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**Interrupting Traditional Social Studies Classrooms: Perspectives of  
U.S. History Teachers**

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**Interrupting Traditional Social Studies Classrooms: Perspectives of  
U.S. History Teachers**

**by**

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## **Dedication**

For Mom and Dad, who taught me the value of an education

For Larry, Joseph Grey and Phillip Ernest, my constant sources of strength and support

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# **Interrupting Traditional Social Studies Classrooms: Perspectives of U.S. History Teachers**

Publication No. \_\_\_\_\_

Robin Denise Robinson Kapavik, Ph.D.

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Supervisor: Lisa Cary

The purpose of this collective case study is to examine the perspectives of secondary U.S. history teachers and how they see the classroom as a space where multiple narratives about race, class, gender, religion, etc. are explored, studied, and analyzed. When secondary history teachers facilitate discussions beyond surface level about these issues, it creates a space where students can begin to understand Others' histories and how those histories have been influenced, as well as influenced the dominant notions of traditional story lines within the social studies/history curriculum. Although there may be an assumption that this is an impossible task not valued by those in the profession (Cornbleth, 2001; Cornbleth, 1998; Goodlad, 1984), for many teachers, this type of pedagogy is an "explosion of contradictory and competing knowledges" (Lather, 1991; quoted in Santora, 2001, p. 151).

Therefore, this study will focus upon the expansion of “more inclusive ways of knowing” in order to “transform one’s assumptions, values, beliefs, and ways of experiencing” (Santora, 2001, p. 150) culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994) for teachers and students.

Similar to teachers of every subject matter, social studies educators are bombarded with the daily task of choosing what to include, as well as what not to include, in their daily curricular decisions. This task is intensified due to the obligations each teacher must satisfy with regards to the curriculum: state standards, state mandated examinations, pacing guides, departmental requirements, professional commitments to the field, student interests, etc.

With all of these influences upon the curriculum, secondary social studies educators must carve out the best possible pedagogical methods to meet the diverse needs of their students in a way that is complimentary to their own teaching styles. Therefore, the perspectives of social studies teachers become key when researching how and why certain curriculum topics and materials are chosen. These ideas shaped the development of the final research questions.

From the data emerged six themes that led to four findings: passion for history; resistance and facing resistance; lifetime learning; and reciprocal stories of inspiration. Implications for the field of teacher education and social studies follow.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*As we educate one another to acquire critical consciousness, we have the chance to see how important airing diverse perspectives can be...* (hooks, 1990, p. 6)

### **Perspectives**

Similar to teachers of every subject matter, Social Studies educators are bombarded with the daily task of choosing what to include, as well as what not to include, in their daily curricular decisions. This task is intensified due to the obligations each teacher must satisfy with regards to the curriculum: state standards, state mandated examinations, district pacing guides, curriculum materials adopted and purchased by school districts, departmental requirements, professional commitments to the field, student interests, etc.

With all of these influences upon the curriculum, secondary social studies educators must carve out the best possible pedagogical methods to meet the diverse needs of their students in a way that is complimentary to their own teaching styles. Therefore, the perspectives of social studies teachers become key when researching how and why certain curriculum topics and materials are chosen.

A perspective is simply defined as a point of view, or a way of regarding situations or topics. When social studies educators present information, there are layers upon layers of perspectives that directly and indirectly affect the lessons of history that are learned by their students. Most obviously, there are the perspectives of the teachers who decide which materials to (not) present with regards to each topic. In addition, there

are the perspectives of the students who decide which information to internalize more than other information. The writers of the state standards (in Texas, the TEKS – Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), textbook authors, textbook editors, and various other curriculum writers all bring perspectives to the “table” about what will (not) be taught about historical figures and events. If a social studies teacher decides to take her/his students on a field trip to a museum or historical landmark, those who design, maintain, and curate each of these places also hold a perspective that influences the students who visit these places.

Since history is created by humans, as well as retold by humans, it is important to understand that the study of history is a study of human perspectives based upon facts, but reliant upon the realization that all humans have biases and memories that are not always in agreement with one another. Historians work to meticulously find, record, and interpret information that builds the recreation of past events. It is due to their research that social studies educators can bring history lessons to the classroom; however, as social studies educators, we must be mindful of our own perspectives, as well as the layers of additional perspectives that shape and mold the stories that are retold in our history classrooms.

