming is attuned through a gaze that is concurrently forward-looking and historically conscious (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1989; Given, 2008; Prasad, 2005; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1999a). Philosophical hermeneutics also offered appeal in relation to my dialogic

sensibility about pedagogy. Teaching, as a conversation, has mutuality to it for both teachers and students as they come to understand themselves and the world around them in different ways through dialogic encounter (Freire, 1994; Hess, 2009; Parker, 2008). It is not quid pro quo exchange but a conversation, as the route to understanding it interrupts pedagogies that are monologic and/or didactic.

According to Gadamer language has three unique features: “The first is the essential self-forgetfulness that belongs to language. The structure, grammar, syntax of a language -- all those factors which linguistic science makes thematic -- are not at all conscious to living speaking” (1966/2004a, p. 64). He noted that for the native speaker of a language the grammar is an invisible part of learning. It is in the formal learning of another language that one learns grammar and syntax. "The more language is a living operation, the less we are aware of it” (p. 65) So, its ubiquity contributes to delimiting the kinds of attention it is given by speakers. “The second essential feature of the being of language,” according to Gadamer, “seems to me to be its I-lessness. Whoever speaks a language that no one else understands does not speak. To speak means to speak *to* someone” (p. 65). Language, then, is something necessarily social. “Speaking does not belong in the sphere of “I” but in the Sphere of “We”” (p. 65). Gadamer argued that no utterance or marks on page constitute language until those marks can speak in a way that offers a possibility that someone else understands. The third feature of language is its universality:

> Language is not a delimited realm of the speakable, over against which other realms that are unspeakable might stand. Rather, language is all-encompassing. There is nothing that is fundamentally excluded from being said, to the extent that our act of

> meaning intends it. Our capacity for saying keeps pace untiringly with the universality of reason. Hence, every dialogue also has an inner infinity and no end. One breaks it off, either because it seems that enough has been said, or because there is no more to say. But every such break has an intrinsic relation to the resumption of dialogue. (p. 67)

Gadamer has told us that language has a dynamic capacity to adapt and change, to add words and change meanings and usages. Dialogue always has potential to continue even when it is terminated.

'Language', rooted in the Latin 'lingua,' meaning both the tongue and spoken language, is fundamentally a relational notion of human-to-human intersubjectivity (Gadamer, 1966/2004a; OED Online Version, 2008). For me, it came as no surprise that the English language tied the 'tongue' together with 'language.' English, like many European languages, continues to evolve and its dynamic fabric continues to draw on homegrown and appropriated terms, notions, and historical and liturgical tropes. English, and other European languages, have nostalgic affinities for the classical world, persisting in the present and accompanied, ubiquitously, by Judeo-Christian liturgical texts and traditions (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989, 1989; Linge, 2004; Schwandt, 2007). The role of communication and mutual intelligibility, for example, is at play in Chapter 11 of Genesis, in the story of the city of Babel. It seemed sensible, then, that the English usage of language connects an element of human physiology, the tongue, with the notion of a complex system of mutually intelligible signs and symbols (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1989; Linge, 2004; Schwandt, 2007). The Hebrew word הפש (sa'fah) means both language and tongue (Sivan & Levenston, 1975, p. 274), . Similarly, γλώσσα

(glossa) can mean both tongue and language in Greek (Collins Greek-English dictionary, 2006). What is evident is that such systems are necessary for the possibility of 'dialogue,' rooted in διάλογος (dialogos), the Greek term for a conversation, meaning 'by sharing speech,' 'by sharing words,' or 'by sharing reason' (Collins Greek-English dictionary, 2006; OED Online Version, 2013c). Gadamer (1966/2004a) opens his essay, Man and Language, by noting that Aristotle defined man and humanity in relation to the human capacity for λόγος (logos), meaning speech, word, reason, and thought (Collins Greek-English dictionary, 2006).

So language and dialogue are inescapably necessary elements for any organized community of human beings and especially so in sustaining peace and enjoyment of life in the modern liberal democratic nation state. Language allows for the sharing of ideas and notions not otherwise immediately present. Through words human beings can recall and story the past, express perceptions of the present, and envision the future. Language is the vehicle of history, tradition, identity, and the institutions that sustain these (Gadamer, 1966/2004a). Thus, language and public schooling are deeply intertwined with each other. For teachers, attending to language requires appreciating and attending to its taken-for-granted invisibility to find in the words, notions, and idioms used in pedagogy and in official curriculum, the presence of the past in the present, and the ways language use, in the present, might shape possibilities for how the future is imagined. Such attention, potentially, invites recognition and interrogation of the language used in schools, opening it up to see what it welcomes and what it might deny in order to imagine, research, transform, redefine, invite from other languages, and/or coin terms and notions, expressing what may not be already present in a language.

"In educational terms," according to Smith, "the hermeneutic imagination throws open the challenge to inquire into what we mean when we use words like curriculum, research and pedagogy. We are challenged to ask what makes it possible to speak, think and act in the ways that we do" (1999a, p. 28). Language and community go hand-in-hand. In an educational context like Alberta and with a social studies POS focused on cultivating "engaged, active, informed and responsible citizens" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1), teachers have an invitation to interpret and understand curriculum and content in thoughtful and deliberate ways (den Heyer, 2008, 2009a; Smith, 1999a).

4.5 Action Research and Philosophical Hermeneutics

As an interpretive approach to understanding study-generated data, philosophical hermeneutics comes with a caveat: Gadamer's distrust of method as a route to truth and understanding (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Schwandt, 2007; Smits, 1997). So, engaging text with such an approach must go hand-in-hand with thoughtful consideration of how the prejudices and historicity of the method and the researcher(s)/participant(s), because those are at play in shaping all elements of the research from the initial question to the interpretation of data to the articulation of results and the generation of theory. In offering a historical account of the evolution of action research earlier in this chapter, I wanted to illustrate that I am aware of its roots and how it has evolved. For me, as the principal researcher, the approaches I chose to collecting data and attending to what I understood as present in the data had to fit with my sensibilities. Both philosophical hermeneutics' and participatory action research are open to new understandings and both have potential to reveal new questions that, perhaps, get at deeper or unasked questions (Feldman, 1999; Smits, 1997; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006).

For educators and educational researchers, action research can offer conditions for orienting the initial conversation in the interest of better understanding and the potential for transformations of practice. But, as Kemmis and McTaggart pointed out, opening participants to encounters with themselves and with the situation, conditions, and traditions that they inhabit, is a very important aspect of action research, even when little change occurs:

> [Through] participatory action research, people can come to understand that – and how – their social and education practices are located in, and are a product of, particular material, social, and historical circumstances that *produced* than and by which they are *reproduced* in everyday social interaction in a particular setting. (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005, p. 565)

It is in developing such understanding that philosophical hermeneutics and action research can share the same conversational space.

4.5 Data Collection for This Study

The participatory spirit of action research differs from other interpretive research approaches in relation to securing and protecting the anonymity of study participants and the research site (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Action research is not something to be hidden from view, nor is it an approach that secures data collection against the influence of the subjectivities of participant researchers, nor the potential compromise of an identified context. On the contrary, participatory action research takes place in a specific setting with committed participants who seek to understand and improve their practice (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Lewin, 1982; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Unquestionably, the situated

character of the site and the relationship of participants to the site and the conduct of the research can make the generalizability of findings challenging (Creswell, 1998; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). Still, an important reason for sharing findings from action research studies is that it can serve as an exemplar of research into practice (Feldman, 1999; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Stenhouse, 1975). I must note, however, that for this study, in the process of applying for ethics approval from the university, I checked the box guaranteeing that I would sustain the anonymity of participants and the research site. Subsequently, I secured consent from the teacher participants to use their names, but because I secured ethics approval with participant anonymity check off prior to that, I have sustained teacher participant anonymity in this dissertation. So I have assigned each of the teacher participants a pseudonym. These are: Allen, Brian, Cam, and Dale; I use my own name in reference to myself. In excerpts where teacher participants have named a fellow participant I have replaced those names with the appropriate pseudonym.

4.5.1 Research procedure

My first choice about where to conduct data collection for the study was aided by the interest of a teacher at the research site. I had been collecting data for another study at the school that became the research site for this study when the topic of my research for this dissertation came up. Once I explained my idea it was suggested I conduct my research there. In June 2010, before I secured ethics approval from the University of Alberta to conduct this study, I contacted the teacher with whom I had shared my research idea to see if he was still interested in participating in the study and whether any of his colleagues might be interested in particpating. He talked to his colleagues and

confirmed that a number of them might be interested in participating. With a site for research in mind, I obtained ethics approval at the end of September 2010 and permission from the school district to conduct data collection in mid-October 2010. The school board's authorization recommended that the window for data collection close by the end of May 2011.

I was able to meet with my teacher contact at the school and with the other social studies department members in late October 2010. I gave a presentation about the study's participatory action research approach, I talked about language and philosophical hermeneutics, and I explored the idea of teachers' identifications, backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, along with their geographic location, and education, as all contributing to ways they are politicized and historicized subjects. I provided them with an invitation letter (Appendix I) outlining the elements and steps in the research phases of the study, and a letter of consent (Appendix II) for potential participants to express their interest in participating in the study. In addition to these I provided my teacher contact at the research site with a CD-ROM that had copies of all these documents, plus a copy of my candidacy paper that served as the proposal for this study, as well as a copy of the PowerPoint slide show for our meeting that day. Those were available for any of the participants if they wanted further information about the study. Of the five teachers present at the informational meeting, four consented to be participants.

4.5.2 The participants

This study had five participants: the four practicing social studies teachers who consented to participate in the study, and who teach in the same department at the research site, and me, a doctoral candidate at the University of Alberta. All of us are

male, and all of us, at the time of data collection, were in our mid-to-late 40s or early 50s. I chose the pseudonyms – Allen, Brian, Cam, and Dale – because those names offered alphabetic convenience and were easy for me to remember and keep straight. Importantly, I gave thought to the way teach of those names seemed consistent with the identifications shared by teacher participants in their biographic profiles in Chapter V.

4.5.3 The Research Site

All data collection took place at the research site, a mid-size public high school located in a middle class neighborhood in a large urban centre in Alberta. The school had a student population of approximately 1500 students at the time of data collection. Based on the students I saw in classrooms and in the hallways, the student population was visibly diverse and participants shared with me that the students at the school come from socioeconomically diverse households, as well. Based on the faculty members I encountered in my visits to the research sites the teaching faculty appeared to be not that visibly diverse. Both streams of Alberta's social studies program were present, and the school offered the International Baccalaureate (IB) program through all three high school grades. Two of the four teacher participants in this study taught some IB courses as part of their assigned loads in the February to June term in 2011.

4.5.4 Communicating with participants

Organizing meetings with participants was done, principally, by email, but also through telephone contact and voice mail. All of the teachers participating in the study had full teaching loads, extra-curricular assignments and duties, and commitments beyond their teaching practices. Those impacted their availability, their responses to

communication, and scheduling for this study. There were occasions where contacting participants required multiple channels of communication in order to get a response. As a researcher external to the research site I had the assistance of my teacher contact in contacting his peers for group meetings when I was having limited success. For me, my own teaching schedule, weather, illness, and other responsibilities, impacted my availability and access to the research site.

4.5.5 Data collection

All of the data collected for the study emerged out of conversations I held with participants in each of two phases of data collection. According to Peräkylä (2005), interviews and conversations put researchers in more direct touch with participants and maintains conditions for intersubjective understanding. Data collection began with one-on-one conversations I had with each of the teacher participants, exploring their identifications, backgrounds, professional and educational experiences, perspective, and commitments. That part of the study served as a confluence of the general idea and reconnaissance steps of the action research cycle. It gave the teacher participants and I an opportunity to better understand the situation and to begin to give thought as to what how we could explore our relationships with the language of the POS (Elliott, 1991; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Those conversations took place in December 2010 and January 2011. Each conversation had been scheduled to take about one hour, and three of the four were close to an hour. My meeting with Brian, though, was about 100 minutes long.

I had provided the teacher participants with guiding questions in advance of those initial one-on-one conversations (Appendix III). The questions offered some structure and consistency to our initial conversations, and allowed for some cross-comparison

during analysis. I began with questions about professional practice; in particular, educational attainment and teaching experience. Next were questions exploring biographical information on ancestry, ethnic identifications, language fluency, religious identifications, and social, political, and community affiliations. Those were followed by questions on pedagogic motivations, helping me to better understand how participants came to teaching and to social studies. The questions then moved to issues tied more directly to participants' self-perceptions of their relationship with the Alberta's POS for social studies. The last set of guiding questions explored participants' understandings and perceptions of the place of the notions of citizenship and identity in the social studies curriculum and in their pedagogy.

We started the first of two action research cycles in January 2011. The first cycle began with our first group meeting and was completed with our second group meeting. There was a two-month interlude between the first and second group meetings in which I met with teacher participants for either one or two one-on-one meetings. The second cycle began and ended with our third group meeting, a week later. Table I shows the dates these meetings took place, and who among the participants was in attendance. Table II shows whom I met with for one-on-one meetings during the interlude between the first and second group meetings.

Table I: Group Meeting Schedule and Attendance

	Laurence	Allen	Brian	Cam	Dale
Group Meeting 1 January 17, 2011	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Group Meeting 2 May 19, 2011	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Group Meeting 3 May 26, 2011	yes	no	yes	yes	yes

Table II: One-on-one meetings I held with teacher participants

	Allen	Brian	Cam	Dale
First set of one-on-one meetings March 24, 2011	yes	yes	yes	no
Second set of one-on-one meetings April 12, 2011	yes	yes	yes	yes

The first group meeting took place on January 17, 2011, just two weeks prior to the beginning of the winter term. At that meeting we reflected, briefly, on our initial conversations, building on the general idea and reconnaissance moments to be able to imagine a general plan (Elliott, 1991). The general plan involved choosing an idea or concept from the POS and exploring each teacher participants' interpretations of the language of the POS while he attended to his identifications, background, experiences, perspective, and commitments, and reflecting on how those played out in pedagogy. Then, teacher participants were to give consideration to their understandings and pedagogies in light of what they learned. The one-on-one meetings took place in late March and mid-April 2011, and were followed in May 2011 by the final two group meetings. It was during our second group meeting which closed out the first action research cycle and in our third group meeting which served as the second cycle that we drew on the one-on-one conversations to attend to how who we are as teachers has been intertwined with our teaching (Elliott, 1991; Feldman, 1999, 2002).

I had prepared some questions (Appendix IV) to guide our discussions for the second group meeting, although through nearly an hour of conversation we did not address many of the questions in directly. Instead, our dialogue carried on to deeper

considerations of the interweaving of teachers' pedagogies and their identifications, experiences, backgrounds, perspective, and commitments. Allen, Brian, and Cam attended the first of these group meetings. All the participants attended the second group meeting, and Allen was the only one absent for the third group meeting. Data collection ended with our third group meeting, because the school district preferred that research in their school not take place in the final month of the school year.

4.5.6 Recording and transcription

All the conversational data for the study was collected in the form of digitally recorded audio files. These were transcribed and verified against the original recordings for accuracy. With consideration to the amount of audio data accumulated, there were some moments during data collection where background noise, usually school-wide announcements, obscured the conversation, making what participants' said, unintelligible. I was able, in some cases, by slowing down playback, to figure out what had been said. There were also some instances with Allen and Dale, where they spoke very quietly; like the impact of the announcements on transcription, with slow playback, and careful listening, I captured some of what Allen, and Dale had said.

The friendly character and trust evident in every meeting I had with participants suggested they felt very comfortable engaging in our conversations. There were moments in all three group meeting that were punctuated with small talk and banter, including the trading of good-humoured insults and other verbal jabs. Those were seldom related to the research, but I did transcribe them when the dialogue appeared related to the study. I did not, for the most part, transcribe speech affects like 'uh,' 'um,' 'uh-huh,' 'like,' and 'you

know,' although I included them when they appeared to be tied to the intention, meaning, or struggle to articulate an idea.

4.5.6 Interpreting the data

Analysis began with a close reading of the data so that annotations could be made, and all data interpretation involved a philosophical hermeneutic encounter with the recordings and transcribed text conversations I had with participants, and with the text of the front matter of the POS, and its specific outcomes and benchmarks. I was looking, in the data, for interesting utterances, recurring patterns, and dispositions towards topics, notions, terms, and ideas raised in conversations, particularly when the same or similar expressions recurred in other conversations, appreciating that talk is a vehicle for human action (Peräkylä, 2005). I was seeking insider's perspectives on the language of social studies from practicing teachers to gain a better understanding of how each of the participants mediated their relationship between the POS and students through descriptions of their pedagogy (Merriam, 1998). What participants said, in the context of conversation about themselves and their understandings of curriculum text or their pedagogy led to categories that I had not necessarily anticipated at the outset of the research (Boulton & Hammersley, 2006) For example, Cam raised the issue of bias on multiple occasions throughout the course of the study. In those cases I would give consideration to the context in which it was raised, and listen to the audio recording to get a sense of his tone. I used both the transcripts and the recordings because I wanted to understand the contextual and emotional character of 'bias.' Further, drawing on the etymology of a word like 'bias,' I would seek to recognize how its use related to notions and concepts associated with its use.

Identifying important, interesting, and resonant expressions and word use in the data involved generating groups and sub-groups of ideas, notions, and terms that, to begin with, were connected to the questions that motivated this study. I could move, then, to generate new groups and sub-groups, as necessary, as the conversations with participants' progressed through the duration of data collection. For example, a term like 'nation' could serve as a group identifier for related terms, like nation state, Aboriginal nation, and country. Terms like 'home,' tie into others, like 'nation,' and 'heritage,' all interweave land and birthright (OED Online Version, 2003a, 2011b, 2012b). Further, I was paying attention to the use of collective pronouns like 'we' and 'us.' Those terms might point to places where participants could attend, more closely, to their identifications, especially national identifications with the past and present, and trouble discourses of inclusion and exclusion (J. W. Scott, 2001). Principally, I was interested in language related to notions of citizenship and identity, the two core concepts in Alberta's POS for social studies, but I was also interested in attending to language tied to the social sciences disciplines and their and practices. I was aware that the terms used in social studies to talk about citizenship and identity were rooted in Greek and Latin, and that much of the discourse about the political, economic, and social domains, especially ideology, shares a heritage in the same languages. In addition, I was seeking what was not present. For example, I was looking for terms and expressions that articulated complexities of identification, and multiplicities of perspective, and I was looking for what I expected, but hoped I would not find in large quantity, such as the prevalence of binary and dialectic constructs. My approach reflected an understanding that emergent

notions, ideas, and terms may lead to insights that I did not necessarily anticipate at the outset of the study (Boulton & Hammersley, 2006; Merriam, 1998).

4.6 Summary and Conclusion

I began this chapter by explaining why I had chosen a research approach in the interpretivist tradition. I wanted to carry our research with an approach that resonated with my sense of the complexity and situatedness of knowledge, especially in relation to teaching practice in social studies. As a teacher, but more so as a teacher educator, I have come to appreciate that teachers' relationships with official curricula are idiosyncratic. I recognized, in my pedagogic practice, a preference for the conversational over the didactic. I seldom stood-and-delivered and I was never a sage-on-the-stage. I did not have all the answers, regarding myself as the most experienced learner in the classroom, instead. Conversation contributed to helping me evaluate and better understand what I already knew, but it as provided conditions for coming to know and understand what I did not already know. For me, conversation made sense as an approach to data collection.

Choosing conversation meant appreciating its capacity to transform parties to the dialogue (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). That transformative capacity, though, meant that I had to rule out some interpretivist approaches, like case study, because such approaches captured one moment in time and that the researcher needed to take measures to mitigate influence on participants (Creswell, 2005; Merriam, 1998). Action research fit the bill because it invited an appreciation of the situation and because it could provide conditions for new understandings. I provided a brief history of the action research tradition, positioning it relative to its social science roots and I gave consideration how it has evolved in education research settings in recent decades. Participatory action research

fit in well with my democratic disposition towards research; it is a respectful approach, valuing practitioners' insights and understandings.

Conversation occurs using language (Gadamer, 1966/2004a). It has a back-and-forth give-and-take to it. I needed an approach to interpret dialogues with study participants, and philosophical hermeneutics offered a way of engaging with the language of our conversations that, again, suited my sensibilities. Both philosophical hermeneutics and participatory action research are open to the future, and both attend, although in different ways, to understanding a current situation. I provided a history of the evolution of philosophical hermeneutics. I explored the notion of hermeneutic circle, and how philosophical hermeneutics complicated it by integrating the ontological, understanding that the interpreter's situation is at play in reading and understanding, rather than limiting the focus of interpretation to the text as a whole, and to the words that constitute the text. I talked about the role of cultivating hermeneutic attention among teachers and how that might lead to inviting more careful attention by teachers and students of the language of curriculum and pedagogy, especially in social studies, how it reflects and sustains culture, and how the language used at a moment in time can limit gaze and restrain imagination.

Finally, I described the research setting, the participants, the data collection process, and data analysis. In the next chapter I have put together biographic profiles of participants. Those reveal that some participants were already attentive, in some respects, to the way language was at play in how they talked about themselves and their teaching practices, and how language can betray facets of their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, that they have not disclosed to students.

V. The POS, the Participants, and the Action Research Cycles

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a profile of Alberta's Program of Studies for Social Studies.[16] That is followed by an account of the reconnaissance step, the initial step in action research, and one that focused on profiling the study participants. Next, I offer a narrative of the action research cycles. The first of these was, by far, the longest, beginning with a group conversation in January 2011, followed by one-on-one meetings I had with teacher participants over the course of the next few months, and concluding in our second group conversation in May 2011. The second action research cycle began and ended in with our third group conversation in late May 2011. I conclude this chapter by offering a possible subsequent action research step, and offering insights I drew from the data.

5.2 Profiling Alberta's Program of Studies for Social Studies

Official curriculum documents like Alberta's POS for social studies are authoritative documents articulating a politicized expression of authority situated in space and time, bringing in and drawing on specific perspective, language, and history to communicate an intention about what the young should understand, appreciate, and be able to do. Teachers are the principal mediators between this official expression and the students' understanding. The teachers' role is evidently important in pedagogy, but is

[16] As in all the other chapters, I refer to the Program of Studies for Social Studies in Alberta as POS.

largely ignored in the official curriculum for social studies in Alberta. As noted in Chapter I, Carson (2005), argued that teachers figure little into curriculum design.

Alberta's POS for social studies was present, implicitly and explicitly, in all of my conversations with teacher participants. It was both a topic of conversation and a conversation partner. Alberta Education rolled out the current program between the 2005-2006 and 2008-2009 school years. It applies to all grade levels from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Although the rollout finished a few years prior to data collection for this study, the current POS still feels new to me, and felt new to the teacher participants in this study.

All grade levels share the same front matter pages which outline the program rationale and philosophy, an expression of the place of multiple perspectives in social studies, and an articulation of the core concepts, strands, and outcomes around which the program is structured. The program has two streams at each high school level from Grade 10 through 12. The streams, use a '-1' and '-2' designation coupled with the numbers 10 for Grade 10, 20 for Grade 11, and 30 for Grade 12.[17] Oddly, there is no language in the POS or in the province's annual Guide to Education that names either stream to clarify distinctions between them (Alberta Education, 2005, 2013). The '-1' stream courses tend to be more academically enriched than the '-2' stream, with the former having more outcomes and more challenging outcomes than the latter. There is a provincial diploma exam in social studies in both streams and students must obtain credit in social studies at every grade level as a condition for meeting provincial diploma requirements. The 'dash'

[17] Alberta's Knowledge and Employability program has social studies components for grades 8 – 11 leading to a completion certificate, rather than a high school diploma. The social studies part of that program shares substantial common language with the Alberta POS for social studies, although the program vision statements differ, and there are fewer outcomes at each grade level.

nomenclature of the current program differs from the previous numbering system. At the time of data collection, three years past the end of the rollout period for the current POS, some teacher participants in this study dropped the '-1' when they referred to the enriched stream, so, for example, 30-1 was referred to as 30. That may be an artifact of some teacher participants' long relationship with the old numbering system.

The current POS reflects a constructivist vision for social studies curriculum and pedagogy with the potential for drawing students into active problem exploration and resolution, building on students' prior learning, attention to evidence, and dialogic reasoning to enhance their capacities as engaged and responsible citizens (Gibson, 2004; Hughes & Sears, 2004). It is intended to foster "the building of society that is pluralistic, multicultural, inclusive, and democratic," emphasizing diversity and social cohesion, encouraging students to develop a "sense of belonging and acceptance… as they engage in active and responsible citizenship at the local, community, provincial, national, and global level" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1). The language of the POS vision statement has a consensus-focused liberal pluralist character with a distinctly Canadian national flavour, acknowledging that the programs' core concepts, citizenship and identity, "are shaped by multiple factors such as culture, language, environment, gender, ideology, religion, spirituality and philosophy" (p. 1).

The core concepts of citizenship and identity are complemented by six interrelated strands: Time, Continuity, and Change; The Land: People and Places; Power, Authority, and Decision Making; Economics and Resources; Global Connections; and, Culture and Community. Social studies is described as an interdisciplinary school subject area (Alberta Education, 2005). It draws on the social sciences to lend 'discipline,' that is

domains of knowledge and understanding, and methodology, invoking Western intellectual and institutional traditions, theories, and practices to the exploration of issues, guiding inquiry, while not necessarily questioning or challenging disciplinary foundations (Nelson, 2001; Sears, 1997; Segall, 2006). The disciplines named in the program are social science touchstones for organizing inquiry, action, and interaction, lexically and practically rooted in enlightenment rationality and positivism.

The language promoting civic engagement in the front matter of the current program document does mark a discursive difference in relation to the previous program (Richardson, 2009). The current POS states that the role of social studies is fostering students' knowledge and capacities to be "active and responsible citizens, engaged in the democratic process and aware of their capacity to effect change in their communities, society and the world" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1). For example, it openly engages with key principles in Canadian rights discourses, requiring that, by the end of the program, students be able to "demonstrate a critical understanding of individual and collective rights" (p. 3). The program acknowledges that communities are dynamic, complex, and pluralistic. Being 'active' as opposed to contemplative is to be engaged with something beyond the self (OED Online Version, 2010a). It is immediately relational and context conscious, although whether this can be interpreted as an insistence or requirement for participation in the community, such as service learning, is ambiguous. By comparison, the wording of the previous POS reduced engagement and participation to the exercise of responsible citizenship, describing social studies as "a school subject that assists students to acquire basic knowledge, skills and positive attitudes needed to be responsible citizens and contributing members of society" (Alberta

Learning, 2000, p. 1). Responsible citizenship in the previous program was connected to a rendering of critical thinking, calling on teachers to blend inquiry strategies that could lead to decisions, defining the responsible citizen as "one who is knowledgeable, purposeful and makes responsible choices" (p. 3). In that program, responsible citizenship meant:

> Understanding the role, rights and responsibilities of a citizen in a democratic society and a citizen in the global community; participating constructively in the democratic process by making rational decisions; and, respecting the dignity and worth of self and others. (p. 3)

As a principal goal of the previous program, responsible citizenship was integrated into that program's front matter ahead of knowledge, skill, and attitude objectives. The program's text grounded citizenship, solidly, in the Western academic and epistemic tradition, noting that "citizenship education is based on an understanding of history, geography, economics, other social sciences and the humanities as they affect the Canadian community and the world" (p. 3). The text of the program explained that because information changes rapidly, social studies pedagogy should emphasize "learning those social studies facts, concepts, generalizations and skills that are useful for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship (p. 3).[18]

The use of the word 'responsible' in relation to citizenship suggested a narrow vision for community engagement. 'Responsible' can be understood as meaning: capable

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[18] I have addressed issues related to the previous iteration of the POS because it had been in place for two decades prior to the current program, although it had been revised at various points while it was in use. Allen, Brian, and Cam, had worked with that program longer than the current one, at the time of data collection. I had asked teacher participants to contrast the old program with the current one, and, on several occasions, teacher participants referred to the prior program, especially its outcome structure.

of fulfilling an obligation or a duty, or having good character, or being accountable (OED Online Version, 2010c). Its roots are in the word 'respond:' to act in a particular way when prompted; this could be a responsive recitation in a church or reply to correspondence (OED Online Version, 2010b). Responsible citizenship is reactive rather than proactive; conservative, rather than radical; status quo-sustaining rather than challenging foundations of current conditions and remediating issues.

The former and current social studies programs both share an expression of the importance of inquiry in social studies pedagogy. The prior program stated that inquiry strategies "help one answer questions, solve problems and make decisions using process, communication, and participation skills" (Alberta Learning, 2000, p. 4). The language of the current program is more provocative and constructivist in tone, still emphasizing problem solving as an important objective, but not the sole intent of inquiry. "Purposeful deliberation and critical reflection are essential skills and processes for democratic citizenship and problem solving" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 10).

The use of the word 'deliberation' connects inquiry with democratic citizenship. Parker (2008) referred to deliberation, the discursive partner of seminar, as the space for informed discussion, decision, and action, that is, the space of thoughtful engagement. 'Deliberate' evokes measuring, balancing, and the use of comparative scales (OED Online Version, 2013a). While inquiry in the prior program was concerned with resolving problems and developing solutions, in the current program it is not as resolution-focused, reflecting a dynamic sensibility about knowledge and understanding.

In the front matter of the current POS, social studies is described as a progressive curricular space for students' exploration of the world they inhabit, understanding it

through disciplinary traditions, political customs, and Western sensibilities. Both prior and current programs reflect a liberal progressive and Western metanarrative. In doing so, they reach back to the classical period of the Athens of Solon and Pericles and to the Roman Republic, and then jump to the neoclassical sensibility of the Enlightenment, connecting democracy, scientific rationalism, and liberalism, to the present, and to contemporary Canadian sensibilities (Feinberg, 2012; VanSledright, 2008; Wertsch, 1998; Willinsky, 1998). Terms in the POS like 'multiculturalism,' for example, grounded in contemporary progressive political liberalism, continue to have particular resonance in English Canadian social policy and public education, storying legislation expressing egalitarian sentiments as ameliorative and remediating, officially outlawing injustice by legally leveling the playing field for everyone, once-and-for-all (Banks, 2004, 2006; Hardwick, et al., 2010; Kymlicka, 1995; Richardson, 2002).

A key change in Alberta's social studies program from the former POS to the current one is in the role that perspective taking plays at every grade level. The current POS highlights the place of multiple perspectives, especially those associated with Aboriginal and Francophone communities, noting their inclusion in the program for "historical and constitutional reasons," (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 5) . The inclusion of these perspectives does not preclude teachers from addressing or exploring social studies content through perspectives associated with other ethnic, linguistic, or cultural perspectives, but it does mandate that Aboriginal and Francophone perspectives must be addressed in relation to "an understanding of Canada" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 4). Attention to the roles First Nations peoples played in the past and play in the present gets comparatively more attention in specific outcomes in the current POS than in the

previous one. Interestingly and somewhat troubling, the language of such outcomes is framed in Western social science terms, situating Aboriginal experiences in the context of European contact, attending to First Nations peoples through historical, sociological, and anthropological regard. What appears to be insufficiently expressed in the current POS is the invisibility of its perspective frame and the metanarrative supporting it (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011).

The explicit naming of 'other' perspective communities and the absence of attention to the situated character of the language and historicity of the POS, potentially impacts teachers' readings of it, if they have not deliberately invited self-attention to the ways their prejudices impact interpretation of text (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). Such attention could enrich teachers' encounters with the POS, expanding interrogation of its language and assumptions, and welcoming the possibility of appreciating other ways of knowing (den Heyer, 2009a, 2009b; Donald, 2009; D. Scott, 2013).

'Knowledge and understanding' outcomes in the current POS are framed in two different ways. For grades seven through nine all of the specific 'knowledge and understanding' outcomes are questions designed to contribute to pedagogies that could aid students in articulating responses assessable for relative correctness. Specific outcomes in the same domain in the high school grades are descriptive rather than interrogative and tied to a 'key issue' question around which the whole course is structured; each 'key issue' question is supported by three or four 'related issue' questions, reflecting facets of the 'key issue.' For example, in both streams for grade 10, the 'key issue' question is: "To what extent should we embrace globalization" (Alberta Education, 2007a, p. 13; 2007b, p. 27)? A 'related issue' question for 10-1, the enriched

stream, is: “To what extent should I, as a citizen, respond to globalization” (Alberta Education, 2007a, p. 13)? The corresponding related issue question in the lower stream is: “Should I as a citizen, respond to globalization” (Alberta Education, 2007b, p. 27)? For both streams, the questions invite students and teachers to engage in synthesizing knowledge and related understandings, while attending to the associated value and attitude outcomes. In contrast, the junior high social studies program has no key issue at any grade level. Statements like: “Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how Canada’s political processes impact citizenship and identity in an attempt to meet the needs of all Canadians” (Alberta Education, 2007d, p. 1) , are declarative, and reflect the kind of language in general outcomes at all three junior high grade levels. Teachers could seek to weave general outcomes together around a theme or notion, but the POS does not provide that guidance (D. Scott & Abbott, 2012).

Structuring the language of the junior high program differently from the high school program reflects an expectation of different kinds of pedagogic engagements that teachers and students might have with program outcomes, and how they may connect the school community to the world in which it is situated. This outcome approach expresses an imagination of junior high pedagogy as comparatively, and potentially, less dialogic than the high school program. Implicitly, then, teachers at different levels of the secondary program can be expected to have different relationships with the program and its outcomes.

5.3 The Participants

There were five participants in this study: the four practicing social studies teachers, and myself, a doctoral candidate from the University of Alberta. I met with each

of the four teacher participants for our initial one-on-one conversations as a principal part of the reconnaissance step in the first action research cycle, seeking to better understand who the teacher participants understood themselves to be, and how they regarded themselves in relation to the POS and social studies pedagogy. Each of the teacher participants had a full teaching load during the period of data collection. Allen, Brian, and Cam, taught, exclusively, in the social studies department; Dale, was, principally, a social studies teacher, but he did teach lower stream courses in mathematics and science. At the time data collection took place, Allen said he had been teaching for about 23 years, 22 of those years, in social studies. Brian had been teaching social studies for about 11 years, and that followed a career in the documentary film industry. Cam had taught for 25 years; the first 10 years as a physical education and mathematics teacher, and the remaining balance, in social studies. Dale had been teaching social studies for eight years, and prior to that he had spent about two decades with the armed forces. I had four years experience teaching social studies in a public school classroom, and, as a graduate student, I have been teaching undergraduate courses in social studies curriculum and pedagogy for about seven years, and I have been doing research in teacher education, citizenship education, historical thinking, and social studies pedagogy, for about 10 years.

Both Allen and I had earned Master of Education degrees in social studies curriculum, complementing our Bachelor of Education degrees. In addition, I have a Bachelor of Arts degree. Brian has three undergraduate degrees, Cam has a Bachelor of Education degree, and Dale has a bachelor's degree in education, complemented by undergraduate and graduate degrees in military studies. For Brian, Dale, and myself, social studies was our chosen major in our undergraduate Education programs, and the

principal focus of our professional teaching assignments. In addition to the courses Dale was assigned, at the time data collection took place, he had classroom experience teaching lower stream English Language Arts, and automotives. As mentioned in Chapter III, I worked as a school counselor as part of my assignment.

Table III: Educational and Professional Experience When Data Collection Took Place

	Years Teaching Social Studies and Related Courses	Prior Professional and Teaching Experience	Post-Secondary Education
Laurence	4 years teaching high school + 7 years teaching undergraduates	10 years as a professional student, 2 years as political consultant	BA, BEd, MEd, PhD Candidate
Allen	23 years	1 year teaching English Language Arts	BEd, MEd
Brian	11 years	Approximately 20 years in the film industry	BFA, BA, BEd
Cam	15 years	10 years teaching Physical Education and Mathematics	BEd
Dale	8 Years	Approximately 20 years in the armed forces	BA, MA, BEd

Of course, our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, and commitments, reflected complexities and multifacetedness beyond our professional backgrounds and credentials. All five of us had been born in Western Canada, and most of us had spent our entire childhoods there, too. The exception was Dale; he spent some of his early school years in Germany. All of us were in the same general age bracket, stretching from our mid forties to early fifties, at the time data collection for the study took place. All five of us had multigenerational connections to English Canada and the Canadian Prairies on at least one branch of our families, and all of us were descended from ancestors who came

to Canada from Europe. All of the teacher participants had some ancestry in the British Isles, and Allen and Dale had German ancestors, too. I was the only participant who descended, solely, from immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Brian believed it was important to differentiate his ancestry in the British Isles from his peers. In describing how he shared his background with students, and how that influenced his perspective, he told me he emphasized his Irish Catholic background more than his Scottish background, because it informed how he talked "about the human condition… the legacy of European dominations, and all those kinds of things" (IOC, lines 425-426).[19] I found an echo of myself in that diasporic facet of Brian's background and identity. He appreciated that he was historically and geographically connected to places and people far away from the site of his teaching practice, and those connections were at play in his pedagogy. It was a reflection of key elements of what Gadamer called 'historically effected consciousness' (1966/2004b, 1975/1989). For both of us, our diasporic identifications complicated our Canadianness, adding dimensions of distance and otherness to our sensibilities about teaching social studies.

Allen and Cam, by comparison, offered articulations of their Canadianness that seamlessly interwove their ancestral roots in Great Britain with contemporary Canadianness.

> I've thought about this in the past… other people have this ethnic or religious background that they're part of, but I would have to say, for the most part, [I am] relatively Canadian… parents born here, their parents born here… so there's a real Canadian lineage. (Cam, IOC, lines 258-262)

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[19] IOC=Initial one-on-one conversation – Each teacher participant had his own IOC transcript

Cam's British ancestry, while nameable, was generationally and geographically distant. British, for him, was not "ethnic," and so not foreign within the context of Canadianness. Allen, too, had said, "Whether the family considers themselves Scottish, or British, or German, they are always Canadian. In all honesty, because my family has been here so long… I don't think of myself as having any sort of ethnic background" (IOC, lines 318-319). For both Allen and Cam, Canadian was a normative code for Anglo/British ancestry, and a multigenerational territorial presence in Canada. As a national identification, it operated in a subliminal way to diminish, but not totally erase, the temporally and geographically distant identifications associated with familial ancestry. 'Canadian,' seamlessly displaced European identifications, and diluted affiliations with ancestral communities.