In order to present students with a “bigger picture” of historical people, places, and events, it is necessary to include multiple perspectives based upon multiple resources that bring complimentary, as well as opposing viewpoints to students. That way, students can experience the true nature of a historian’s work – incorporating multiple ideas, stories, and viewpoints to create a larger vision of what happened in the past.

Understanding that there are multiple and often competing viewpoints is a prerequisite to being an informed and effective citizen. Teaching students to define and express their viewpoints in appropriate ways, to listen carefully to opposing views, to insist that all parties adhere to evidence, and to detect flaws in argument and reasoning falls under the purview of social studies education. (Hinde, 2004, p. 32)

By teaching in this manner, students are made aware of the intricacies that occur as human beings create more history for future study. Teaching in this type of manner is definitely not an easy task; in fact, it may possibly become uncomfortable at times as teachers present information that is in resistance to students' prior learning.

Based upon my own experiences as a first year social studies teacher, I struggled with how to make my secondary U.S. History course more interesting and relevant to my sixteen-year old students. While I tried to bring in diverse perspectives, I think I probably failed more than I succeeded in presenting multiple viewpoints. Many times, I made an effort to bring in additional resources that were well received by my students; however, in the interest of time, I more often opted for the easier mode of information transmission – the textbook.

After teaching various courses within the social studies for an extended period of time, I entered a graduate program and was afforded the opportunity to supervise student teachers within the social studies. Through this assignment, I found myself in a variety of U.S. History classrooms to observe student teachers; however, the personalities and curricular decisions of each of the mentor teachers quickly became apparent. Many of

these mentor teachers' classrooms looked similar to my own classroom experiences; however, a few stood apart as different from the status quo. These atypical classrooms included obvious differences in classroom décor, student conversations, and instructional materials. While in these particular classrooms, I found myself in awe of these mentor teachers who, with ease, appeared to present multiple perspectives to their students with every lesson. The students teachers, I was there to observe, were given instructions from their mentor teachers about how to facilitate lessons that encouraged multiple views of historical figures and events with regards to race, class, religion, gender, etc. From those initial observations, I began to ponder the design of this research study.

Then, at the 2003 annual meeting of CUFA (College and University Faculty Association), I had the opportunity to hear Dr. Frances Rains speak during a session. In her keynote address, she asked several questions, including:

- Why aren't the social studies addressing race and culture in both historical and contemporary contexts?
- Why aren't the social studies addressing the myths that have been taught and re-taught in social studies classrooms?

Social studies teachers face an interesting dilemma. "The dilemma is how to teach about 'core values' such as 'freedom,' 'liberty' and 'justice for all' in a country that has a *continuing* legacy of oppression and intimidation within its own boundaries. For generations this dilemma has been skirted in social studies..." (Rains, 2003, p. 200).

*Might I be able to find many classroom teachers who believe they present multiple perspectives to their students? Where? How many? How might I find them? How did*

*they come to teach in this manner?* These are the questions that initially came to mind as I began to contemplate this research study.

Upon completing initial interviews with various teachers, several of whom included those mentor teachers who first inspired the original ideas for this study, I decided the best approach for the study would be to narrow it down to secondary U.S. History teachers. The reasons for this are two-fold. First of all, the majority of my experiences as a classroom social studies teacher are at the secondary level; therefore, I felt that my “insider” experiences would be more valuable for a study concerning the secondary, rather than elementary, level. In addition, during the initial interviews and research collection process, I found that diverse perspectives were more common place in world history classrooms; whereas, teachers were less supportive of debunking many myths in U.S. History by providing additional resources that may make students uncomfortable with new perspectives concerning the history of the nation. Because of this, I felt that while it was probably more of a challenge to interview only U.S. History teachers, it was also a more interesting study to ask how and why these particular teachers were willing to bring multiple perspectives and viewpoints to their secondary U.S. History students. These ideas shaped the development of the final research questions.

### **Research Questions**

- a. What are the perspectives of U.S. History teachers regarding the social studies classroom as a space of interruption and teaching differently?
- b. How do the teachers articulate their decision-making within this space?