For Dale, Canadianness was more complex, and ethnicity was a factor in how he articulated his national identification. He had an interest in the shifting categories of identifications. The appreciation that the nature of nationality was in flux reflected both the comfort that Richardson's (2002) study participants had in the indeterminacy of national identifications, and seemed to invite the possibility of welcoming reappraisals of the language and mythology of Canadianness, as Saul (2008) had argued. Reaching into his recollection of his childhood encounters with identity discourses, Dale pointed out how the changes in the labels associated with difference in the English Canadian urban education context have changed. Like Dale, his father "was career military" (IOC, line 253). When his father was stationed in Germany, Dale's family lived there, too. "While you're living in Germany, you're the Canadian," but once he was back in Canada, "people would say 'you're German, right" (IOC, lines 259-260)?

> Nowadays, as Canadian culture has diversified, further… If you talk with the kids, here, they tend to identify themselves: I'm brown, I'm Asian, or I'm white. And they label each other that way… The labels seem to be growing larger, based on skin colour, as opposed to ethnicity (Dale, IOC, lines 263-266).

What was apparent from Dale's account was that the language of identity at play among students in schools had shifted, significantly, from his childhood. Perceptions that such change takes place reflects how identifications are fluid, concurrently contextual, social, political, and cultural (Peck, 2010). In Dale's childhood experience identification labeling was concerned with a person's relative distance from an Anglo/British normative conception of Canadian. Current labels, as he described them, obscured the complexities of largely European ethnicities and nationalities that seemed to have mattered more to differentiated Canadianness in the past, when difference was cleaved along national, linguistic, and religious identifications associated with Europe.

In previous chapters, I had drawn in Saul's (2008) thesis that Canadians should reappraise their national mythology and embrace their hybridity and complexity, and Richardson's (2002) finding about social studies teachers' contentment with indeterminacy, to capture some of the benefits of Bhabha's (1994) sense of the value of keeping identifications from settling and becoming reified. That participants could imagine themselves as hybrid, emerged in some of our conversations, illuminating facets of the subjectivity of teachers I had considered as I conceived this study, as well as aspects I had not considered. I shared, with Brian and Dale, a sense of ethno-national hybridity. That sense of nationality and ethnicity intersecting with Canadianness was evident, for example, in how the word, 'ethnic,' was used by Cam and Allen, to qualify

Canadian identity in relation to Anglo/British heritage; neither of them thought of their national identifications as hybrid.

I had not considered, sufficiently, prior to the study, the role of a professional identity with its associated cultures and ethos, nor prior teaching assignments outside of social studies, as constituting sites of hybridity, influencing interpretation of official curriculum and, in turn, social studies pedagogy. Dale's experience, transitioning from a career in the military to a career in the classroom, offered insights into his struggle to be 'both-and,' as soldier and teacher, rather than 'either-or,' reflecting a professional dimension of hybridity. Throughout this study, he was always negotiating his identifications in his practice. Those identificatons impacted his expectations, his intentions, his disposition towards his students and his colleagues, and they were at play in his teaching. Eight years in to his teaching practice, his background and experience as a soldier would come through in the idioms and expressions he used in conversation, and in his desire to instill in his students an appreciation for the value of dialogue.

Dale's persistence, and his willingness to adapt, reflected his desire to rise above the prejudices he encountered from his military colleagues, some of whom did not believe there was a place for soldiers in the school environment, and his teaching colleagues, who assumed that soldiers were no-nonsense people who would straighten out lower stream students. Dale told me, "There's biases that operate, and I'll call them cultural biases, because they're not necessarily tied to ethnicity, but they're also tied to perceptions of people's backgrounds" (IOC, lines 292-294). This was a sense of culture that was not present in the questions I asked of teacher participants to get a sense of who they were. But it has helped me to change my perception of professional cultures within

the teaching community, and beyond, revealing how, in transitioning to teaching from another path, professional or otherwise, a teacher does not simply supplant previous identifications for new ones, nor displace sensibilities about themselves and how they relate to the world.

That seemed present, too, in Cam's transition, within his teaching practice, from one specialty to another; his was a form of intra-professional hybridity. He did not set aside his pedagogic approaches from 10 years of physical education and mathematics teaching, or from 20 years of coaching football, when he taught social studies, although, until our conversation, Cam had never given thought to the ways his prior pedagogic experiences played out in his current practice.

> The best coaches are teachers, but I think the best teachers are also coaches… I mean I wouldn't teach Phys. Ed. by just talking about how to tackle for sixty minutes, right?
>
> …And I don't think you should teach about classical liberalism for sixty minutes, either. (Cam, IOC, lines 1180-1185)

In a sense, the hybridity at play in Cam's identifications, were subliminal and unproblematic to him. His realization that he had been drawing on his pedagogic experience from another subject area in his social studies teaching revealed, for Cam, how a facet of his past was persistently at play in the present.

Brian and Allen offered a further potential dimension of hybridity: their activism. Brian chose to bring his commitments from outside of his practice into his classroom. In that sense, Allen, too, negotiated who he was inside and outside of his teaching practice through his external commitments. For both, and potentially for other teachers, such a

sense of hybridity could be understood as an accessible opportunity to explore how a teachers' identifications, experiences, and commitments, are intertwined with practice, and how they might be gateways to reimagining aspects of pedagogy and the modeling of community engagement.

5.4 Mediating Students' Encounters with the World

The sense that a teacher's practice is a negotiation among facets of identifications, experiences, background, perspective, and commitments, complemented my developing sense of the complexity of the role of the teacher in mediating students' encounters with the world through curriculum. All of the teacher participants used different terms to describe their mediating roles, each reflecting a different sensibility about how to teach social studies. Allen characterized himself as "not a filter, [and] not really a conduit, but I am sort of this bridge between the curricula, in its various forms, and students; sort of a translator" (IOC, lines 554-555). His language evoked mediated connectivity in bridging and translating, rather than transmission, such as a conduit that channels knowledge from resource to student, or a filter that might sift out knowledge that is difficult or unpleasant for teachers and/or students to encounter.

Dale talked about his role as "delivering the curriculum" (IOC, line 435). I found his use of the notion of delivery interesting in relation to social studies. It emerged from the Latin, dēlīberāre, to set free, and may be understood as a duty to protect others from danger and evil (OED Online Version, 2013b). Delivering the curriculum may be more transactional than relational; the teacher has a responsibility to contribute to students' encounter, contributing to their understanding and valuing what they learn, and how that will help them to live in the world.

Cam, as a coach, looked at his pedagogy as building relationships with students, focusing on "getting kids to think about issues and have informed opinions" (IOC, lines 606-607). Yet he talked about how he tempered his approach, maximizing students' autonomy to come to informed opinions, without overtly inviting his own beliefs, values, and commitments into his teaching. In this study, Brian served as Cam's foil, allowing Cam to describe how each of them had a different sensibility about teaching social studies.

> Like [Brian's] into changing people's view on the future, and how we live, and how we interact. I don't have that kind of philosophy…I always kind of use the teacher/preacher [binary]. I'm definitely a teacher. I don't believe in preaching a sort of ideology or a certain way of looking at things. (Cam, IOC, lines 532-534)

Cam's disposition was reflective of what he had told me about his political commitments, "I've never belonged to a political organization… [I'm] pretty neutral in that category" (IOC, line 214). His use of neutrality in relation in relation to politics and religion was interesting. Neutrality means not taking a side, particularly in war, and it shares roots, in Latin, with the word 'neither' (OED Online Version, 2003b). The idea of 'not taking sides' and 'neither' is a dyad structure.

Brian characterized his approach to teaching social studies more personally than his peers.

> It's tragic that I've had to resolve that what students take away [from my course] is a social responsibility. In the end… it's to understand the human condition and to see themselves as important as anyone who was ever born… that they realize their significant responsibility commensurate with living in a free society…

> having knowledge that not all have that, and so they see themselves, first, as human beings. (IOC, lines 186-194)

Brian's teaching was focused on developing and sustaining students' lifelong ethical regard for all human beings. For Brian, the 'tragedy' was that students would leave his class feeling a burden they had not anticipated upon entering at the beginning of the term. He saw his approach as the unfortunate responsibility of a social studies teacher.

In my own practice I appreciate how my own sensibility about my mediating role has evolved. I began my teaching practice with a sense about my role similar to both Allen and Dale. I worked, principally, with students who had reading difficulties and challenges in articulating themselves in writing. I had to be an interpreter of curriculum and I had to make choices about what I thought mattered and how I was going to share that with students. My role as a teacher educator has been somewhat different than my public school experience. As an instructor I have enjoyed the opportunity to participate in determining program outcomes, and the autonomy to design my course and my assessments in relation to common outcomes. My courses have, increasingly, reflected my sensibilities about social studies, and how teachers might interact with students, peers, and official curriculum. I do a bit of what Cam refers to as 'preaching.' As my teacher education practice has evolved I have attended to helping students appreciate their epistemological situatedness, highlighting the socially constructed nature of knowledge, and the ways we talk about ourselves, and the world. For my teacher education students, this has meant focusing on the disciplinary roots of social studies, and paying increasing attention to the language in curriculum documents like the POS, and the words we use to when we teach. That sensibility resonated with me in my

conversations with study participants, especially in the ways I came to notice how the lexicon of the social sciences, and the ideological character of social studies discourses and pedagogy seemed to define the terrain that could be perceived and explored with students.

When I teach, I want my students to appreciate that language is not arbitrary; words have genealogies (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989). In envisioning this study, I had hoped to offer teacher participants the opportunity and conditions to attend to the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy. In 'Truth and Method,' Gadamer's (1975/1989) highlighted the historicity of text, language, and the knowledge carried through it, from the past into the present. He argued that attending to the historicity of language was necessary because of the persistent immanence of the future in the present moment. For social studies to be relevant in the lives of students and teachers, it should be taught and learned as a situated engagement with the world, conscious that the present, as it is conceived, is historicized, perspective laden, and that coming to understand issues, notions, and ideas, matters, because of the future's immanence.

5.4.1 Participants and the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy

Gadamer pointed out that there is nothing that is fundamentally precluded from being engaged with through language (1966/2004a). "In all of our knowledge of ourselves," according to Gadamer, "and in all the knowledge of the world, we are always encompassed by the language that is our own" (1966/2004a, p. 62). He noted, further:

> We are always already biased in our thinking and knowing by our linguistic interpretation of the world. To grow into this linguistic interpretation means to

> grow up in the world. To this extent, language is the real mark of our finitude. (p. 64)

For Gadamer, knowing the world occurred through language; human beings encountered and engaged the world through it, but, importantly, in having language and in using it, language seldom raised the attention of the speaker or interpreter to itself. In turn, language users may not appreciate how they, themselves, are reflected in their interpretations of what they read, that their prejudices and dispositions, while impacted and changed by their encounters with text, nevertheless, reflects back some of what the interpreter brought to the encounter. To what extent were social studies teachers, like those involved in this study, attending to notions and narratives inhabiting the language of the POS, and to the language of the conversations I had with each of them?

In our initial one-on-one conversations, it was when we talked about multiple perspectives, and the shift to mandating the inclusion of Francophone and Aboriginal perspectives, to contribute to students' gaining "an understanding of Canada" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 4), that we got into interesting language territory. For practicing and pre-service social studies teachers in Alberta, research on multiple perspectives discourses has revealed a range of challenges and resistances to thoughtfully and deliberately attending to the complexities, multiplicities, and possibilities, encountered in perspective taking (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Donald, 2009; D. Scott, 2013). The invitation in the language of POS, regardless of its mandatory intent, reflected an evolutionary move in broader liberal-inclusivity discourses, a restorying Canada as a nation state with three founding peoples. Coming to embrace a change in mythology has proved challenging. The liberal-inclusive predispositions of teachers in Scott's (2013)

study, and of pre-service teachers in den Heyer and Abbott's (2011) study, were echoed by teacher participants in this study, as were some of their resistances. In our initial conversations, and resonating in the two studies mentioned, above, was the conclusion that participants were not attending, sufficiently and persistently, to their language, and how it laid out the terrain of understanding, and the boundaries of the current state of their gaze. Even in the absence of what Gadamer (1966/2004b, 1975/1989) referred to as 'historically affected consciousness,' a liberal-inclusive disposition in social studies could be open to appreciating injustice, welcoming the possibility of addressing or redressing it, and expressing egalitarian sentiments, and inviting attention to implication in current conditions (den Heyer, 2009a; Pike, 2008b). What may get not overtly invited into such a discourse is a hermeneutic attention to the language of curriculum and teaching; how words, terms, expressions, and idioms set parameters of what enters the conversation, when it enters, and how it is integrated into the encounter teachers and students have, connecting the curriculum with the world.

There were too few instances in this study where attention was raised to the epistemological situatedness of language and how that shaped the interpretation of the POS and, in turn, social studies pedagogy. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the language of Alberta's current POS reflects the touchstone notions of the social sciences, and evolving liberal sensibilities. That was not completely invisible to Dale, who, when we talked about multiple perspectives, said:

> We tend to fit culturally in, say, the dominant white European perspective, a very dichotomous rather than holistic approach… A lot of our social studies

> curriculum is actually still stuck in that dichotomous perspective. We have nationalism and internationalism; choose one. (Dale, IOC, lines 731-747)

In recognizing the curriculum's epistemologically situatedness, he appreciated the move that the authors of the POS were making in articulating a complex perception of perspective, extending it beyond left and right, this or that, or one stance and its contrary. Dale added, "At some point you've got to take this curriculum and boil it down to something manageable, and even give it some direction, otherwise it's wide open! How do you test to that" (IOC, lines 736-738)? The epistemological frame, complemented by the perceived limitations of pedagogic time, and the scientistic expectation that the encounter with the curriculum needed to be measured, suggested the lenses through which he read official curricula.

He took that further, complicating the sense that by Aboriginal or Francophone, the language of the POS was implying group-transcendent positions:

> We may look at Quebec; we may look at Aboriginal groups in Canada; but what about Aboriginal groups within Quebec… We tend to break things down to good or bad perspectives. (Dale, IOC, lines 761-762)

Dale implied that his interpretation of the POS, and the pedagogy that followed from it, operated at the confluence of an Enlightenment-inspired, Anglo-Canadian normative, social science influenced pedagogic stance, mixing in progressive liberalism, the pressures of perceived pedagogic time, and the desire to reduce complexity in the interests of clarity and assessability. He was concerned about the pressure he felt to reduce complexity, and he appreciated a hidden curricular push to emphasize the assessable; that was a persistent tension for Dale, raised at later stages of data collection,

too, but one not mentioned by any of his teacher participant peers. I can recall, in my own high school teaching practice, encountering similar pressure to adapt my teaching approach to focus on the content upon which students were likely to be assessed, and I felt the influence of that pressure reaching back through Grades 10 and 11. Tupper (2007) found similar sentiments about Alberta's provincial exam culture among her study participants, too. Those pressures were complemented, for Dale, by his perception of students' resistance and reticence to engage with complexity, multiplicity, ambiguity, and imagination. Dale told me, most of his lower stream students "tend to be more immature, and so you're asking [them] to deal with a multiplicity of perspectives, when most teenagers, at this point in time, [think] it's all about me" (IOC, lines 786-788). He was frustrated with his students' reluctance to embrace ambiguity and uncertainty, and to engage in dialogue that could contribute to new understandings and broadening of their gaze. Drawing on his background in peacekeeping he told me he wanted his students to value dialogue that exposed them to other perspectives: "If we don't start talking, there's no real hope; the function of our society works on the basis of communication" IOC, lines 372-374).

Dale's appreciation of the complexities and possibilities of multiple perspective-taking and the epistemological situatedness of the curriculum were not addressed, directly, or in the same way, by his teacher participant peers. Brian offered a postcolonial infused regard for the prior POS, and Allen pushed past the dispositions for the pre-resolved, in favour of the ambiguous and the uncertain. Cam appreciated that the discourse on multiple perspectives had influenced changes in the language of textbooks,

but for him, that shift contributed more to feelings of ambivalence, than affinity for ambiguity.

The change in the POS offered Brian sanction for teaching social studies the way he wanted to teach it. "Virtually everything that I teach now is relevant to them… With the old curriculum… it was hard" (IOC, lines 701-703). For me the former and current programs articulate a vision for social studies reflecting a liberal multicultural gaze; the current POS, though, has a more progressive voice than its predecessor, evoking moments of critical postmodern and postcolonial attention to the world. That sensibility resonated in Brian's interpretation of the POS. He noted that the former program was, at the Grade 11 level:

> A myopic European kind of thing in a way of an explanation, but [with] no real apology… an explanation of – 'sorry about that; this is how that all happened.' And so some of that, at least, in [the] form of explanation, but in a really horribly glorified kind of a way, I hate to say, in my view. (Brian, IOC, lines 635-638)

An Anglo/European regard for past, as the historical disposition of the prior social studies program in Alberta, was complemented by a liberal apologist stance relating to the consequences and persisting global impact of European imperialism. For Brian, that explanatory relationship with the past lacked life, refused interrogation, and denied space for the humanizing sensibility that was part of who he understood himself to be as a teacher, and what he wanted his students to understand about themselves. The former program articulated an acceptance that harm was perpetrated, and that injustices occurred, but it failed to implicate present conditions as emerging from that past, or attend to the inequities that persist (den Heyer, 2009a). The intention of the current

program, according to Brian, "is to elevate and expand students' perspectives on humanity… the dynamic of globalization, and the quagmire of nationalism" (IOC, lines 622-624). Like his peers in this study, when he talked about the POS, his focus was on the high school grade levels, and issues related to those grades. In the case of the quote, above, the issues he referred to were central to Grades 10 and 11. His sense of the humanness of the current program, congruent with his Trudeau-era-inspired liberal egalitarianism, complemented his postcolonial stance, when he characterized the Grade 12 level social studies courses in the prior POS in contrast to his understanding of the current program:

> I think the 30 level was, considering that the new curriculum is all about humanity, for me, and kind of the evolution of all of that, the [old] 30 level was kind of a shock [for students]; it was very sad; the historical side, and the very, very cold political and economic side of the old 30 curriculum. I was so glad to see that change and have it be something that you could actually use. (Brian, IOC, lines 640-643)

In the prior POS, the Grade 12 program was, for Brian, composed of dry, technical, essentialized, informational renderings of political and economic theories. Any sense of the possibility that political and economic domains could be otherwise organized was absent. What students encountered was wholly within Western traditions. Humanity and the world, in the previous program, seemed to Brian to be very European, and principally British. The matter-of-fact expression of British and European imperial contrition and shoulder-shrugging in the prior program was a sentiment that seemed to him to intentionally foreclose on looking back further and deeper, shutting down any need to

actively engage in the present to imagine alternative futures by inviting students to thoughtfully contend with the narratives of others haunting the present; avoiding, ignoring, misperceiving, or refusing any remembrance that insists on accountability and demands implication (Simon, 2004).