## **The Research Study**

The purpose of this collective case study (Stake, 1995; 2000) is to examine the perspectives of secondary U.S. History teachers and how they see the classroom as a space where multiple narratives about race, class, gender, religion, etc. are explored, studied, and analyzed. When secondary history teachers facilitate discussions beyond surface level about these issues, it creates a space where students can begin to understand Others' histories and how those histories have been influenced, as well as influenced the dominant notions of traditional story lines within the social studies/history curriculum. Although there may be an assumption that this is an impossible task not valued by those in the profession (Cornbleth, 2001; 1998; Goodlad, 1984), for many teachers, this type of pedagogy is an "explosion of contradictory and competing knowledges" (Lather, 1991; quoted in Santora, 2001, p. 151).

Therefore, the focus of the study will be to utilize a critical framework that focuses upon the expansion of "more inclusive ways of knowing" in order to "transform one's assumptions, values, beliefs, and ways of experiencing" (Santora, 2001, p. 150) culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994) for teachers and students.

According to O'Loughlin (1995), "...teachers are more likely to be successful in this type of teaching if they possess knowledge of, and empathy for, the cultural narratives and discourse styles underlying their students' lives and are willing to draw upon them as primary sources of curriculum" (pp. 111-112). This study is designed to

elicit from the participants, descriptions of their experiences in classrooms open to these types of discussions and multiple viewpoints.

As such, data emerged from this study as I employed a collective case study approach (Stake, 2000, p. 437) to examine the perspectives of five purposefully selected secondary U.S. History teachers. The collective case study includes three forms of data collection: interviews, document analysis, and researcher journaling. Ruth Behar (1993) explains that, in this type of qualitative work, “We ask for revelations from others, but we reveal little or nothing of ourselves; we make others vulnerable, but we ourselves remain invulnerable” (p. 273 quoted in Weis & Fine, 2003, p. 34).

However, I shared with the participants my connections to viewing social studies as a space of possibility for sharing multiple perspectives. Teaching in this manner did not begin during my professional development sequence; it did not begin until much later, when I was exposed to critical pedagogy.

### **The Big Picture**

The Social Studies classroom is a dynamic space in which teachers are afforded the opportunity to explore many areas with regards to history, geography, sociology, government, and economics. In particular, secondary history courses are designed to include all of these components in order to offer students a better understanding of the historical connections between geography, sociology, government, and economics throughout time. These inter-connections between issues are documented in state

standards and the National Council for the Studies (NCSS) standards; however, how are they actually portrayed in history classrooms?

Unfortunately, most peoples' remembrance of secondary social studies is "boring" (Loewen, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2003), with a great deal of academic time spent on the memorization of definitions. I remember the same experience from my own secondary schooling where the curriculum proceeded with the same routine: *write the definition of every vocabulary word from Chapter 1; read the text; answer all the questions from the end of the chapter; test over the material; repeat with Chapter 2; and so on.*

I believe this type of teaching methodology misses many students. In addition, according to Ladson-Billings, "the [social studies] profession continues to ignore one of the more pressing social issues of our day – race (and social justice)" (2003, p. 6). Of all the subject matters taught in school today, I can think of no better place to include race and social justice issues than the social studies.

In contrast to the teaching of a 'boring' social studies, I am drawn to the notion of a different type of U.S. History classroom, where students are encouraged to think critically beyond rote memory for state standardized tests.

As mentioned earlier, the K-12 social studies curriculum is an all-encompassing curriculum that includes many branches, one of which is history. This study is primarily concerned with the secondary history curriculum; however, as I discuss history, I must also remain aware of its connection to the greater whole, that is, social studies. After all, I believe the idea of teaching and learning about multiple perspectives should be included

within all social studies branches; however, for the purpose of this study, I shall only include secondary U.S. History teachers as research participants. Because of this, the participants involved in this study teach either 8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History or American History at the high school level, which typically addresses 11<sup>th</sup> graders.

Similar to the debates in Literature and Art concerning the Master Canon, American History is also with its own set of master narratives (Columbus, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, King, Parks, etc.). According to Ladson-Billings (1998), Critical Race Theory contends that these master narratives, as well as the official school curriculum “are designed to maintain a White supremacist master script” (p. 18).

Swartz (1992) adds,

Master scripting silences multiple voices and perspectives, primarily legitimizing dominant, white, upper-class, male voicings as the “standard” knowledge students need to know. All other accounts and perspectives are omitted from the master script unless they can be disempowered through misrepresentation. (p. 341)

I contemplated what might happen if the master narratives within the history classroom were transposed with multiple narratives. Might the classroom then become a space for transformative learning (hooks, 1994)?

In addition, with regards to the history classroom, I continually considered that if “history is a story about power, a story about those who won” (Trouillot, 1995, p. 5), then how will students of color ever become interested in a history that is not about them in any capacity other than a colonized, subjugated, and negative way? If history continues to re-inscribe the hegemonic powers that dominate society with the notion that ‘the past is

the past', how will Others' stories ever be told? "True, the past is the past, but the blindness of guilt, denies not merely culpability for past misdeeds, but also ignores the benefits that have accrued over time as a consequence of those misdeeds" (Rains, 2003, p. 203).

The social studies field needs to ask the question: How can secondary history education be liberating if it, at all, reinforces the colonizing effects of imperialism by primarily teaching about the great White figures in history who dominated Others in the name of all that is "good", namely Christianity, democracy, and capitalism? If history continues to teach about Native Americans as an inferior, extinct group from thousands of years ago, how will a young Cherokee child ever see her/himself in the social studies curriculum? If Black Americans are primarily addressed in the context of slavery in social studies classrooms, how will a young African-American fe/male ever feel empowered? If Texas history is only taught from the White perspective, how will young Tejana/o students ever sense the depth of their heritage with this land now known as Texas? If history continues to re-inscribe the hegemonic powers that dominate society, how will Others' perspectives ever be valued by students of secondary U.S. History?

According to Delpit's (1988) *Culture of Power*, "Issues of power are enacted in classrooms. These issues include: the power of the teacher over the students; the power of the publishers of textbooks and of the developers of the curriculum to determine the view of the world presented..." (p. 283). By presenting multiple perspectives and becoming aware of the need to provide students with a history that is inclusive rather than

exclusive, teachers may begin to work towards what Delpit describes as teaching all students the “explicit and implicit rules of power” (p. 280).

I propose that history classrooms are in need of a (re)vision in order to reveal the possibilities that occur when multiple narratives about multiple people are included within the curriculum. By including many points of view within the social studies, educators have the opportunity to share multiple interpretations of history. I am of the belief that history lessons will never offer ‘truths’; history lessons can only offer ‘interpretations’ that many times, become recorded as ‘absolute truths’. Therefore, social studies/history educators have an obligation to present as many multiple perspectives as possible in order to assist students in internalizing their own versions of history.

For every debate, there is always a “he said” and a “she said”. For too long, history texts and classrooms have only been filled with one perspective, the “he said”. Now is the time to open the space of possibility within the social studies to find multiple perspectives, leading to multiple narratives. “As our country and schools become more ethnically and culturally diverse, elementary (and secondary) teachers must have tools to help them plan for broadening the perspectives of the children they teach” (Burstein & Hutton, 2005, p. 15).

### **Reflexivity**

I am a former secondary social studies educator; however, I entered the teaching profession as a post-baccalaureate history major and English minor. Therefore, my preferences within the social studies were the history courses (Texas, U.S., and World),

all of which I have had the opportunity to teach. As a pre-service teacher, I remember sticking to the textbook, for fear I might leave some pertinent information out of the students' instruction. Upon reflection, that need to "stick to the facts" may have stemmed from my concentration in history, rather than education, as an undergraduate. My reliance upon the textbook as a guarantee that I would not forget to include pertinent dates, facts, people, and events became somewhat of a crutch as I moved from one chapter to the next in chronological order. While my history background provided me with an overview to see the interconnections between historical events, I think my efforts were so concentrated on 'getting it all in' that I never stopped to think about the connections I was (not) making for my students.

I was, at first, definitely not a teacher who even thought about how to bring multiple narratives/perspectives to my students. It was not until after my first two years of teaching that I realized there might be another way to plan units. For me, it was an epiphany to realize that my units *did not have* to match the chapters of the textbook. While I worked to be more inclusive about my teaching, I did not find any more opportunities to teach within the social studies. After moving to another town, I quickly discovered that my English/language arts teacher certification was much more valuable to interviewing principals. I went to several social studies interviews, but once my resume revealed my English certification, rather than a physical education certification, I found myself with English job offers, most often. Therefore, most of my 'experimentation' with multiple perspectives came in the form of language arts lessons prior to the influx of high stakes testing curriculum.