While Allen did not trouble or even point to the epistemological situatedness of the program, its language, or its objectives, he expressed an affinity for what he interpreted as the current program's implicit sanctioning of ambiguity and uncertainty as important pedagogic goals. Dale had mentioned ambiguity, too, in our initial one-on-one conversations, and the term came up at various points in the study. For Allen, responding to a question I asked about how he understood the intent of the current POS in comparison to the prior program, he told me:

> I think this one has a degree of complexity that the [previous POS] did not. It tolerates and perhaps even promotes a degree of ambiguity and doubt and questions. If it is based on issues, and it is done really properly, the issues are complex and messy and don't have a right answer. The old curriculum was … inquiry based, which suggests that we are going to start with a problem and we will find the answer or conclusion. This one, you may not find an answer and you may not come to any conclusions. I think that is okay. (Allen, IOC, lines 756-766)

Allen liked the ambiguity in the POS, sensing that it invited teachers and students to become comfortable with the "complex and messy." He suggested that he believed that the nature of the prior program, which was "much more of a shopping list," had become a "default setting" to which teachers could gravitate, and using "the so-called bracketed material [in the current program] rather like the third-column shopping list [in the

previous program]… You could still teach the new curriculum as if it were the old one" (IOC, lines 770-772).[20] This struck me as a 'counter-resolutionary' pedagogic stance; it seemed very Canadian; he accepted and even welcomed indeterminacy and appreciated the value of constant negotiation (Richardson, 2002; Saul, 2008). That sensibility was similar Dale's affinity for ambiguity, and for thoughtful conversation aimed at bridging differences. Allen valued the potential that the program, when it was "done properly," could leave students and teachers confronting ambiguity. It was, for him, the purposeful possibility in the program that students and teachers should ask or take on a problem or a question that may not have been asked before, and may have no resolution, no prepackaged, anticipated outcome (den Heyer, 2005, 2009a).

Compared to his fellow teacher participants, Cam had a more conservative and ambivalent relationship with the language and intention of the current POS, as he understood it. His disposition evoked what Kelly (1986) called 'neutral impartiality,' characterized by a "belief that students should be actively involved in discussions of controversial public issues as part of their education for citizenship," and that "impartiality entails the related principles of a fair hearing and critical dialogue" (p. 121). Yet, I found in our initial one-on-one conversation, and at other points in the study, moments where his impartiality and neutrality were interrupted, as Cam suggested that he offered stances that counterbalanced what he perceived as 'bias.' In a critique of a Grade 10 textbook on globalization, he noted that "some of the social studies teachers,

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[20] "Bracketed Material" refers to issues, concepts, and notions, found in the specific outcomes in the Program of Studies for social studies in Alberta, especially in the secondary grades. In the front matter of the program it states: "where appropriate, examples have been identified as an optional (e.g.) or required (i.e.) component of the specific outcome. At the high school level (10, 20, and 30), all bracketed items are required components of the specific outcome" (Alberta Education, 2005, pp. 7-8).

especially the white male ones… after teaching [from] it for a year… like, 'we're the root of all evil' in terms of the problems we have in society" (IOC, lines 1375-1378). That was, at the time, an encounter for those teachers with difficult knowledge, that the legacy of coloniality belonged to them (Britzman, 1998). Still, he did not deny the value of the perspective in the textbook and how it rendered an interpretation of the intention of the POS front matter. He expressed a sense of contrition when he said, "like this is what we did to Aboriginals, and we did take their land, and the treaties were not all that legal." (IOC, lines 1510-1511). Cam believed, though, that "most of his students don't see it," that is, they do not connect people in the past with themselves in the present (IOC, lines 1513-1514). That might allow him to explore the issue as it was raised in the textbook, but counter-balance it with a conservative-situated perspective on colonialism, too. Cam, though, expressed concern that his students may not encounter a similar counter-balance from student teachers, although he implied he might not intervene in that situation. He said, " I always get student teachers… and there's always a part of me that wants to provide the other side, because they just do teach from the textbook" (IOC, lines 1425-1427).

Interestingly, Cam invoked 'we' in relation to the colonizers and oppressors of Aboriginal people, as well as 'we' in relation to teachers, a complicating dissonance to his egalitarian and universalizing sensibility, and complicating Canada as a political and geographic entity, and complicating how he storied himself into it (J. W. Scott, 2001). He was prepared to acknowledge he was associated, through his current identifications, with those in the past who, as perpetrators of injustice, identified themselves as Canadians, and/or British Subjects, exploring, colonizing, and governing Canada. It was in the

accounting for the gaps and chasms between the story he told of Canada, and the one he encountered in the textbook, that his guilt was manifested (J. W. Scott, 2001). He used 'we' to position the English and French colonials and settlers in a dialectical tension with Aboriginal peoples. 'We' made sense for Cam, who identified as a "real Canadian," earlier in our conversation. Interestingly, he pointed to Canadian-perpetrated injustices in the past, acknowledging that the 'we' of the past may have been unjust. Such discourses sustain temporal distance from responsibility for injustice, cleaving 'we' in the past from 'we' in the present (den Heyer, 2009a; den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Donald, 2009; Kanu, 2011; Kearney, 2002; Levstik, 2000; J. W. Scott, 2001; Tupper & Cappello, 2008).

Cam's sense of his relationship with the POS and with his teaching raised for me the issue of whether, through a change in the intention expressed in the language of the POS, teachers are invited, as human beings and as politicized and historicized subjects, into the teaching of social studies. Kelly (1986), and Hess (2008, 2009), argued that teachers' disclosure of their political stances and commitments contributed to students' perceptions of teachers as honest arbiters of classroom dialogue, a sensibility about teaching social studies supported in empirical research (Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006; Niemi & Niemi, 2007). In my own high school teaching experience, while I was not reluctant to share my stance on political and economic issues, I was hesitant to do too much unpacking of a notion like 'we,' in my social studies classes, although, upon reflection, I seemed less resistant to taking that up when I taught Sociology 30. Certainly, the sense that teachers limit sharing too much of who they are and what they believe, was evident in the literature I explored in Chapter II.

For Cam, keeping his 'biases' out of his pedagogy was likely challenging. I do not

know if he was policing what he shared with me, but his biases were evident in our conversation, and it seemed plausible that his dialogic approach to our conversation would not be that different from how he talked with students. Niemi and Niemi (2007) noted that it was difficult for teachers to conceal their stances, even when they resisted, deliberately, their disclosure. Cam thought of himself as more conservative than his colleagues, and while he suggested that he did not intervene with student teachers to lend balance to the perspective of the textbook, he appeared less reluctant with students in Brian's classes. "When Brian's teaching, I'll walk by and kind of get my two cents in… Those kids need to hear the other side" (IOC, lines 1803-1804). His sense of balance implied a polarity to perspective rather than complexity, a sense echoed other times, during the study. Interestingly, while he was prepared to offer his "two cents" in Brian's class, his reluctance to do so in his own classes ran contrary to what he believed was in the POS: "There's ample opportunities in these new curriculums (sic) for your own personal perspective… I try and stay away from that, to be honest" (IOC, lines 1617-1618).

It was not clear to me the extent that Dale shared with students where he stood on political issues, or on notions such as the legacy of coloniality. Politics, in the public policy sense, did not come up in our conversations. While it was evident that Dale had a grounding in history, and that he was familiar with critical discourses that revealed to him the epistemological situatedness of social studies, our dialogues never seemed to get us to a place where we talked about politics in the public sphere. When politics arose it was the internal politics of public education and the pressure he felt to reduce complexity in the interest of maximizing students' assessment performances. What was present in our

conversation was Dale's military background, especially his reluctance to discuss it too much. "It doesn't lend value, somehow, in grabbing kids attention, because kids can't relate to it, and, maybe, I can't articulate it" (IOC, lines 515-518). He shared that he perceived students as having an understanding of military life "shaped by Hollywood, and first-person shooter games on the X-box" (IOC, lines 534-535). As the study progressed, I learned more about Dale's military background and experience, and it served as an interesting window into ways teachers' backgrounds and experiences can come into play in their teaching.

Both Allen and Brian had dispositions towards activism that they brought with them into their classrooms, although what drove each of them to integrate their commitments, differed. For Allen, his activism tied together his intellectual curiosity with his sense of the relationship between teaching social studies and social justice. He told me:

> That is a function not so much of my background as just the kind of reading I do, or the people I interact with… [Those factors] have put me down kind of a different path than where I used to be, or where I might have gone with the new curriculum. (Allen, IOC, lines 603-605)

Brian's blend of activism and teaching had different roots, and was a manifestation of a different sensibility about interpreting the official curriculum, and the role of the social studies teacher. He shared with me that he positioned himself:

> …intentionally, in a way, as a critic of the curriculum, and [I] try to ask [students], 'is there value here?' And I want to help them to begin to look…and see where is the value and why are we teaching this, too… Having an idea of who

> I am as a person…because I take a perspective, in a way, but I think I do that responsibly, but, also, as a political individual, as I am, [I share] my history through that. (Brian, IOC, lines 449-455)

By asking his students about what was valuable in the official curriculum, he invited them to explore why (some) adults had decided something mattered enough that it should be taught in schools (den Heyer, 2008). In a sense, he was bringing den Heyer's (2008) notion of making the curriculum the curriculum, in his teaching practice. His invitation also found resonance with Pinar (2004), who noted that intergenerational transmission of knowledge is a principal function of school curricula. Further, Brian shared his political and economic orientation and stances with students, disclosing his commitments and relating his experience, because he believed revealing those things to students allowed him to facilitate deliberative engagements in class (Hess, 2009, 2010a; Kelly, 1986; Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006). By sharing what he valued and what the program valued, students could have an opportunity to see that teaching and learning, organized within the context of public education, actually has purpose and intention, and that teaching is not neutral.

As far as Brian was concerned, social studies was the school subject area that mattered most, because it connected him with students, and because it interwove the classroom with the world. Early in his teaching career he had described a crisis that expressed how personal teaching was to him.

> [I was] in my classroom with the children of all the world's troubles – no question. And that's a very sobering thing for a human being. Had I chosen to teach math or something, I could have been blissfully ignorant to all of that, to

> what was actually going on in our community there. Here I had a Kurdish student who lost five sisters, and another student who lost two sisters, and a Somali student who watched her mother being raped and murdered, and a Bosnian kid, the last time he saw his mother, someone shot her and she fell face first, but his story was not just a tear jerking thing. It was unbelievable, cathartic experience for him, I think, to actually have a chance to say that to us, but for all of us, and forever more, that's kind of what I was doing there.
>
> And so I fired off this email [to Noam Chomsky] at midnight…and within 24 hours I got a response in my inbox. And it was like questions. So I called one of my friends and I said, 'shit,' now what? Chomsky wrote back! (Brian, IOC, lines 322-347)

Brian's humanizing pedagogy, as he described it, was dialogic, thoughtful, engaging, and alive, offering students an invitation to bring their lives and experiences into the classroom. In contrast, Brian regarded mathematics teaching as something entirely abstracted from life and living. Mathematics, as a school subject, acted as a placeholder for the school subjects that were disconnected from teaching students about living in the world. His difficult encounter with the curriculum of "all the world's troubles," reflected a willingness and intention to accept implication in what he shared with students. He appreciated that his privilege, as a teacher, could have been used a shield, if he had chosen to teach that way, resisting the extension of an invitation to the world that was present, already, in his classroom (den Heyer, 2009a; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). By inviting the pain in the lives of students into his teaching, he positioned himself as

someone who acknowledged and accepted 'tragic' burden he mentioned earlier, the weighty responsibility that he wanted students to embrace, as he embraced it.

5.4.2 Participants' understandings of citizenship in relation to the Program of Study and social studies pedagogy

Citizenship is one of the two core concepts in Alberta's social studies POS, and is commonly associated with social studies and history education (Nelson, 2001; Osborne, 1997, 2001, 2005; Sears, 2004). In this study, the ways participants imagined citizenship could be taught, taught for, and cultivated, varied, and what I could capture from our conversations was only a snapshot of our relationships with it. Allen, in a critique of the current POS, and the thread of citizenship that ran through it, suggested that its ubiquitous presence throughout the program's front matter and outcomes was a ploy to make the more radical changes in the program "socially acceptable."

> I think that this curriculum wrestles with complexity, with contemporary issues, which are complicated… and tries to develop some sort of way for young people to deal with complicated, messy ideas… I think to say that we are going to teach citizenship is, possibly, rubbish. To say that we are going to find some ways to learn about our complex world and come to terms with it is probably more correct. (Allen, IOC, lines 812-815)

He implied that if the real core of the program were revealed, that it was intended to have students and teachers "wrestling with complexity," that might have provoked resistance from teachers who had been comfortable with the 'third column' shopping list treatment

of the outcomes in the previous program.[21] Allen suggested that the current POS offered teachers a 'fork-in-the-road' for taking up social studies – one path, the one that he followed, explored coming-to-terms with living in a complex world, and wrestling with difficult and complicated issues, ideas, problems, and questions. The other path served as cover, in the form of predetermined issues for some teachers, so that they "could still teach the new curriculum as if it were the old one" (IOC, line 778).

This bifurcated sense of social studies pedagogy illuminated tensions at play in teaching about and for citizenship. According to Sears (2004), activist language and participatory conceptions of citizenship are common in formal curricula across Canada. Allen's concern about the current POS, reflected his appreciation of potential for interpretations of what he read as activist language to be understood in a way that abstracted engagement, treating it as a topic for discussion, or a performance, rather than an opportunity for thoughtful action. Allen's sense of the roll of participatory engagement was in tension, somewhat, from what Cam had told me.

For Cam, teaching for citizenship was more about students encountering the feeling of engagement, and developing an understanding of themselves as politicized subjects in both the Canadian nation state context, and the global system. He was concerned with helping students to appreciate the world through encounters with the institutions and conventions of governance. In a sense, he was concerned with teaching students that it was important to think about their commitments to communities, from the

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[21] The previous program of studies had a three-column structure to articulate specific knowledge outcomes. The first column, "Generalizations and Key Understandings" named themes, and broad outcomes; the second column, "Concepts," had one or two-word concepts like 'imperialism,' or 'total war"; the third column, "Related Facts and Content," expressed specific content and notions students could be expected to describe or explain (Alberta Learning, 2000).

local to the global, but he did not want to teach them what to think in terms of their commitments. His approach with his Grade 12 students in both streams was to ask, based on the key issue question in the POS:

> To what extent should you embrace a particular ideology? Whether it's collectivism, or individualism, where do you stand in line? So, ultimately, they have to come to a decision. Are they slightly more left wing, or slightly more right wing, and why? (Cam, IOC, lines 2000-2002)

With his Grade 10 students in both streams, his questions, echoing the POS, were:

> To what extent should we embrace globalization? And, to what extent can I make a difference? I think the culminating activity we do with NGOs, where [students] raise money, and the become aware of this NGO, what its purpose is, what it does… They'll forget a lot in terms of residential school, and a lot of the terminology that we use they will forget, but what an NGO is and what NGO they represented, they'll remember that. (Cam, IOC, 2047-2051)

Cam's sense of citizenship was consistent with the ambivalent language in the program of studies, "promoting active and responsible citizenship at the local, community, provincial, national and global level[s]," (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 1) which seemed, in my reading, but, perhaps, not in Cam's, implicitly, more activist-oriented than the previous program. The program's language is, concurrently, provocative and hesitant. It is ambiguous, reflecting its own sensibility in its indeterminacy. It values the cultivation of students' sense of capacity to be actively engaged in their community, but the authors chose language that did not leave some readers with the sense that the program explicitly pushed pedagogy into curative, ameliorative, or imaginative action, consistent with

Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) justice oriented citizenship (Kennelly & Llewellyn, 2011; Llewellyn, et al., 2010). Cam taught for citizenship as an informed and democratic practice, requiring students to develop competencies, taking for granted the status quo.

That had resonance in the NGO activity for Grade 10, which was the culminating assignment at that level. Students would learn about non-governmental organizations and how those provide services and support to justice oriented causes. In particular, the project focused on enhancing students' understandings of NGOs with transnational mandates. Students would engage in research about the role of an NGO, raise money, and participate in some form of public action, such as marching with picket signs. The extent to which the activity contributed to students' sense of shared fate with human beings elsewhere in the world, and whether the activity cultivated an ethical regard for other human beings, was not evident.

Was the activity's role, as a positive memory of social studies, enough to make it worth doing? What was absent from Cam's description of the NGO activity was the extent to which students understood the conditions that necessitated NGOs existence and function, in the first place, and how students might address and ameliorate those conditions once the project was finished (den Heyer, 2009a; Segall & Gaudelli, 2007; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Further, in its local character, as an effort to raise awareness about issues, raise money, and stage a demonstrations, the subjects of NGOs' efforts were rendered as beneficiaries of the benevolent attention and intentions of students far away, reinforcing students' detachment and distance from the challenges and injustices they were taking up (den Heyer, 2009a; Pike, 2008b).

Both Dale and Brian treated the notion of citizenship as complicated by the tensions between the national and the global. Dale told me, "We're coming into a society which is much more multilateral, multi-connected… and so the traditional notions of citizenship in terms of nationality, [and] place of community, is, in fact, changing " (IOC, 852-853). He situated his citizenship related pedagogy within a discursive space, where he told me he tries to get students to think, share what they understand and to commit to something they believe in, suggesting that good ideas are ones that others will buy into because they are grounded in evidence. "I take more delight in the idea of a marketplace of ideas… that, ultimately, through the course of time, the strongest ideas carry forward, whether it's a good or a bad thing" (IOC, 864-865). He wanted his students to attend, thoughtfully, to what they know and how that helps them develop a stance. He said he told his students, "I don't say this is right or wrong; what's your argument, and what are your biases; and use evidence" (IOC, 881-882). Earlier in our conversation Dale had pointed to the epistemological situatedness of social studies and its inevitable dichotomous rendering of the world. Twenty minutes further into our dialogue, Dale had talked about a strong/weak idea continuum, good and bad, and right and wrong. In doing so, while talking about citizenship and the idea of belonging, the subliminal situatedness of the language of that belonging, inevitably, surfaced.

Epistemological situatedness is difficult to escape; attention to language is difficult to sustain, and recognizing how it is reflected in the speaker and the interpreter, takes effort (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1975/1989). When Brian talked about citizenship it was still embedded in the Western social science tradition, although interpreted through a lens that had elements inspired by critical theory and cosmopolitanism.

> I think of the miracle of life, and, again, to the primary nature, which is that [students] are human, and are part of a human community… I think having an anthropological perspective helps, and from out of that evolves some kind of identity… At some point, when we're talking, having begun that [conversation on] broader anthropological origin, where we get to look at [students] as becoming… so kids start to see themselves and others in a way that they maybe haven't seen. And so you take that and then you tie it back to the idea of citizenship, and how to be actively engaged, because I think there's a really active nature to that, being a citizen. Students can dig their cleats in, and they can really be part of a dynamic discussion about what that is, and whether they accept that responsibility… And students don't always accept it. And it's really, for me, only the beginning of the dialogue… I am kind of sad that they leave just when you get them to begin to think. (Brian, IOC, lines 865-867, and 938-947)

The sense of citizenship Brian was trying to encourage his students to understand and take on reflected his shared fate and cosmopolitan sensibilities, blending in elements of classical citizenship that humanizes, but also reflected his regard for his students developing capacities to make choices (Feinberg, 2012; Heater, 1990, 2004; Nussbaum, 1996). In speaking 'anthropologically,' he engaged his students, dialogically, in a Western social science disciplinary regard for humanness. That echoed back to the beginning of our conversation – Brian's embrace of the ethos of the Trudeau era's multicultural and just society, and his affinity for anthropology, as a discipline.

Brian's conception of citizenship and identity were, for me, both consistent with and at odds with the text on the first page of the social studies program of studies front

matter. Brian's stated intent was for students to recognize, and, potentially, actively exercise their democratic capacities as citizens. Yet, the framework through which this occurs in the POS is lexically and geographically linked to Canada as a geopolitical entity and context, imposing boundaries, impediments, and restrictions on action. For Brian, citizenship was not about boundaries, and in our conversation, he never talked about social studies as related to Canada. For me this sensibility evoked Nussbaum's (1996) cosmopolitanism; for both Brian, and for Nussbaum, national boundaries were arbitrary, and political frontiers were sources of conflict, and impediments to genuine equality.