I must also add that this topic is very pertinent to my own identity. I am the product of multiple histories, histories that have dominated and histories that have been silenced. In order to be reflexive about my position, I must describe my genealogical background.

My father's family (Robinson surname) originally left England with the religious group now known as the 'Pilgrims'. Before coming to North America, the group first settled in Leyden, Holland, where my 12<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather, Reverend John Robinson, served as pastor for the families who left England for Holland. In fact, his picture even hangs in one of the large portraits in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol. I was taught from an early age to be proud of my heritage. My history *was* the history of my textbook. As a child, I loved to study about the Puritans because it was part of *my family's personal story*.

On the other hand, my mother's family (Horobec surname, although this spelling is incorrect from its original Romanian spelling as immigration officials regularly misspelled the names of families emigrating from countries all over the world) immigrated to Canada in search of work and a life without war in the late 1800's and early 1900's, approximately three hundred years after my father's family settled in North America. My grandmother did not come to the United States until 1945, after she married an American serviceman, who was stationed in Edmonton, Alberta, during World War II. I did not know many stories of this part of my history until much later in life, the reasons for which I am not sure. However, I am sure of one thing, and that is,

this part of my history, unlike the connection to the Puritans aboard the *Mayflower*, was not a major chapter of any textbook I ever read in school.

Upon reflection, I remember feeling proud of my Robinson family roots, yet indifferent regarding my Horobec family roots. Why? Why was one history valued over the other in my secondary history classes? Was I lucky to have *one of the two* mentioned in my history books? What about other students who only see their histories demonstrated through oppression, slavery, massacre, etc. in secondary history classrooms? How does that make those students feel about their personal histories? How can that be empowering and liberating social studies?

According to Levstik and Barton (2001),

Unfortunately, the range of interpretations traditionally found in textbooks and school curricula has been extremely small. The historical narratives that students encounter at school, for example, focus almost exclusively on the political and diplomatic history of the United States – the history of laws, presidents, wars, and foreign relations. Information that does not fit into these categories is rarely afforded much (if any) importance. As a result, those who traditionally have had little access to politics – such as women, people of color, and the poor – have been largely excluded from the narrative interpretation of American history.”

(p. 6)

I was lucky to find the marginalized portion of my own history when I entered college. As a history major, I discovered Other histories; in fact, the majority of my coursework was in non-European history. I took African history, Nigerian history, Latin

American history, Cuban history, etc. I felt like I had been taught American history numerous times during my K-12 education; therefore, I wanted to spend the next few years with histories I had never even thought about, much less, studied. As part of an assignment in a *Women in History* course, I interviewed my maternal grandmother, Alysandra Horobec Drake.

I heard her family's story about immigration, along with many sub-stories of acceptance and rejection. I discovered that my great-aunts and uncles, her sisters and brothers, had to change their first and last names out of a necessity to appear more Western European in order to find work in Canada. I learned of family stories from Romania that may have included some embellishments, but were still fascinating to hear about as I became more connected with the heritage of this particular side of my family's history. I learned of a group of farming people who moved across an ocean and North America to settle in a remote part of Central-Western Canada, where weather and land conditions were so harsh and miserable, yet it was where they had to make it work for their families and future. These stories were fascinating; in fact, they were as fascinating as the stories I had always been so proud of with my Robinson family roots.

Then, with the destruction of Communism in Romania in 1989, my grandmother and mother were able to travel to Romania, as well as the former Soviet Union a few years later. My mother, who was born in 1946, grew up in the midst of the Cold War, when images of Red Square created fear and Communism in Romania prevented travel to far-away family members. While touring the former Soviet Union, she was able to purchase a military officer's hat, complete with the infamous hammer and sickle symbol

for a mere ten dollars. She had always seen images of military personnel wearing these heavily lined black hats for warmth during the harsh winters. She found it remarkable that she was able to, as a first generation American-born woman, travel to a country that had created so much fear for her as a child, and purchase a hat, complete with the symbol of Communism for an American ten-dollar bill.

For me, the perspectives of my mother and grandmother were fascinating, and I realized every part of my history was as interesting as the rest. Through my courses at the undergraduate level, I was able to find more perspectives and viewpoints about my own family history, as well as the histories of many Others throughout my diverse course selections.

### **Chapter Overview**

I contemplate that many people may be of the belief that multiple perspectives within history can only be told within the context of the “ivory tower” of academia; however, statistics tell us there are fewer Others within academia. Do those in power think these histories are only safe to be told to the few rather than the masses? I ponder what might happen if more students heard their own histories within the context of the U.S. History curriculum?

Therefore, I propose that teaching the history curriculum with multiple perspectives widens the possibilities for everyone, as students discover “new” histories that ask us to consider what might not have been considered in the past. As I reflect upon my past experiences as a student, a teacher, and a family member, I realize that diverse

perspectives are just as important in every level of history, as well as social studies curriculum, in general.

In a similar reflection, Patrick Finn (1999) describes working with pre-service teachers in English education in his book, *Literacy with an attitude: Educating working-class children in their own self-interest*. While Finn works with pre-service teachers in literacy education, and I interviewed experienced social studies teachers, his work is still appropriate to consider. Through a Freirean lens, Finn proposes that there are two types of literacy taught in American public schools: domesticating and empowering.

Domesticating education leads to a simple, yet functional literacy in which students become “productive and dependable, but not troublesome” (Finn, 1999, p. ix-x). Empowering education, on the other hand, leads to powerful literacy in which students “become conscious of injustice and inequity, and through disciplined, focused, and strategic action, they can bring about change” to challenge the status quo (Finn, 1999, p. xi). This, Finn suggests, is “literacy with an attitude”.

I found this concept interesting and relevant to my work in social studies. What would happen if “social studies with an attitude” became the norm for the social studies curriculum? How might it look within the social studies curriculum? To answer that question, Finn describes how social studies classes should be taught with multiple perspectives about the collective accomplishments of people who sought to challenge the status quo throughout history.

However, Finn also describes his pre-service teacher's reactions to instruction 'with an attitude': "And so, in come my students, bug-eyed, saying, 'You can't do that; it's too political,' or 'I'd never get away with it.'" He continues,

Of course, taking sides is political. It reflects a position – a point of view...We [teachers] engage in dozens of political acts and make dozens of political statements in our classrooms every day that support the status quo. We don't think of them as political because they are not controversial. (Finn, 1999, p. 178)

I argue that everything history teachers do is political. Telling one story over another is a political act that supports the dominant and re-inscribes the hegemonic forces that have taught us to feel uncomfortable with, rather than embrace, multiple perspectives. This is the type of history classroom within the social studies I envision. I know that once students begin to hear and feel the empowering effects of their histories within the history curriculum, the effects upon the traditional curriculum will be remarkable. Social studies with an attitude *is* about finding a space of possibilities where teachers encourage multiple narratives and perspectives about race, class, gender, religion, etc.

As such, the next four chapters will detail how five purposefully selected secondary U.S. History teachers have incorporated multiple perspectives within their curriculum. For the research study, I inquired about each teacher's own perspectives regarding the social studies classroom as a space of interruption with regards to teaching with multiple perspectives. In addition, I inquired about how each teacher articulated

their decision-making when it comes to curricular decisions, lesson planning, and instruction.

In order to provide a background of information for the research, Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature most pertinent to this topic. Included is an historical look at the social studies field, as well as a review of the transitions involved with the teaching of history. In addition, there is a review of the topic of multiple perspectives and their place within the social studies, followed by a selection of contemporary research that includes studies related to this one.

Chapter 3 continues with a description of the methodologies utilized to best represent the five participants in a manner that is consistent with the qualitative expectations that ensure validity within the field of educational research.

Chapter 4 includes the data, as well as an analysis of the words of each of the participants. This analysis led to the development of six themes that emerged from the data and address each of the study questions:

- the influence of participants' educational experiences
- the participants' love of subject matter
- the participants' commitment to challenging institutional and other forms of resistance
- the vital impact of professional development
- the inclusion of personal and family experiences
- the re(tellings) of historical people, places, and events.

From the data and subsequent themes, four particular findings emerged that highlight the participants' commonalities, which is further explained in Chapter 5. For the first research question, which addresses teachers' perspectives regarding the Social Studies classroom as a space of interruption in order to teach about multiple perspectives, two particular findings emerged that revealed that everyone had a passion for history, as well as handled some type of resistance within their careers, whether it was directed towards them or directly at others. For the second research question, which addressed how these teachers articulate their decision-making, an additional two findings emerged that each participant shared a commitment to lifelong learning, as well as shared reciprocal stories of inspiration.