5.5 The First Action Research Cycle

The research around which this study is framed took place through two specific action research cycles. The intention was to invite teacher participants to attend to specific language of the official curriculum, so that they might begin to gain insights into how their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, influence their interpretation of documents like the POS, which, in turn, impacting their pedagogies. The key means for doing this was conversation intended to cultivate hermeneutic attentiveness, revealing, perhaps, the range of participants' gaze, and offering opportunities to appreciate others' understandings, in the interest of reaching a fusion of horizons. The first action cycle began with a group conversation that took place in January 2011. Unfortunately, it was a short meeting. It had been planned to be about 45 minutes, but by the time everyone was there, apart from Dale, who had another commitment, we had less than twenty minutes to meet. I had time to talk, briefly about study procedures, and then we began to talk about the language of social studies and citizenship education. Following that group meeting were two sets of one-on-one

meetings; the first set occurred in March 2011, and the second set in April of 2011. The one-on-one meetings, which were part of the first action cycle, allowed us to dig more deeply into the role of our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and commitments in relation to our interpretations of the language of the POS, and our pedagogies. In those meetings we talked about ideas for lessons, assignments, projects, and units. We wound up the first action cycle with a second group meeting in mid-May, 2011, and set the groundwork for the second action cycle.

Drawing on the conversations I had with participants explored earlier in this chapter, it was apparent how grounded we were in the Western episteme. While there were instances where our attention to these came to the surface, most of the time our common understandings and shared language concealed the constructed and situated character of what we knew, and how we knew it. In the course of our conversations discussed in the remainder of this chapter, we extended our encounters with our identifications, experiences, backgrounds, perspectives, and commitments. Participant action research has the potential to expose aspects of the professional context and of practice that may not have been anticipated at the outset of the study (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Noffke & Somekh, 2005). That freedom, within the context of a participatory action research approach, had echoes in the freedom of possible trajectories inherent in conversation (Feldman, 1999; Gadamer, 1975/1989). In that respect, then, how the study took shape on the ground was not what I anticipated when I proposed the study. While it took time to build some momentum, many of us began to appreciate, to varying extents, how our identifications, our politicized and historicized subjectivities,

and our educational, professional, personal, and familial experiences and backgrounds shaped our interpretations of the POS, and, in turn, our pedagogies.

5.5.1 Our first group meeting: social class and competent citizenship

As I met Allen, Brian, and Cam, it was evident, in the sarcasm and tongue-in-cheek comments, how comfortable all three of these teacher participants were with each other. We started by talking, briefly, about which courses each of the teacher participants had as their assignment for the winter term that was about to begin. Allen asked Brian about his course assignment. Brian replied that he had 30-1s, 30-2s, 20-1s, and 10s. Asked to clarify which stream of 10s, Brian said, "I'd have retired if it was a 10-2."

> Cam: Are you above or beyond that?
>
> Brian: I'm an elite teacher; I'm a mini professor. I don't think I should have to teach the great unwashed, to tell you the truth. I'll leave that for the kind of working-man-type teacher. (FGM, lines 9-15)[22]

The facetious nature of that exchange was tied up, in part, in the mutual acknowledgement, between Cam and Brian that their respective ideological orientations and their pedagogic styles differed. Brian's use of 'elite' pointed to the ambiguity of its meaning in this context. Whether he used it to elevate himself in relation to his peers, or to elevate his students in relation to their peers, the word 'elite,' as he employed it, poked fun at the different social and intellectual atmospheres that can materialize in classrooms among the two program streams.

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[22] FGM=First Group Meeting

Brian's comment about potentially being assigned a lower academic stream course, pointed to the irony that social class was always at play in schools, impacting social (studies) classes and programs through streaming; separating, and cleaving grade level communities by previous academic performance, that, coincidentally, seemed to reflect socioeconomic status, and other markers of difference (Apple, 1986). That sensibility, that social class impacted and presupposed teachers' expectations about what students were willing and able to accomplish, had resonance for me, in the assumptions I made about my students when I was assigned lower stream social studies courses.

We moved, next, to focusing on language. We had no formal agenda beyond an invitation I had extended by email to the teacher participants to bring to the meeting a term, notion, or concept that could serve as the starting point for a conversation about language and social studies curriculum. What I had hoped was that whatever teacher participants might come up with, we might consider that term, notion, or concept, in light of my research questions. Allen provided the sole response to my email prompt, raising the word 'competence' in relation to the practice of citizenship. That term was a good fit for my second research question about the ways the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy invites and/or delimits teaching for active and responsible citizenship and democratic engagement. The word, 'competence,' is not in the current POS, but it was present in the language Allen said he used in class to express the cultivation of basic skills, abilities, values, and understandings of responsible citizenship. 'Competence' implies sufficiency, but not necessarily expertise (OED Online Version, 2012a).

At the time the study took place, Allen was in the process of establishing a branch office of local human rights organization at the school/research site, in the social studies

teachers' prep room. Both Allen and Brian were involved with that organization, and they were familiar with its mission. Allen shared with us:

> I contacted the girls [with that organization] to see if they wanted to set up a branch office at the school, so that they recruit students to do 'citizenship' kinds of stuff… and operate out of that room. (Allen pointed to a preparation room next door to the classroom where we met.) They said 'yes,' last week, and [the principal] said 'yes.' For the kids who are interested, and drop by, somebody at the desk could say, 'on Thursday we're going to the food bank.' (Allen, FGM, lines 17-21)

That effort, for Allen, tied the cultivation of students' participatory competencies to fostering a comfort and a willingness among students to choose deliberate engagement in the community in the present, as a school-based initiative. He hoped that in the future, on their own, they might choose to be involved, again, because they experienced engagement in high school. In some respects that was the present in Cam's approach to citizenship that he had discussed with me a month earlier, that the memory of the experience impacted students' future engagement choices. It also had resonance in the experiences of the Madison County students in Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) study; they suggested that students were more likely to choose to be involved as participatory citizens in the community because of their involvement in a school-based initiative.

> I have been thinking about competence around curricular outcomes, but competence as an act of citizenship or in an act of citizenship has suddenly peaked my interest. What does it mean to be a competent citizen outside of school?

> …Wouldn't it be cool if we could teach globalization, citizenship, and community kinds of things, and have the kids say 'I could just go [to the room] next door [to get involved]? (Allen, FGM, lines 25-28, and 40-42)

In studies exploring engaged citizenship, well-supported and well-organized efforts were found to be most successful in getting teachers and students involved in community-oriented, and globally oriented action (Larsen & Faden, 2008; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Both Allen and Brian were familiar with the framework for three visions for citizenship developed by Westheimer and Kahne's (2004), and both were interested in promoting pedagogies that pushed students towards community participation and participatory learning that connected theory encountered in the classroom with ameliorative and humanizing actions in the school and beyond.

Allen and Brian were interested in overcoming the ways talk in social studies could function to limit community engagement. For both of them, talk needed to be vivified, interlacing study and contemplation with action, within the classroom and the school, and beyond. It appeared sensible, then, to think that learning to be a competent citizen meant more than knowing information about citizenship as a concept, possession, or a set of performances, principally concerned with social and political compliance (Kennelly & Llewellyn, 2011; Osborne, 2005). Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) framework involved fostering student engagement beyond 'personally responsible citizenship,' the most basic of their three visions. For Allen, the incremental step of providing conditions for some manifestation of participatory citizenship, served as a gateway to richer forms of engagement, understanding, and living, and having a human rights organization representative in the school lends itself to that objective.

Achieving competence in something could be understood as an incremental process, especially in light of the structure of the outcomes of the POS, particularly in relation to skill and process outcomes. These are intended to build upon each other, and to be reinforced through further iterations of each skill and process, within a school year, and importantly, year-upon-year. The iterative nature of teachers' engagements with such outcomes should serve as opportunities to experiment with practice, enriching and improving pedagogy as objectives.

Interestingly, in my initial one-on-one conversation with Allen, he pointed to the core concept of citizenship as something he regarded as not directly teachable, but, as a vague and concurrently complex outcome of teaching and learning; that students come to better understand 'citizenship' by learning to live it through thoughtful practice and the development of competencies. In that sense, there is a distinction between the relationship of a student's good memory of involvement in the community, and their future involvement. For Cam, it was the sense that his students might be nostalgic, but for Allen, it was a product of the cultivation of care and responsibility, sensibilities that resonated, too, with Brian and his sense of the obligation that students-as-citizens should take on as members of a free society.

For Allen and Brian, the provision of a venue for students to become engaged easily, quickly, and conveniently, with a human rights-focused community organization, was an opportunity for students to learn that the experience of citizenship and the development and enhancement of competencies occurred at the nexus of theory and practice. Living in the world demanded that teachers and students do more than focus their attention on in-class talk.

Our conversation about the role of the school and of social studies in cultivating 'citizenship' competencies resonated, potentially, in the way teachers might interpret the POS. Kennelly and Llewellyn (2011) pointed to ambivalent language in specific outcomes in the Grade 10 portion of Alberta's social studies program, but such language is present in the front matter, too, in broader outcomes that transcend all grade levels. According to the POS, "Social studies provides learning opportunities for students to recognize and responsibly address injustices as they occur in their schools, communities, Canada and the world" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 2). Interpretation of words like 'address,' could be understood as inviting action, or it could be interpreted as insistence on in-class discussion. Allen understood the 'learning opportunity' in the outcome, above, as something that must be done as part of social studies pedagogy. But it could be read as an opportunity to consider, imagining participation in the abstract (Kennelly & Llewellyn, 2011).

And so our conversation began to take on a hermeneutic playfulness, as an engagement at the confluence of language, and teachers' identifications, experiences, perspectives, and commitments, giving attention to differing understandings of words and expressions, impacting our perceptions concerning what is present in the language of the POS (Smith, 2006). Our word play was an element of what I sought to have us explore and take up, and in doing so, it provoked some emotional, but, importantly, thoughtful dialogue, revealing that what a teacher values inevitably influences interpretation of official curriculum, and in turn, pedagogy.

Cam had a different sensibility about being so deliberate in facilitating students' participation compared to Brian and Allen. Brian believed that until students "move their

feet," engagement remained abstract (FGM, line 59). Cam expressed concern about what sort of moves students might make. It gave us the chance to talk, briefly, about the extent to which facilitating students' caring about something was part of the job of teaching social studies. As noted in Chapter II, there is a dearth of empirical research on the extent to which teachers do influence students' choices. Hess (2009) noted that her research suggested that students who encounter such expressions of teachers' points of view believe that their own stances are not influenced by their teachers' stances, but what resonated in Cam's concern was, for him, a social expectation that teachers practice self-censorship to facilitate student making choices free of undue influence.

Cam asked, "What should they care about? Should they care about the environment? Should they care about Wall Street? Will they simply learn to care about themselves and nobody else" (FGM, lines 88-89)? Clearly, there were differences in how each of us understood citizenship, caring, and choice. All conversation topics for the future. This, for Cam, was the realm of the teacher/preacher dyad that he raised in our initial one-on-one conversation, and for Brian it was the realm of teaching the kind of engagement he lived and modeled on a day-to-day basis.

Cam was concerned that the opportunity to choose a vector for students' active citizenship was constrained by the possibilities available; choice was contingent on the agenda of the human rights organization in the school, and by the inherent presumption that the nature of the caring was already predetermined and prepackaged. Cam agreed that the channel for engagement that Allen was opening was valuable, but in questioning its wisdom, as the only choice, he implicitly pointed to both an absence of balance in participation choices, and to the conditions for pre-resolving the location and dimensions

of students' caring. That ran contrary to his neutrality sensibility. Such a limit to choice, 'either engage in the way provided, or choose to not be engaged,' challenged Cam's pedagogic disposition towards students' democratic autonomy, and their competence to exercise decision making about community engagement. Cam was ill at ease with the notion that a socially conscientious act could be found, so conveniently, 'next door,' but that other avenues of engagement were absent. One kind of citizenship opportunity was privileged, without offering students avenues commensurate with other ideological and/or partisan identifications, because those were not represented at the school.

Our conversation, then, offered a moment for Cam to draw on his identifications, experiences, perspective, and commitments to trouble the nature of the research, as he came to appreciate my role as the principal researcher in the study. Cam's sense was that a researcher should be objective and impartial, a social science sensibility. It was an opportunity to review my role with the teacher participants, so we might better appreciate the nature of a participatory action research study. I explained that while I did not intend to be overly interventional, my role was not neutral and catalytic, but was tied up in my subjective relationship with the research, and with the field of social studies curriculum and pedagogy. According to Ladkin, "one of the primary tenets of action research as a participatory approach is the acknowledgment that the researcher plays a key role within any inquiry" (Ladkin, 2005, p. 109). Ladkin pointed out the importance that the researcher draws attention to the nature of his or her perspective and bias, and how that would be at play in the research. I was a doctoral candidate in social studies curriculum, acquainted with a body of literature that impacted my sense of social studies as a school

subject, its subject matter, and its pedagogy. Further, my involvement would be impacted by my experience as a high school teacher and teacher educator.

So, in response to Cam's concern about what students should care about, our dialogue allowed us to explore Cam's concern about the political dimension of the study:

> Laurence: Certainly, [the caring] is supposed to be constructive and community-minded, so neoliberal self-care is not something we need to foster… I think the idea that the appreciation and valuing of something beyond themselves is part of the point of what we should be doing.
>
> Cam: Well that is a bias.
>
> Laurence: It is a bias; intention comes from a perspective.
>
> Cam: I agree with you, but there could be someone sitting here that doesn't, like a classical liberalist, or a big 'R' Republican. If I just care about myself, the invisible hand makes sure everyone else will be cared for.
>
> Laurence: I know that whatever we do, nothing's going to be a silver bullet… I think, though, there are students and people that are changeable. (FGM, lines 90-100)

Cam revealed that he was not uncomfortable with the students choosing to be engaged in the way Allen and Brian envisioned, but he saw it as his responsibility, as a teacher and as a participant, to serve in the capacity of a devil's advocate. Such a position reflected Cam's comfort with dialectical logics, and opened our future one-on-one conversation to how we might complicate that.

5.5.2 Highlights of the one-on-one conversations

In between the first and second group meetings, which constituted the beginning and end of the first action research cycle, I had an opportunity to meet with each of the teacher participants for one or two one-on-one conversations. Those dialogues were focused on developing 'pedagogic experiments;' those were lessons, assignments, or projects that teacher participants could use to aid themselves in illuminating ways their identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and commitments shaped their interpretations of the POS, and in turn, their pedagogies. Like the first group conversation, I had intended our one-on-one dialogues to take up terms, notions, or concepts in the POS, and have the teacher participants tease those out. However, only one teacher participant responded to my invitation. Cam expressed an interest in first of the 'skills and processes' outcomes: "Social studies provides learning opportunities for students to engage in active inquiry and critical and creative thinking" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 2). In my meetings with Allen, Brian, and Dale, I raised Cam's interest in the critical and creative thinking outcome, and each of them assented to it.

When Allen and I met, he told me about how critical and creative thinking skills were at play when he engaged his three classes of Social Studies 10-1 IB students in exploring globalization.

> I'm interested in how the kids [are] making meaning out of the world that they live in, so in that regard, the actual content of globalization is far less important

> than coming to some sort of personal understanding about why the world is the way it is. (Allen, OCFC, lines 125-128)[23]

In the excerpt above, Allen forefronted students' developing understandings of the complex contexts they inhabited, rather than treating knowledge as the principal outcome of his teaching, although he did not forgo knowledge, because it was necessary for critical thinking to take place (Case & Daniels, 2008; Case & Wright, 1999). He planned to structure students' encounters with 20th Century history through Western and non-Western lenses, helping them to better understand their perspectives, by exploring what issues and orientations resonated with them. Yet, the language he used to describe their attention to perspective imposed boundaries on the multiplicity of perspectives. Allen's description of what students might discover about themselves reflected a Western ideological sensibility. Students, in his 10-1 IB classes were expected to:

> Develop an understanding of an ideology that they can, perhaps, hang their hat on and say: Oh yeah; I tend to be left wing, or I tend to be right wing, or maybe there's a lot of feminism in my thinking. (Allen, OCFC, lines 135-138)

While there were opportunities for complexity tied to gender and social class, his approach would not necessarily interrupt how social studies curriculum and pedagogy was working to cultivate students' politicized and historicized subjectivities. Once students had located themselves on this Western ideological matrix, they could turn what interested them into an opportunity for informed action, understanding "how to make the world a better place, and then going out and doing something about it. What I am trying to do is build this bridge from the classroom into the community" (OCFC). His sense of

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[23] OCFC= One-on-one conversation first cycle – Each teacher participant had his own OCFC transcript

sanction, supporting his student involvement/service pedagogy, followed from the multiple iterations of his readings of the POS, and from specific outcomes he interpreted as requiring community involvement and service. The conversational rapport that Allen sustained with the POS captured the back-and-forth nature of the hermeneutic circle, shaped by Allen's attention to his changing understanding. According to Prasad:

> The hermeneutic circle tries to get beyond *the letter* of any text's message in order to capture its *spirit*, while fully recognizing that the spirit of the text will elude us unless we have a good understanding of the letter itself. (2005, p. 35)

Allen's iterative approach with the language of POS convinced him that his understanding of community engagement was what the program intended. For him, the call in the program insisted that abstracted understandings encountered in the classroom must be extended into the living in the world that students inhabited.

Brian told me that he integrated critical and creative thinking in his teaching through a humanist and anthropological stance, so that students "see us as a cohesive species… and how change happens…I'm particularly interested in education; the application of education for social change" (OCFC, lines 72-73). While he had told me, when we had our initial one-on-one meeting, that the program change in social studies had contributed to him feeling safe with his pedagogy because his approach better aligned with the current program than the prior one, Brian did not seem to be a teacher who feared pushback. His sense of safety suggested that the school administration and the community did not impose what Cornbleth (2010) had called 'climates of constraints,' on his teaching. The confidence he had with his approach to teaching was reflected in an anecdote about a dialogue he had with Allen and Cam about planning and teaching. Brian

told me Cam asked, “How do you know that step one is right?” He said that he replied, “Well, you have to know that step one is right, that you bring your own biases, so that you bring your own intention, [and] you bring your own perspective” (OCFC, lines 125-128).

Brian talked about pedagogy as ‘proprietary,’ in the sense that it was unique and idiosyncratic. Lessons and units, as proprietary, in Brian’s use of the word, reflected facets of a teacher’s identifications, orientations, pedagogic intentions, commitments, and beliefs. In Brian’s case, his notion of ‘proprietary’ expressed an attention to the intertwined nature of teaching and subjectivity, and how it could be integrated, productively and purposefully, into pedagogy. His teaching was a manifestation of being himself with his students. His conversation with his peers about his pedagogy revealed aspects of the idiosyncratic character of his teaching, and that for Brian and Dale, what they shared were different understandings of program outcomes from the POS, different conceptions of social studies pedagogy, and idiosyncratic motivations shaping and influencing why each of them taught. For Brian, enacting pedagogy is living in the world, and modeling what that looked like to his students.