These findings are further explained within the context of the field of social studies. In addition, an effort is made to address the implications for the field of teacher education, social studies education, as well as my own research interests in the future.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

In order to understand the need for a study of multiple perspectives within secondary history classrooms, a thorough examination of the existing research is necessary (Hart, 1998). The ideas associated with utilizing multiple perspectives within social studies classrooms is well researched, as well as documented by scholars in the field, which will be reviewed later in this chapter. However, before an examination of the current field of research is considered, it is necessary to establish a context for the field of social studies, as well as the teaching of U.S. History.

Therefore, after considering the historical background of the social studies, a review of the transition in the teaching of history will occur, followed by a look at multiple perspectives and their place within the social studies. In closing, there will be a review of studies that have also examined multiple perspectives within the social studies based upon various methodologies, types of participants, and a multitude of foci.

### **The Social Studies**

The term “social studies” is complicated and comes with a history of differing opinions and discussion. The National Education Association sought to address the organization of human development in schools in the 1916 report, *The Social Studies in Secondary Education* (Dunn, 1916). In it, the committee made recommendations, including the following: courses in vocational and community civics taught in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>

grades; a course in Problems of American Democracy offered in high school; courses in European and American history offered in high school; and the term ‘social studies’ to refer to the subject matters of economics, history, political science, sociology, and civics (Lybarger, 1991). Therefore, this report is often viewed as the impetus for social studies being considered an interdisciplinary school subject (Brophy & Alleman, 2006). The committee legitimated the term ‘social studies’ and defined it: “The social studies are understood to be those whose subject matter relates directly to the organization and development of human society, and to man as a member of social groups” (Nelson, 1994, p. 9).

This report brought citizenship education to the forefront of the mission of the social studies in K-12 public education. According to the report, “social problems were assumed to be solvable with the application of knowledge from the social sciences” (Nelson, 1994, p. vii); however, scholars have since demonstrated that to be a narrow view of society’s social issues. Rather, issues must be analyzed from multiple viewpoints to consider the multiple factors leading to social injustices within society.

Curriculum reforms continued to occur with the ‘new social studies’ of the 1960’s. This method acknowledged the issue of historical interpretation as proponents of the ‘new social studies’ emphasized the use of ‘inquiry’ in order to gain an understanding of the problems associated with historical interpretation (Seixas, 1993).

Barr, Barth, and Shermis reported in their 1978 book, *The Nature of the Social Studies*, that citizenship transmission is the oldest and longest lasting goal of what is now known as the social studies (p. 37). Other than citizenship transmission, “there is and has

been no single entity called the ‘social studies’...not only was there no agreement as to the essential nature and purpose of the social studies, there was also little consensus as to desirable content and proper methodology” (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1978, pp. 17-18).

The authors added that every civilization throughout time has continued a tradition of citizenship and cultural transmission through literature, oral histories, and communications.

Some would argue the practice of cultural transmission is as old as man himself...with heroic tales and moral parables designed to inspire youth to value and to attain the high ideals handed down through the ages...[which] meant that certain ‘unpleasant’ facts would have to be omitted and that certain men and situations viewed only in a favorable light, such could be justified by the meritorious goal to which the activities were dedicated. (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1978, p. 38)

In 1992, the House of Delegates for the National Council for the Social Studies voted to give a definition to the “social studies”:

Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and the natural sciences. The primary purpose of the social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and

reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. (p. 1)

Included within their “Need for a Guiding Vision”, the writers of this 1992 NCSS document also address the need for multiple perspectives within social studies classrooms. “When taught well, social studies engages students in the difficult process of confronting ethical and value-based dilemmas, and encourages students to speculate, think critically, and make personal and civic decisions based on information from multiple perspectives” (p. 2).

In a recent study, Urietta (2004) interviewed educators who self-identified as Chicana/o “activist”. For one part of the study, he focused upon the participants’ responses to the following question: “In your experience, was there anything in the K-12 curriculum that represented Mexican or Chicano identity or culture?” (p. 440) Data was analyzed to reveal that social studies and U.S. History courses served as a source of “disconnection” to “American” citizenship in one of three ways: invisibility; uncritical portrayals; and negative and hostile portrayals.