Brian’s proprietary understanding of pedagogy reflected a desire to personalize his interpretation of the curriculum. Part of that involved returning, regularly to the POS, seeking and seeing in it, new possibilities. His pedagogic experiment was inspired by Allen, and broke away, in part, from pedagogies that looked, principally, at the past and present. The challenge was for students to imagine: “Earth 2.0 – What’s the next version of Earth” (OCFC, line 176)? His question was risky; in part because it depended on students to set the trajectory and tempo for the assignment, and in part because it fostered

conditions in which students would have to contend with ambiguity. The students who worked on this were in Social Studies 20-1, the enriched stream course in grade 11. He regarded his approach as critical thinking, integrating a future-oriented approach, to limit the conditions for students to render a 'right answer.' Although it was future-oriented, students had to do research on the past and the present to imagine the future. In that sense, Brian was encouraging students to cultivate a consciousness that past mattered in relation to envisioning future possibilities.

Cam told me that critical thinking was a feature of his everyday pedagogy, too. For him, critical thinking involved "not taking something for face value. Being able to look at an issue, deeper, being able to see the other perspective, and being able to see and understand other arguments" (OCFC, lines 102-104). To give me a better sense of how this played out in his teaching he gave me an example:

> If you take a look at what's happening with the budget; if we read something from [Opposition Leader Michael] Ignatieff, so this is what he says, or what's [Prime Minister Stephen] Harper going to say? (Cam, OCFC, lines 104-108)

Cam's language emphasized dialectic logics, and a partisan-based sensibility of the Canadian polity, to contribute to students' understandings of political and economic realities. His language suggested that issues in civics and economics discourses have, principally, two (relevant) sides, offering alignments with government or opposition, and with left-leaning or right-leaning ideological stances. He had a dialogic comfort in the dialectic tension between Liberal and Conservative, and liberal and conservative points of view. There was an in-between; his was not a purely binary sensibility, there was grey,

but his framing of perspective did not leave room for others to be present outside of the frame he employed.

This struck me as ironic in relation to his effort to keep his politics out of his practice, but it is reflected in his neutrality-oriented disposition, serving as a catalyst for students' politicization, but seeking not to compromise it with his biases. Teachers keeping politics, and their politics, out of political discourse in schools was a concern expressed by Kelly (1986), Hess (2008, 2009), Levstik (2000), and Llewellyn et al (2010). Such efforts avoid the reality that schools are situated in communities, and that social studies curricula are, at the rhetorical level, at the very least, intended foster thoughtful and purposeful democratic engagement on the part of students and teachers (den Heyer, 2008, 2009a; Kennelly & Llewellyn, 2011; Westheimer, 2008; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Certainly, in reviewing the transcripts of our conversations, Cam's political dispositions came through. According to Hess (2009), students are adept and perceptive at reading their teachers' points of view on issues when such stances were not shared with students. So, it seemed likely to me that Cam's stances and dispositions likely come through in his teaching, and some students must notice them, too.

In the spring of 2011 there was federal election campaign underway and that offered a circumstance for Cam's students to explore public perceptions of politicians and the political process in Canada. He came up with an assignment that focused on analyzing print-based news media, attending to political ethics, party platforms, and political conduct.

> What's the central issue? What are the arguments? What would you say to oppose that? Whether it's [the local newspapers,] the Globe and Mail, or the Toronto Sun, it's a variety of different sources. (Cam, OCFC, lines 402-404)

Cam appreciated that the national political domain was complex, and perspectives nuanced and multiple, and this was reflected in his choice of multiple channels for students to seek opposing arguments. His plan for these lessons relied on students accessing large-circulation English language Canadian newspapers, so they were unlikely to encounter Aboriginal and Francophone perspectives, as mandated in the program of studies. I suggested that Cam have his students attend to advertising, too, to identify the audience that each news source was intended to reach.

While this did not necessarily invite Aboriginal and/or Francophone perspectives, it added facets of complexity, potentially revealing aspects of issues hidden by partisan-situated dyads, and linked these to consumer behavior. Importantly, it added further criterion for evaluating sources, and judging their value and relevance (Case & Daniels, 2008). Cam agreed to integrate my suggestions into his assignment. I had hoped to trouble the notion that media reporting is objective and neutral. In a study by Llewellyn, et al. (2010), they had teacher participants who believed that the news media was neutral, and that was an ideal to which teachers should aspire in their pedagogy.

Dale found it problematic to integrate critical and creative thinking into his social studies teaching. In the 'Dimensions of Thinking' section of Alberta's POS, the language of argument-making evokes methodological treatment of information: "Critical thinking is a process of inquiry, analysis and evaluation resulting from reasoned judgment. Critical thinking promotes the development of democratic citizenship" (Alberta Education, 2005,

p. 8). But for Dale, social studies as a school subject lacked methodological discipline or common approaches to teaching critical thinking skills.

> When you go into science classes there's a thing called scientific method; there is an approach you use for labs; there's templates, and things like that, which deals with the empirical nature of science in terms of knowledge… From a military background, we have things called estimate processes, where we teach analytical skills; it always starts as a model, which you can, then, deviate from. [In social studies] we don't have models that are widely accepted or pushed, because people come to social studies because it is a wildly interdisciplinary approach. (Dale, OCFC, lines 61-70)

Complementing, but also complicating critical and creative thinking, for Dale, were weaknesses in textbooks supporting instruction. In our initial one-on-one conversation, Dale had described the program philosophy in front matter of the POS as "adults [writing] for adults, for understanding by adults" (IOC, lines 458-59). Implicitly, the social studies program and its outcomes were imagined as fully achieved by students in each year of the program, and then built upon in subsequent years. The assumptions about the foundation, then, that students would bring to class, served to shape what seemed, to Dale, to be present and absent in the textbooks. "We end up working with a textbook that is very shallow, and assumes a lot of knowledge that students simply don't have" (OCFC, lines 94-96). As a teacher, whose social studies assignments have tended to be lower stream students, Dale had found himself in an ambivalent position between the social studies he wanted to teach, and the reality he understood as present in his classroom. Reaching back, again, to our initial one-on-one conversation, Dale told me, "I

want to deal, actually, more with the front matter, as opposed to the content side" (IOC, lines 440-441). But his frustration lay in bringing the front matter to life for his students. He asked, "How much can you truly change people or add to them? It's more of a process, as opposed to an end state." When it came to his students, Dale said, "There is not doubt in my mind, that most of my students do not see themselves as having any relationship with the curriculum, or a connection between the world and themselves, in school" (OCFC, 201-203). So, for Dale, the confluence of engaging students to take up complex notions and ideas, and the weaknesses he perceived in terms of what students had encountered, methodologically, in the past, along with the deficiencies in the textbooks and the POS, frustrated him.

For his pedagogic experiment, he had planned a few lessons to get students to understand the notion of genocide, using a decision matrix to help students to employ eight indicators to evaluate historical events taken up in class, making determination whether those constituted genocide. That would be followed by students, working in groups, discussing and comparing their determinations, to better understand the process, and what made a sound determination. Dale's approach was analytical, and the temper of our conversation differed from our dialogue five months earlier. In our initial one-on-one conversation Dale had pointed to the epistemological situatedness of the POS and he had raised issues tied to the hidden curriculum. During our one-on-one conversation in between the first and second group meetings he seemed to be less attentive to the complexities of perspective than he had highlighted, previously.

5.5.3 Closing the first action research cycle

Our second group conversation occurred on May 19, 2011. It was the only time during data collection that all of the participants attended for the duration of the meeting. At that meeting we reflected on the 'pedagogic experiments,' transitioning our conversation to the next action research cycle, one in which we attended, more deliberately, to how our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and commitments, were at work in our pedagogies. I had assembled some questions to get us thinking about the pedagogic experiments, and our respective relationships with the POS. I emailed them to the teacher participants prior to the meeting.[24] Once we started talking, it was evident that most of the teacher participants had not checked their email, or if they did, they had not opened the attachment with the questions that had been intended to offer a frame for reflection on our previous conversations. As in prior meetings I had with teacher participants, once the dialogue was underway it was allowed to find its own course (Feldman, 1999; Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). We could, if necessary, return to the questions if the conversation needed a boost.

Interestingly, as I went through the transcripts of our conversations for the first action research cycle, 'creative thinking' was nearly absent from our dialogues, and none of us noticed. For me, while it seemed reasonable to pair critical thinking with creative thinking, it has been seldom that I have thought about them together or taught them together. The pairing of critical thinking with creative thinking in the current POS was echoed in the previous POS, although the current program provides a definition for creative thinking that is absent in the text of the prior POS:

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[24] Appendix IV

> When students identify unique connections among ideas and suggest insightful approaches to social studies questions and issues. Through creative thinking, students generate an inventory of possibilities; anticipate outcomes; and combine logical, intuitive and divergent thought. (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 8)

In Alberta's current POS critical thinking is analytical and evaluative, contributing to reasoning and judgment, and key to students' understanding and practice of democratic citizenship. Critical thinking should develop and enhance students' skills and abilities for:

> Distinguishing fact from opinion; considering the reliability and accuracy of information; determining diverse points of view, perspective and bias; and considering the ethics of decisions and actions. (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 8)

Together, in the current POS, they express a language that grounds inquiry in a Western and positivist frame, but welcomes thinking that may depart from conventional frames. In contrast, in the previous POS, critical and creative thinking were mentioned multiple times in the front matter of the program, always tied to inquiry, but of the two, only critical thinking was linked to responsible citizenship. "Responsible citizenship is the ultimate goal of social studies. Basic to this goal is the development of critical thinking" (Alberta Learning, 2000, p. 3). So, while 'creative thinking' faded away in our dialogue, it was present, to varying extents, in the pedagogic experiments, and in our further conversations.

As we reflected on our first group meeting, and on the one-on-one meetings that followed, we came to better understand how critical thinking functioned, to some extent, rhetorically, that it was seldom very critical in terms of unpacking what students knew and understood, and that the thinking associated with it was not necessarily organized,

nor sufficiently thoughtful, or purposeful. Dale, who had been frustrated by the absence of methodologies that he could build upon with his students, found that even when he offered them structure, they "were not comfortable stepping out and having to make a decision, which was, in their minds, high stakes" (SGC, lines 16-17).[25]

> I'm wondering whether or not if the dynamic of committing to a point of view… Historically, these kids have not had a good academic result… It could be that by giving them a relatively simple decision matrix it then clarified the options, and at that point there was a right answer and a wrong answer, when in what I was asking them to make a judgment… They're not comfortable with ambiguity. (Dale, SGC, lines 32-38)

Dale had borrowed from his experience with the military's estimate process, and his background in peacekeeping, to offer students a template for their thinking and determination-making, sharing with us that he drew on his "inherent skills," to provide the information upon which students could make their judgments (SGC, line 36). Yet, even as he closed the gap for ambiguity, a notion that he had told me he was very comfortable with, some of his students still resisted the hint of uncertainty that remained.

The word, 'ambiguity,' does not make an appearance in the current social studies POS, nor is it in the prior iteration of the program, but teaching for it seems to be a hidden curricular outcome that most of the teacher participants recognized in their readings and interpretations of the program's text. The implicit or explicit expressions of teacher participants regarding their comfort with ambiguity spoke to a collective, although variable perception, by all of the teacher participants, that the POS was written

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[25] SGC=Second group conversation

to be malleable, flexible, and invite interpretation. The interrogative structure of the program means that at any point in the high school level social studies courses, students and teachers contend with two categories of questions, a 'key issue,' and 'related issues.' The POS offers no prescribed resolution for these questions, and the questions, themselves, are democratically oriented, and do not privilege recall of prepackaged conclusions or right answers. In the case of Social Studies 20-2, the lower stream in grade 11, these questions are, respectively: "To what extent should we embrace nationalism " (Alberta Education, 2007c, p. 25)? And, "Should nations pursue national interest" (p. 25)? The use of the word, 'should,' demands that students come to an understanding, and engage in deliberation, making determinations and decisions (Hess, 2010a; Parker, 2008).

With consideration to Dale's assertion that his students have no sense of connection to the curriculum, that the high school social studies program in Alberta seems predicated on ambiguity, and that methodology, alone, cannot bring students to contend with uncertainty, we came to appreciate that there was something potentially personal to the mediating role between official curriculum and students' lives. A dispassionate process denied students an encounter with what it meant to engage with uncertainty.

Brian's 'Earth 2.0' assignment was still in progress when we were meeting, but it offered an interesting contrast to Dale's assignment. Both were working with Grade 11 students; Dale's were in the lower stream, and Brian's in the enriched stream. Brian pointed to where he believed the risk lay in each class. For Brian, it was in extending the invitation to his students, that he carried the risk of failure in how he structured the assignment, rather than having the students carry the risk of failure in their encounter

with uncertainty. According to Brian, "that they can do that without risk, that's the real key, here, that they can't get the answer at all, and that they were free to do that… I found that liberating" (SGC, lines 107-108, and 118). I asked, in response, "did you see a change in the way you perceived kids' understanding of critical thinking" (SGC, lines 127-128)? Brian said, "Yes, and it was entirely rooted in the idea of freedom. There were requirements to be met, and so on, and that should be met…other than that, there weren't any restrictions" (SGC, lines 131-133). With no possibility of a 'right answer,' the decision-making process was placed in the hands of students.

I would characterize Brian's assignment as creative thinking, even though he called it critical thinking, because students were engaged in "[generating] an inventory of possibilities; [they were expected to] anticipate outcomes; [and they were expected to] combine logical, intuitive and divergent thought" (Alberta Education, 2005, p. 8). That both Brian and Dale had such different assignments, one methodological, and the other much less so, but that both said what their students we doing was 'critical thinking,' highlighted pedagogical ambiguity of the term. The POS renders critical thinking as tensions between fact and opinion, and perspective and bias, and further teases out in liberal-minded social science terms of reliability, accuracy, diversity, and ethical regard. Cam called it a "somewhat nebulous term," because in social studies students were expected to be doing it all the time (SGC, lines 163-165).

When I asked Cam the same question I asked Brian, about his perception of changes in his students' understanding of how they understood critical thinking, Cam replied, "I'll be honest with you, I'm not going to be like my colleague, here, and say it was liberating" (SGC, lines 182-183). He gave his students latitude to decide how they

would render their insights and share them with their peers, but he suggested his assignment was much more structured and purposeful than Brian's:

> It was a little different than Brian's Earth 2.0. His was idealistic; mine's more practical. Mine was very ideologically driven in terms of each of us, and our curriculum, and [Brian's] was ideologically driven in terms of his curriculum. (Cam, SGC, lines 200-203)

Cam's characterization of his project as practical, rather than idealistic, spoke to his sensibility of what it was to be a social studies teacher. His predisposition was to regard his practice as neutral, catalytic, and analytical. What he said, echoed our initial one-on-one conversation, when Cam described his pedagogy, in contrast to Brian's, as that of a teacher not a preacher. He also played an interesting game with the words in the quote, above, situating himself and the rest of the participants, apart from Brian, as teachers of 'our' curriculum in contrast to 'his' curriculum.

Allen's experience with three classes of Social Studies 10-1 IB students was a mixed-bag encounter with critical thinking.

> Some kids really got into the topic, asked a lot of questions, did some good research and investigated something they were genuinely interested in. Some of them dealt with the analysis pretty well…Way too many of our kids are still locked into 'What is the correct answer?' 'How many paragraphs does this have to be?' [They are] expecting that there's a product [to produce] rather than an investigation. (Allen, SGC, lines 251-260)

What struck me as interesting was how the Social Studies 10-1 IB students and the 20-2, lower stream students, had similar dispositions to 'right answers,' something that Brian

made an effort to short-circuit by shifting to a future orientation. Further, was that all of the teacher participants seemed to have to start their students from scratch with critical thinking, reminding me of Dale's critique of a lack of methodological consistency in social studies. Why did it seem that high school social studies teachers were providing their students with their first encounters with critical thinking? Critical thinking outcomes are present in the POS, from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

The insights on critical thinking were intriguing, but for our purposes, 'critical thinking' was intended to be a catalyst for our conversations; it was an arbitrary choice. Still, the question raised at the end of the previous paragraph is one worthy of further exploration. In any case, 'critical thinking' served to allow us to look at the language of social studies, seeing in it aspects of ourselves, what we valued, and unveiling some of the challenges at play in education, and in the cultivation of students' dispositions towards engaged citizenship. We could have taken on other words, and those, too, would have likely led to analogous insights. I had left the choice of a term, notion, or idea, up to teacher participants. We might have taken up, for example, multiple perspectives, historical thinking, or even words like 'embrace,' or 'respond,' as in the interrogative frame: 'To what extent should we embrace/respond…'

5.6 The Second Action Cycle

What was becoming more apparent to us was that our identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments, were shaping our interpretations of the POS and our pedagogies. The meanings each of us connected to the terms, notions, and ideas we shared, played out in somewhat idiosyncratic ways, what Brian had referred to as the 'proprietary' nature of pedagogy. Coming to better appreciate

that our interpretations of official curriculum and how we taught, was, in a way, a reflection of ourselves that fostered conditions for us to further invite interrogation into the relationship between who we understood ourselves to be, what we taught, why we taught, and how we taught. According to Gadamer, "meaning represents a fluid multiplicity of possibilities… *The hermeneutical task becomes of itself a questioning things*" (1975/1989, p. 271). Our invitation to interrogation, then, contributed to moving us towards the next action research cycle. In the next cycle we began to draw on our encounter with the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy in the first cycle, opening up an opportunity to attend to the proprietary ways we have shaped our teaching and our interpretations of official curriculum. Our next challenge involved considering how we might be more deliberate in linking that with our attention to the confluence of language, curriculum, pedagogy, and participants' identifications, backgrounds, experiences, perspective, and commitments.

In accepting that we were interpreters of language, we assented to a common understanding that each of us had a subjective relationship with the text we read and the words we used. Our conversation in the first action cycle had captured our differing understandings of 'critical thinking,' allowing us to unveil, if only a bit, how the official curriculum was idiosyncratically filtered by teachers. What we were beginning to appreciate was that our understandings of the role of social studies as a school subject, our intentions, and our approaches, were implicated in the kinds of encounters students would have or could have with the curriculum, in turn, having a potential influence on their immediate and future choices with regards to living in the world. That became more apparent in the second action research cycle. It began with the opening of our final group

conversation, as we started a dialogue about attending to that sense of implication of ourselves in our teaching, and the challenges and potential benefits that might accompany bringing who we are into our teaching in thoughtful, deliberate ways. We began with a question: In what ways did any of the changes you made in your teaching approach impact your perception of what it means to be a critical and creative thinker?

We commenced with an encounter with ambivalence and let the conversation find its way from there. From our initial one-on-one conversations until the end of data collection most of the participants had told me or implied that they valued the ambiguity that the current program invited it into classroom discourses in social studies. Ambiguity was a welcome form of uncertainty; on the other hand, ambivalence, with which shares some of the same roots in Latin, is an unwelcome uncertainty (Oxford Reference, 2005). In our explicit or implicit embrace of ambiguity our willingness to teach for something beyond or different than the right answer came into tension with the privileging of pedagogies of right answers and the production of work for the sake of marks. What we valued, as teachers, reflected what we read into what was valued in the POS. That sensibility echoed a principal purpose of official curriculum, the determination by adults of what children should learn (Pinar, 2004).

That ambivalence was evident with Dale, who said his students had a "compartmentalized" approach to learning and "see things as context independent, and their deliverables are concrete operational" (TGC, line 15).[26] Dale valued ambiguity and critical thinking. He shared with us that he "really believed that our curriculum is going to be less content-driven" (TGC, lines 28-29). Drawing on his experience with the

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[26] TGC=Third group conversation

lessons he did with his students on using criterion to make a determination about whether a mass murders constituted genocide, captured a key facet of his struggle between dispassionate explanation and his personal investment in his teaching.

> [Critical thinking] is something I value… Maybe there's frustration when others don't value the same thing… It's just reinforced in my mind that I've got more work to do... The area that I chose to try and push forward is one I held dear to me, crimes against humanity, genocidal acts, things of that aspect, and nationalism. I have a hard time teaching that subject, period. From personal involvement in a lot of these sort of things, and maybe I tend to take the passion out of it, and it becomes more rational as a defensive mechanism. (Dale, TGC, lines183-188)

Dale spoke about the frustration he encountered when exploring, with his students, what he valued and why. In relation to the topic he took up with his students, his military background and his experiences served as an obstacle to dialogue and deliberation. In section 5.4 of this chapter, Dale mentioned that he did not talk about his military background much with students because his experience had been that students lacked the foundation to understand and appreciate it. His reticence, which was easier to appreciate in the recording of the conversation more than the transcript, highlighted how a very human dimension of being a teacher could contribute to or could hinder meaningful encounters students might have with the curriculum through teaching.

For me, Dale's encounter with the confluence of background, experience, and pedagogy, resonated in my own encounters with the ways I had tried, in the past, to keep my identifications out of my teaching and treat knowledge dispassionately. In Dale's

experience of teaching about genocide I found an opportunity to share my difficulty in teaching about the Holocaust (or Shoah). Dale struggled with how to keep stories of his experiences out of his teaching and I struggled with how to bring the Shoah, which was something outside of my experience, into my teaching. I suspect that a key aspect of my discomfort was the temporal proximity of the Shoah to me. Images I had encountered and witness accounts I had heard reinforced that proximity and my discomfort. The parents of some of my childhood peers were survivors. Complicating my relationship with the Shoah was my family's physical distance from it; my ancestors made it to Canada 40 to 70 years prior to it. The pedagogic insistence of zakhor to sustain collective memory among Jews was a challenge for me in my role as a teacher; I struggled with my entitlement to tell that story, even though I appreciated my obligation to share it (Simon, 1999).

In responding to our stories Cam situated himself as distant from genocide, although not intentionally dispassionate:

> That's interesting, because as someone who doesn't have a whole lot of connection to it, I try to get as much of those terrible graphics, as much as possible, because I am detached from it. I want [students] to feel something, like 'What went on there?' (Cam, TGC, lines 205-206)

Here our respective pedagogic sensibilities were reflected in particular ways, tying in our identifications, our pasts, and the language in the outcomes in the POS. Dale was a witness to the consequences of genocide during his military career; I was culturally, nationally, and religiously connected to victims of genocide; and Cam had situated himself as distant from genocide.

Outcome 2.9 for Social Studies 20-2, in the POS, says that students will "examine ultranationalism as a cause of genocide (the Holocaust, the 1932-1933 famine in Ukraine, contemporary examples)" (Alberta Education, 2007c, p. 34). This 'knowledge and understanding' outcome with its bracketed examples, meaning they are required at the high school level, is connected to one of the four key issue questions for Social Studies 20-2. The question is concerned with the extent that "we" should embrace nationalism, and ties in a related issue question asking whether nations should pursue national interests. For each of us, as social studies teachers, our different relationships with the notion of genocide and with aspects of it human dimensions inevitably influenced our senses of what it means to teach about genocide. The issue of how an issue, notion, topic, or event is encountered by students, and, potentially, what students might learn is impacted by who the teacher is in relation to what is being taught.

The mandatory aspect of the bracketed examples limits teachers' latitude about which genocides to address. As for contemporary examples there are, unpleasantly, too many to choose from. In Dale's case he did not have to select a contemporary example directly connected with his experience as a peacekeeper, but any other choice might not have shielded him from reliving his own experiences and the consequences of that.

There is an odd feature to the language of the POS, in the way it uses 'we;' it privileges a refusal of implication of teachers and students when they take up, in Cam's words, 'what went on over there,' distancing the classroom and its nation state context from 'ultranationalism.' That implicitly and explicitly made it an encounter with un-Canadian values. Conflict, violence, and the centrifugal forces that divide communities from each other, are rendered as outside of the Canadian experience and outside of the

teacher's identifications, background, and experience. Through the implicit dialectic of nationalism and ultranationalism in the POS, Canada was positioned apart from the contexts of genocide.

While Cam rendered ultranationalism and genocide as distant, Brian had expressed, since our initial one-on-one conversation, that it was present in his classroom.

> My first thought was, maybe, just share that this is hard for you, (speaking to Dale.) If you were open about that, I think it's possible that with students, even in 20-2 class, maybe [they would] be able to appreciate it, because of who you are, and know they appreciate you: 'This is hard for me because of this experience I had in my life; I was right there, I know what this is.'
>
> How many other teachers are talking about life as a human being, and life in this agenda? The kids lean into that…I have long thought and every single fricken day, I think this, like why didn't I teach math… I can't do anything other than to be human. And I cannot forget that I'm dealing with human beings. I think they have to value what it is you're asking them to think about. So, somehow to find value, and maybe that's in the modeling of it. (Brian, TGC, lines 216-254)

For Brian, communicating what he valued to students in a deliberate way was a necessary part of teaching and something he wanted his colleagues to do more of in their practices. Sharing with students what teachers valued also carried the message that students needed to think about what they valued, themselves, and invited thoughtful consideration about why teachers would share some facet of themselves with students. I empathized with Brian; teaching was, for both of us, a human act. "We're all human beings with unique experiences and unique backgrounds… to varying extent how that comes in play in

teaching is in language, like around critical and creative thinking" (Laurence, TGC, lines 354-356). While Brian came to teaching with that sensibility, it took me some time to develop a similar regard for the human dimension of pedagogy, and that happened for the most part while I was a graduate student. It was something I had hoped would be part of our conversation, during the study, because it had become part of who I was as a teacher educator.

Cam, in his customary role as devil's advocate, took note of the role of the emotional appeal of talking about what a teacher valued and being human being as a teacher, pointing out, though, "that you are talking about your personal bias, but how much should we bring [that] in" (TGC, lines 362-363)? However, Cam acknowledged, less than a minute later that what Brian had said about sharing his values was something worth considering in his own teaching practice. His predisposition towards highlighting bias, then, was a sort of prompt for a negotiation of meaning, contributing to a change in his understanding. Cam was willing to consider changes in his practice, but not because a change was merely suggested. He realized that the changes he was most willing to consider were those where dialogue led to a change, what Gadamer (1966/2004b, 1975/1989) referred to as a fusion of horizons. It was, importantly, a reflection of the role of conversation as inquiry within the context of participatory action research, that Cam and Dale, in the second action research cycle, were willing to consider the role of sharing their values with students as a way to differently and purposefully engage their students (Feldman, 1999). It was a manifestation of the hermeneutic circle at work; the interplay of dialogue and the subjectivities of the parties to our conversation leading to new understandings of ourselves, each other, and the language of social studies curriculum

and pedagogy (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989; Given, 2008; Schwandt, 2007; Smith, 1991, 2006).

In Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) citizenship engagement exemplars, the teachers, for the 'Bayside Students for Justice," had shared their language and what they valued with students, negotiating, in a sense, shared valuing that contributed to students developing their capacities and competencies in relation to transformative community engagement. While we were, possibly, a number of steps in the action research cycle away from an analogous understanding of how we might negotiate shared valuing with students, we were beginning to appreciate, together, that who each of us was and what we brought of ourselves to our teaching influenced the kinds of encounters students might have with the curriculum. In turn, how we translated our values into language had potential to enliven social studies, contributing, perhaps, to students' willingness and interest in thoughtful participatory engagement in their communities, and possibly influencing how they might choose to live in the world. That, certainly, was something worthy of future research.

5.6.1 Closing the second action research cycle and imagining a third cycle

Prior to data collection, I had a naïve sense of how an action research might play out in a context like the research site in this study. That naïveté included a belief that with each cycle each participant would change his practice in some appreciable way. In some respects the uneven attendance at our meetings complicated my assessment of change and some of the changes were very small and took me a long time to recognize. Complicating my analysis of the second action research cycle, I was hesitant to speculate how Allen's absence from our final group meeting impacted the trajectory of our conversation.

Certainly, we had a good and productive dialogue. Our conversation about ambivalence, in relation to the pedagogic tension between ambiguity and definitive answers, was, when combined with our experiences from the first action research cycle, a gateway into the conversation about how each of us might be more attentively human, and personally present in our social studies pedagogy. That is a sensibility supported widely in the scholarly literature I took up in Chapter II. To me, the most apparent changes in the second action research cycle were present with Cam and Dale, but Brian and I could appreciate, especially in Dale's reticence, a more complex appreciation of teacher proximity to an event as a factor in difficult encounters shared in classrooms.

The next action research step, had it taken place, might have involved another set of pedagogic experiments focusing on how teachers' values could become more deliberately interwoven with interpretations of the POS, and how to bring that to the classroom. I would have a preference for staying focused on language, instead of going into pedagogic experiments about teachers' values and their intersection with pedagogy, so that we might spend more time talking about what we mean by 'value,' seeking a fusion of horizons that could contribute to teachers designing complementary pedagogies that intermesh and support each other.

While I was pleased that the teacher participants had begun to see how turning attention to words contributed to seeing ourselves in the 'what, how, and why' of our interpretations of the POS and our pedagogies and how unpacking the language of social studies unveiled both challenges and possibilities, it was in encouraging sustained hermeneutic attention, that we struggled. That attention happened, principally, when I was in the room, helping us to pay attention to our language and the language of the POS.

When I was not there, it fell away. I did, of course, bring it back in the analysis of our conversations. Still, when we were focused on it, we could recognize, in the language we used, differences in understanding, and we could, through conversation, negotiate new understandings, but in the absence of a sustained conversation that sensibility was momentary. By bringing to light the invisibility of language, as Gadamer (1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989) had suggested, more persistently and consistently, we might become more attentive to what was not present in our gaze, appreciating how our prejudices shaped and influenced our dispositions to what we could encounter. The avenue to make language more visible, especially in relation to growth and change in teaching, is sustained conversation (Feldman, 1999). In spite of data collection taking place over the course of six months, there was a perceived value in having that conversation last much longer.

Naïvely, at the outset of the study, I had assumed that the cycles would be temporally shorter and that we would be taking larger and more complicated steps and there would have been more cycles, but the teacher participants, while very interested in the study, were limited in the scope of their action and engagement. Those limitations were not among the 'climates of constraint,' identified by Cornbleth (2010). Instead, the principal constraint was time, reflected in the multiplicity of responsibilities teacher participants had inside and beyond the school that made this study somewhat incidental to their practices. My involvement, too, was impacted by analogous responsibilities. So, what we could manage were very small steps with very limited action over long periods of time.

5.7 Responding to my research questions

Drawing on my experience as a teacher and as an educational researcher with a philosophical hermeneutic sensibility, I began this study with the understanding that each person has a subjective relationship with language in terms of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, impacting interpretations of what is encountered (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). I began with the questions:

1. In what ways might teachers be attending to the interplay of their identifications, politicized and historicized subjectivities, and educational, professional, personal and familial experiences and backgrounds, in their social studies pedagogies and how might these influence and shape their understandings of the language of official program documents?
2. In what ways might the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy, as each of us interprets it, invite and/or delimit teaching for active and responsible citizenship and democratic engagement?

I sought to develop an understanding of practicing social studies teachers' relationships with the language of official curriculum and attend to the ways language could function to invite and to delimit how teachers interpret official curriculum, exploring how that attention might influence students' citizenship engagement dispositions.

The principal insight that I have drawn from the conversations that took place was that not enough conversation takes place and the dialogues that were taking place among teacher participants, especially when I was not there, but even when I was there, tended to focus on pedagogic issues, such as assignment ideas, and assessments. I, too, tended to

think of the nexus of curriculum and pedagogy in terms of assignment, project, and unit ideas, more than I attended to the specific language of the POS.

While the POS was present in almost all of our conversations, attention was given to appreciating its broader sensibilities rather than its specific language, especially in relation to the front matter. There was interest among the teacher participants in talking about the shift to embracing ambiguity, but no one seemed to ask, 'What is ambiguity?' 'To what extent do we understand ambiguity in the same way?' Nor did anyone ask why it should be valued, nor does anyone express interest in exploring ambiguity in relation to epistemology, or in relation to relativism. Not only should these kinds of questions become a feature of social studies teachers' mutual discourse, but these same questions are ones that students could take on, as well. They have the potential to open up important conversations about notions such as ambiguity to unpacking and critique. With the exception of Brian, who seemed willing to take his students to dangerous discursive places where they might encounter difficult knowledge, ambiguity appeared to be employed as a condition that was intended to foster very moderate risk-taking by students in response to questions the did not ask (Britzman, 1998; den Heyer, 2005). And, like the comfort teacher participants in Richardson's (2002) study had with indeterminacy, the contentious and difficult aspects of the uncertain, the unresolved, and the unclear, ambiguity invited engagement commensurate with the comfort level and understandings of the teacher.

Sustaining a conversation about curricular language among teacher participants in this study was challenging. In general, apart from Allen's thinking about 'competence,' inquiry into language, and dialogue about language seemed to happen, primarily, when I

was in the room. Teacher participants were unaccustomed to dedicating attention to thinking about and talking about specific terms, notions, or concepts in the official curriculum, or the language they used in their teaching, and the limited amounts of time they could dedicate to the study seemed indicative of the temporal constraints on a sustained conversation. But, while it took me some time to see it, our conversations and the challenge of attending to the range of understandings of terms and notions we took for granted, highlighted the need for an ongoing dialogue among social studies teachers about the language of the official curriculum and how to negotiate understandings and integrate those into teaching and learning. In the absence of such conversations teacher participants were likely missing opportunities to build connections between their pedagogies, and those of their colleagues. Their diverse understandings of critical thinking, as not complementary, served as an example of what is missing from this intra-professional discourse. They could have been asking, for example, 'How might Brian's approach to critical thinking in Grade 11 social studies contribute to preparing students in Allen's or Cam's Grade 12 classes the following year?' They should be asking, 'What approaches to critical thinking might students have encountered in prior grades, and how were those connected to program outcomes?' And, importantly, they need to be asking, 'How might our complementary efforts, based on our negotiated understandings of the language of the official curriculum, contribute to preparing our students to live as thoughtfully and deliberately engaged citizens?'

What we never had a chance to do was get to a point in our conversations where we had developed hermeneutically attentive dispositions, where we wanted and needed to look at language and unpack it relative to our identifications, backgrounds, experiences,

perspective, and commitments. We went ankle-deep into an ocean. We started thinking about how we are reflected in our teaching and how we could be better reflected in our pedagogy, but not how we are reflected in the curriculum and in the language of teaching. Dale could appreciate how his military background influenced his desire for methodology and his interest in promoting conditions for conversation. Brian and Allen appreciated that their justice-oriented commitments were, in part, what drove their teaching, and Cam began to appreciate how his background in physical education and coaching played out in his teaching. What I began to appreciate more deeply about my own situatedness, articulated in Chapter III, barely entered our conversation. Dale had raised the Euro-normative ways we engaged with knowledge during our initial one-on-one conversation, but not again in the remainder of data collection, and no one else mentioned it.

Having not yet reached a point where we were sustaining hermeneutic attention to language, we did not explore, in line with my research questions, how our perceptions of students' dispositions towards active and responsible citizenship and democratic engagement were impacted by teacher participants' relationship with language. The dearth of conversation about the language of curriculum and the relative absence of negotiated understandings about meanings of terms, notions, and concepts, among the teacher participants, contributed to the absence of complementary social studies pedagogies. Participant teachers' well-intentioned plans left students with disparate pieces of a puzzle of engaged citizenship and limited guidance about how to integrate the pieces from one grade into another.

5.8 Summary

I began this chapter by introducing the participants and the POS as a way of reconnoitering the situation at the research site prior to the interventions of the action research cycles. I explored the situatedness of the program rationale, philosophy, and outcomes, and I took up facets of participants' identifications, backgrounds, experiences, and commitments, how each of us understood our relationship with the front matter and the outcomes of the POS, giving consideration to how those understandings were related to the development of students' dispositions towards engaged citizenship. We then moved into the first action step. We turned our attention to the word 'competence,' and then to the notion of 'critical thinking.' In doing so, we started to appreciate how terms in official curriculum and/or our social studies discourses could serve as conversational catalysts, allowing our dialogues to begin to unveil how our different understandings contributed to both the challenges complicating pedagogy and possibilities for changing our relationships with curriculum and with our teaching. In the second cycle, we drew on our experience exploring 'critical thinking' and the ambivalence at play between fostering the conditions for ambiguity and certainty to unveil how limiting our students' access to what we valued influenced the richness and humanness of students encounters with curriculum. Next, I imagined possibilities for subsequent for another action research step. Finally, I returned to my research questions, accepting that over the course of six months of data collection, we had only begun to open ourselves to an important conversation that seemed to be absent but necessary. Participatory action research invites the possibility of reassessing the situation to revise the research question (Feldman, 1999; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Somekh, 2006). From an initial

focus on attending to identifications, situatedness, background, and experience as a gateway to the language of social studies pedagogy, I came to appreciate that the approach was characterized by an expectation that it be progressive, echoing the action research spiral, but that understanding of the trajectory of the research was not sufficiently attentive to the reciprocity of conversation and to the hermeneutic circle. I had thought that if social studies teachers reflected on who they were, they could begin to appreciate their relationship with language and with curriculum interpretation. That was what had informed the research questions. While I sought to help participants explore those relationships, much of the inquiry was focused on the individual participants' understandings, and not enough on the cultivation of a collaborative inquiry into language. Those insights have contributed to some revised research questions for future inquiry:

- To what extent are social studies teachers engaging in conversations about the language of official curriculum and pedagogy?
- To what extent might social studies teachers' conversations about the specific language of the official curriculum contribute to democratic citizenship enriching pedagogies?
- How might a hermeneutically attentive conversation among social studies teachers about the specific language of official curriculum be sustained over the longer term?

VI. Reflecting Back and Envisioning Ways Forward

This study was structured around a participatory action research frame and was not envisioned as a representative case study of an urban high school social studies department. As a group we completed two cycles, and, in doing so, just began to scratch the surface of the research questions that guided this study. But, importantly, in the course of data collection, and in the long period I have spent with the data, a facet of language engagement at play in the study pointed to another issue I was not looking for, directly: The role of sustained conversation and deliberation among practicing teachers, and the negotiation of meaning of terms, notions, and concepts, central to social studies in Alberta.

While teacher participants in this study talked about themselves, their teaching practices, and some pedagogic challenges they confronted, they did not seem to talk much about the language of the official curriculum and their pedagogies. For me, such conversations are gateways to further dialogues, potentially contributing to teachers developing better understandings of how they are reflected in the curriculum they teach, and what, in turn, may be absent, marginalized, or insufficiently considered in the encounters their students have with the curriculum of social studies (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011). The insights emerging from this study, with regards to focused conversations about the language of social studies curriculum and pedagogy has implications for teachers, teacher educators, pre-service teachers, and curriculum designers.

Emerging from the conversations in this study, I came to better understand ways that teachers exercise a mediating role in schooling, connecting, interweaving,

communicating, and facilitating the relationship between students and curriculum. Cam, for example, believed he was a 'teacher, not a preacher,' and Allen thought of himself as an interpreter of curriculum. Those mediating sensibilities, drawn from just two of the four teacher participants, are hardly reflective of the whole spectrum of curriculum-to-student mediation, yet, in just those two, the role of the teacher is differently imagined and understood; Cam regarded himself as catalytic, and Allen's pedagogic disposition in relation to official curriculum, was interventionist.

Teachers bring themselves into their pedagogy whether they intend to or not (Niemi & Niemi, 2007). Subjectivity, according to Gadamer, 'distorts' the transmission and reception of language (1966/2004a, 1975/1989). So while teachers may share the same language with official curricula with students and with peers, a teacher's interpretation of the language of curriculum and the language of pedagogy is distorted and reflected by the prejudices he or she brings to a conversational moment (Feldman, 1999, 2002; Gadamer, 1975/1989).

Collectively, in the context of this study, the participants' common pedagogic language reflected the Western episteme. It was present, as well, in the POS, in describing social studies in terms of its disciplinary roots, and it was present, more broadly, in the mission of public schools to prepare the young for citizenship (Alberta Education, 2005; Callan, 1997; Feinberg, 2012; Pinar, 2004). It was present in this study, overtly, subliminally, and persistently, in the binary and dialectic terms and expressions teacher participants used in conversation, delimiting conditions for the consideration and articulation of perspectives. It was with us, too, in our disciplinary language and imagination, in our suppositions, and in our expectations. It was hard to escape.

Attending to it was very difficult to sustain, especially for the teacher participants, for whom hermeneutic attention was not part of their everyday practice.

Language has an "essential self-forgetfulness" (Gadamer, 1966/2004a, p. 64). It is easy to be unaware of it, to not attend to it, and to not notice the ways it is at play in everyday discourse. Yet, through our moments of deliberate attention to the words and terms we used in our teaching and in attending to the language of the notions, concepts, and ideas we read in the front matter of the POS, and in its outcomes and benchmarks, we discovered how we differently understood what we were teaching, and why we believed it mattered.

Over the course of those moments, when we turned our attention to our shared vocabulary, we engaged language in a way to which the teacher participants were unaccustomed. Together, we could begin recognize how exploring notions and terms in the POS and in our teaching unveiled facets of our shared subject area that normally lay camouflaged. Those encounters with language revealed dissonances in our interpretations of the philosophy and rationale of the POS, differences in our understandings of its outcomes, and that each of us construed the modes for engaging program outcomes differently. That inconsistency contributed, when we attended to 'critical thinking,' to appreciating how our pedagogic sensibilities, shaped, idiosyncratically, by our identifications, experiences, background, perspective, and commitments, could lead to students encountering approaches to critical thinking that they may find difficult to reconcile in relation to their prior experiences and encounters with curriculum. If that same kind of attention to the language of social studies, then, is extended to any other curriculum-based concept, such as multiple perspectives, and to the disparate

understandings of that notion among teachers, evident in the literature, it becomes possible to appreciate the scope of what is missing in teachers' conversations: thoughtful and deliberate dialogue about the nexus of curricular language and pedagogy (den Heyer & Abbott, 2011; Donald, 2009; D. Scott, 2013).

At the time of data collection, we did not fully appreciate this. While teacher participants had mentioned that some conversations took place as part of their everyday practice in which ideas about curriculum and pedagogy were explored, it was only with my involvement in conversations among the teacher participants that the language of curriculum and pedagogy had been the topic. Like any curriculum document, the POS is articulated through language. So, while Allen, Cam, Brian, and Dale did talk about teaching, of course, when I was not at the research site, the nature of those conversations seldom attended to the programs' language or their different interpretations of terms and concepts. Further, there was little dialogue, too, about how their interpretations of the POS could be understood as complementing each other, contributing to meeting the vision of the constructivist architecture of the program. What was present were well intentioned and thoughtful approaches to teaching, reflecting the idiosyncrasies of teachers, and materializing as 'proprietary' pedagogies, reflecting the autonomy of teachers to design lessons based on their interpretations of the POS.

Certainly, along with the teacher participants, I, too, value pedagogic autonomy. It is a manifestation our liberal politicization, but also of our situatedness, making it hard to recognize. The taken-for-granted freedom we enjoyed avoided our attention. That freedom, reflected in most of the teacher participants' dispositions towards pedagogy, reflected a climate that was free of some of the kinds of pressures that constrained social

studies pedagogy, elsewhere (Llewellyn, et al., 2010; Miller-Lane, et al., 2006). The principal limitation to teacher participants' pedagogic freedom was time. Other 'climates of constraint,' as Cornbleth (2010) described them, that could have limited that freedom, were not evident to me at the research site. So, the conditions were right for the conversation we did not get into more deeply during data collection.

Conversation and deliberation among teachers about the language of official curriculum documents, like the POS, are necessary to imagine and design pedagogies that complement each other. Such dialogues invite negotiation and seek fusions of horizons around the terms, notions, concepts, and ideas in official curricula and in pedagogic language (Feldman, 1999; Gadamer, 1966/2004b, 1975/1989). They represent an opening to discourses that welcome hermeneutic attention to the historicity of the language of teaching and the lexicon of social studies. Both Parker (2008) and Hess (2008, 2009) emphasized the importance of thoughtful and purposeful dialogue, such as seminar and deliberation, as necessary to provide opportunities for students to learn about their communities and the world, to encounter the unpleasant and the controversial, and to make decisions about how to be engaged. Why should deliberation be considered valuable for students, but not be a facet of teachers engagement with each other and with the official curriculum? Without deliberation among teachers about the language of the official curriculum, social studies pedagogies, no matter how well intentioned, intellectually engaging for students, or provocative, emerges as a liberal, rather than communitarian message about engagement. That is a message that appears contrary to the spirit of Alberta's POS for social studies (Alberta Education, 2005).

Ongoing deliberation among teachers about the language of official documents, like the POS, could contribute to the sharing of understandings of outcomes among teachers and to complementary pedagogies that build on students' prior curricular encounters. This means that conversation, as a form of community engagement among teachers, must consider the students' cumulative experience and encounters with the curriculum as part of their deliberation. It is a dialogue that requires resources that may not be immediately present, especially in light of the existing pressures of pedagogic time. It requires long-term coordination, direction, and support, within schools, school districts, and the province, to sustain the conversation.

Such an engagement with the lexicon of social studies, and, perhaps, of other subject areas, can be used to make the language of curriculum part of the curriculum, elevating teachers' attention to what language welcomes, but also, alerting them to ways words can deny space for dialogue, and for complexity (den Heyer, 2008). Exploring avenues leading to the elevation of hermeneutical consciousness could contribute to teachers and students engaging in more thoughtful and purposeful inquiry, because attending to language in that way, promotes "our ability to see what is questionable (Gadamer, 1966/2004b, p. 13).

Conversation has a place, too, in teacher education programs. My first encounter with this sort of regard for language occurred while I was a graduate student. I have tried to find opportunities in my own undergraduate teaching practice to invite pre-service teachers into a conversation about language, but it is a dialogue that takes work to sustain, and once students move on I do not believe it is something that persists. If a pre-service teacher enters such a conversation as part of a teacher education program there

should be an opportunity to continue that conversation during a field experience, and later as part of professional practice. Teachers, scholars, and policy makers who play a role in designing official curricula need to be part of this conversation, too, over the long term. There is in Alberta at the moment an opportunity to start that conversation in light of the 'Curriculum Redesign.'

6.1 The Challenge of Beginning and Sustaining the Conversation

Beginning and sustaining the kind of conversation I am talking about is challenging. The route I pursued in this study, using participatory action research, might be an avenue worth further consideration, but additional research is needed, first, on whether the phenomenon I encountered at the research site is generalizable to the wider social studies teaching community. The action research framework of this study limits the scope of what I can say about my data to what transpired at the research site (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Somekh, 2006). While it is possible that the insufficiency of the dialogue among the participants about the language of the official curriculum and pedagogy is limited to the research site, my experience working in schools, speaking to pre-service and practicing teachers, reading the scholarly literature, and engaging in conversations with other social studies and curriculum scholars leads me to think otherwise.

My hermeneutic attention to language took a long time to develop. It began with graduate course work, but I was, already, predisposed to it, reflecting a preexisting interest I had in the nexus of language and history. Social studies teachers should be a suitable community for this sort of conversation. In this study the teacher participants welcomed the opportunity to talk about the curriculum in a way they typically did not.

Unquestionably, owing to my experience from this study, I might have done more to prepare teacher participants for the conversation. They should have had an opportunity to develop some background in philosophical hermeneutics and that should have been supported with other resources that would have aided teacher participants in engaging with the language of official curriculum and their teaching. The key element, though, highlighted in this chapter, and in the previous one, is having time for the conversation; without dedicated time such engagement with language likely can only be sustained as an individual endeavour, and that runs contrary to the communitarian and sharing sensibilities about teaching that are features of a deliberative conversation about curriculum and pedagogy.

6.2 Implications for Research, Teacher Education, and Professional Development

Certainly there is a dearth of empirical research on the interpretive relationships that teachers have with curriculum texts and on the dialogues teachers have among themselves regarding their interpretations of the language of program rationale statements, outcomes, and benchmarks. The nature of the official curricula differs from one jurisdiction to another with variances in specificity and structure. Yet, in spite of such differences and variations, the common thread is that official curriculum is articulated through language. The impact of the self-forgetfulness of language that Gadamer (1966/2004a) pointed out was complemented in this study by an insufficiency of self-attention among teacher participants to the ways they were historicized, politicized, socialized, and situated subjects. Research needs to be done to explore and better understand the extent to which the sensibilities of teacher participants in this study are

represented analogously in the broader population of social studies and social science teachers, but also in the broader population of teachers. Further, if empirical research shows an analogous relationship among teachers and the language of official curriculum consistent with the insights from this study, then perhaps there is a need for additional interventionist studies to explore how to bring about an sustain hermeneutically attentive dialogues about curricular language.

Attending to the confluence of language and the subjectivity of pre-service and practicing teachers is challenging in terms of teacher education and professional development. Engaging pre-service and practicing teachers in close reading and collaborative dialogues about interpretation of curriculum text, and fostering dispositions toward negotiating shared understandings will take time and effort to initiate and sustain. Maintaining such conversations over the long term is especially challenging. Importantly, such dialogue has, at its heart, a democratic disposition – an openness to the understandings of others, offering the possibility of fusions of horizons.

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Appendix I

Interstitial encounters with curriculum: Studying the relationship between teachers' personal subjectivities and democratic citizenship pedagogies

My name is Laurence Abbott. I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta. I would like to invite you to participate in a study of the relationship between the personal identifications of teachers and how they understand and teach pedagogies of democratic citizenship. The data from this study constitutes the central research element for my PhD dissertation. The study involves an exploration of the ways in which outcomes in curriculum documents and the content of authorized resources are interpreted by individual teachers of social studies. I am interested in how such interpretations, filtered through the complex identities of teachers, shape the way each teacher imagines, produces, teaches and assesses curricula to foster democratic citizenship in their students. Further, I would like to explore with study participants, how attention to the role their personal identities play in interpreting curricula might contribute to ways of reimagining and reinterpreting teaching outcomes in citizenship education.

This is an action research study structured to offer opportunities for collaboration with the principal researcher and with teaching peers participating in this study. Your participation in the research involves reflection on the ways your own identifications are at play in the ways you read curriculum documents, plan and practice teaching, exploring opportunities to imagine, design and test lessons and perhaps units that more deliberately attuned to your personal and teacher identities. Data gathering involves a series of 3 focus group interviews of about one hour each scheduled over a period of about 3 months, 3 individual interviews of 30 – 45 minutes each over the same three-month period, and some classroom observation to be negotiated between the principle researcher and each participant. At the end of the third month, participants will be asked to complete a short answer questionnaire that should take no more than 30 minutes to complete. Additional opportunities for collaboration and support can also be negotiated between individual participants and the principal researcher. All interviews will be digitally recorded, either audio alone, or, with consent of participants, both audio and video, supported in either case, with notes taken by the principal researcher. In-class observation data will consist of digitally recorded audio and notes made by the principal researcher. Because this is an action research study participants are co-researchers. Participants have the option, as a group, to consent to the use of their names and any biographic details they are willing to provide. If any participants opt for anonymity, all participants will be identified with pseudonyms, as will the name of the research site.

All of the data gathered in this research project will be handled in compliance with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants, Section 66 of the GFC Policy Manual. This can be accessed online at **http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/gfcpolicymanual/policymanualsection66.cfm**. All information collected, including documents, tapes, CD-ROMs, and transcripts, will be kept for a minimum of five years following the completion of the project, in a secure, locked cabinet. Data gathered in this study may be used in for scholarly presentations and for publication in academic books and journals in compliance with these standards.

You may withdraw from this project at any time without any negative consequences. Any information related to your participation would be destroyed, and not used within my dissertation or subsequent publications or presentations.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension, Augustana, Campus Saint Jean Research Ethics Board (EEASJ REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEASJ REB c/o (780) 492-2614. Please contact Laurence Abbott with any questions or concerns regarding this research project, at [redacted] or [redacted], or by email at [redacted] or contact my doctoral research supervisor, Dr. George H. Richardson, Department of Secondary Education, University of Alberta at [redacted] or by email at [redacted]

Thank you,

Laurence Abbott, MEd,
PhD Candidate
Department of Secondary Education,
University of Alberta

Appendix II

Teacher Participant Consent Form

I, _____ , hereby consent to participate in the study '**Interstitial encounters with curriculum: Studying the relationship between teachers' personal subjectivities and democratic citizenship pedagogies,'** undertaken by Laurence Abbott, a PhD candidate in the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta. Participation in the study involves the following activities:

- 3 focus group interviews, no more than one hour each; no more than once every 30 days
- 3 one-on-one interviews with the principal researcher; each interview should take no more than 45 minutes; these interviews will occur no more than once every 30 days
- Completion of a short answer questionnaire at the end of the third month of data collection; this should take no more than about 30 minutes of your time
- Additional collaboration and support between me and the principal researcher can be negotiated

I understand that:

- I may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty
- I may be asked to allow Mr. Abbott to copy teacher-developed materials such as lesson plans, unit plans and curricular materials for use by students
- All information will be treated confidentially
- Any information that identifies me will be destroyed upon completion of this research
- I will not be identifiable in any documents resulting from this research unless I give consent to the principal researcher

I understand that the results of this research will only be used for the principal researcher's doctoral dissertation, as well scholarly articles and presentations that may emerge from this research.

_____

(Signature)

_____

(Date)

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension, Augustana, Campus Saint Jean Research Ethics Board (EEASJ REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEASJ REB c/o (780) 492-2614. Please contact Laurence Abbott with any questions or concerns regarding this research project, at [redacted] or [redacted], or by email at [redacted], or contact my doctoral research supervisor, Dr. George H. Richardson, Department of Secondary Education, University of Alberta at [redacted] or by email at [redacted]

Appendix III

Guiding Questions for Initial Conversations

These interview questions and prompts offer openings to conversations with participants about their respective relationships with curriculum documents, especially the program of studies for social studies in Alberta, authorized textbooks and support resources. Because there is a significant hermeneutic component to this study, I will be paying specific attention to word choices and usage uttered by participants and by me, as interviewer and principal researcher. I will asking participants for some biographic information, including education, teaching experience, ethnic, cultural and linguistic background, and membership in community, social, cultural, ethnic and political organizations. I am curious, too, about what motivates participants to teach, and what they desire for their students as well as the community where they teach. Participants can share as little or as much with me as they choose.

The biographic questions will be followed up by questions related to teaching social studies curriculum and pedagogy. Questions in this part of the interview are intended to draw out participants' understandings and beliefs about the role curriculum documents play in their practice. We will explore participants' beliefs about the nature of social studies and the perceived/interpreted intent of the program. I will ask participants to reflect on issues, challenges, and opportunities for their teaching practice in relation to the current social studies program in Alberta, especially the integration of identified perspectives in the program of studies.

The concluding set of questions for the initial interview relate to issues of citizenship and identity in social studies education in Alberta. Responses to these guiding questions and prompts will help me to shape further questions for focus group discussions and contribute to the direction(s) participants and I will take in the action research cycle.

1. Teaching experience and education.
    a. How long have you been teaching social studies?
    b. In what other subject areas have you taught?
    c. How long has social studies been your specialty?
    d. Can you tell me about your educational background?
2. Personal identity and identifications.
    a. Are you involved in any ethnic, cultural or linguistic community group or organization?
    b. What about social, service or political organization, community group or movement?
    c. What can you tell me about your family background and identity?
        i. How long have you or your family been in Alberta/Western Canada/Canada?
        ii. What can you tell me about your linguistic or ethnic background?
        iii. To what extent are you familiar with any of your family's/ancestors stories about immigration, settlement, assimilation, and integration in Canada?
        iv. Do you speak or understand a language other English?

   d. Often ethnicity and language background have a connection to religious and spiritual identifications. Do you share a religious or spiritual identification with previous generations of your family?
   e. Are there family customs or traditions that you believe play an important role in shaping your personal, cultural, ethnic, spiritual or linguistic identity?

3. Motivations for teaching
   a. What brought you to teaching, and why do you teach social studies?
   b. What role do you believe your teaching plays in the lives of kids you teach?
   c. What do you hope students take with them when they finish your course?
   d. What keeps you coming back to the classroom?
4. You and the curriculum
   a. Where do you, as a teacher and a person, fit in to the curriculum?
   b. To what extent do you share elements or anecdotes about your own background, that of your family, ancestors, or your ethnic, national, linguistic or spiritual community with your students?
      i. Please share one of these elements or anecdotes with me
      ii. If you tend not to share these elements of your background, can you give me a sense of why these elements are not included?
   c. What is the place and role of the teacher's identity in relation to the content being taught in the classroom?
5. You and the social studies program

a. What do you perceive to be the key philosophic and pedagogic differences between the current social studies program in Alberta, and the previous program?
b. What do you believe is the intention of the current program, and in what ways is the intent similar or different than the previous program?
c. In what ways and to what extent have you changed the way you teach social studies because of the intent, structure and/or philosophy of the current program?
d. In what ways and to what extent has the structure and/or architecture of the current program impacted the nature and character of dialogue between you and your students?
e. How has the identification of perspectives in the current program of studies impacted your approach to social studies curriculum and teaching?
f. In what ways do you discuss, share and/or reflect with students about the perspective(s) through which you teach?
g. In what ways do you discuss, share and/or reflect with students about the perspective(s) through which the textbook appears to speak?

6. Citizenship an identity in social studies in Alberta
    a. As you know, citizenship and identity are complex and malleable notions, making them difficult to describe or define. However, because they are at play in social studies, please share with me a sense of what these notions mean to you at this moment.

b. In what ways are these notions present in the ways you plan, teach and assess your students?
c. In what ways are these notions in the current program similar and/or different in meaning, purpose or intention to the same concepts in the previous social studies program?
d. How, or in what ways, has the centrality of these notions in the current social studies program impacted the way you teach social studies?
e. In what ways do you perceive your approach to these notions has changed as the social studies program has changed?

Appendix IV

Guiding Questions For Second Group Conversation

1. How did your respective engagements with critical thinking go in your class(es)?
2. In what ways did any of the changes that you made in your teaching approach to engaging students in critical thinking impact your own perception of what it means to be a critical and creative thinker?
3. How might your own comfort with your identity impact your conception of the nature and place of critical thinking in the social studies curriculum?
4. How might your experience in relation to this particular approach to critical engagement shape future teaching?
5. In what way do you perceive that students were differently engaged in critical and creative thinking from previous lessons, units, or similar approaches?