With regards to invisibility, participants felt that people of Mexican descent, as well as other ethnic groups, were “almost invisible in the curriculum”, taking a less important role than white historical figures (Urietta, 2004, p. 441). The uncritical portrayals experienced by the participants stemmed from the feeling that when Mexican culture was studied within the social studies, its focus was upon the stereotypical and/or festive aspects of the culture rather than a true portrayal of the dynamic qualities inherent within Mexican culture (p. 443). Lastly, several participants revealed their experiences to

include negative and hostile portrayals of people of Mexican descent, especially within the area of social studies. One particular participant “expressed anger at a system of education that kept him ‘blind’ to the realities of inequality and injustice” (p. 445).

Based upon these findings, Urietta (2004) concluded that his study was consistent with Bragaw’s (2000) and Ross’s (2000) conclusions that “the social studies curriculum has been largely unchanged since 1916” (p. 440), which reinforces the lasting influences of the National Education Association’s report, *The Social Studies in Secondary Education* (Dunn, 1916).

Despite many efforts to be more inclusive with the social studies curriculum, many scholars have found efforts to be of a “add women [or race, religion, culture, etc.] and stir” mentality that relegates Others’ histories to mere sidebars rather than full, inclusive aspects of the social studies curriculum (Crocco, 1997, p. 62).

As Wilson and Wineburg (1998) concluded,

Social studies teachers have to know many things, and it is unreasonable to expect that young teachers will know enough about history *and* anthropology *and* sociology *and* economics to represent them accurately and teach them effectively. (p. 538)

As such, the researchers also found that social studies teachers emphasize the social studies subject in which they have the most disciplinary background. Even so, social studies educators have a responsibility to continue to strive to include multiple perspectives within the curriculum.

## **Teaching History: Transitions within the Field**

History does not construct past events; rather, history serves as the interpretation of past events. Historical scholar, Norman J. Wilson notes,

History is best defined as a continual, open-ended process of argument. No question is closed because any problem can be reopened by finding new evidence or by taking a new look at old evidence. Thus there are no final answers, only good, coherent arguments: history is not some irreducible list of ‘the facts’ but continually changing bodies of evidence. (2005, p. 3)

Historians are trained to sift through multitudes of books, artifacts, journals, pictures, diaries, etc. looking for connections between objects that may be documented and recorded. Some bits of information are expanded upon; others are left out due to lack of information or interest. In any case, it is with those bits of information that historians piece together what then becomes recorded as history. This history includes the biases, values, and interests of the historian. By considering the layers of discovery and influence, it becomes clear that, “Writing history, then, is a continuous process, not so much because historians uncover new sources or develop new methodologies as because our view of the past and our evaluations of what is important about it are constantly changing” (Dye, 1979 quoted in Tamura, 2003).

It is with this notion that social studies educators must work to find and/or develop curricular materials that encourage students to become critical thinkers about historical people, places, and events (Seixas, 1999). Segall (1999) concurs, “In short, the decision facing educators is between a history in which students are receivers of

information or one in which they are its producers; a history education that provides students with *what* to think or one that encourages them *to* think” (pp. 366-367).

There has been a push to incorporate more historical content in the social studies/history curriculum (Thornton, 1990). Reformers have sought to include a heavier emphasis on historical dates and facts within the curriculum, as well as new curricular materials including textbooks, in an attempt to bolster American students’ understandings of history throughout time (Ravitch & Finn, 1987).

In response, Thornton (1990) argued that adding more history to the social studies curriculum is not a solution, but rather a reaction to a problem that needs to be addressed in other ways. He proposed the need for further research to examine the classroom interactions of content, teachers, instructional methods, and students. He proposed that this is the information “that counts” when determining how to bolster content within the social studies. Thornton added that, “Until fuller consideration is given to how, and by what criteria, teachers transform curriculum for instruction – and how this influences what students experience – the requirement of more history courses will likely contribute little to the advancement of citizenship education” (p. 58).

It is this emphasis that reinforces the need for a study of U.S. History teachers who teach for and about multiple perspectives in their classrooms. According to Segall (1999), social studies teachers not only need to consider how history is “storied”, but also share that thinking with students.

Acknowledging that history is constructed not by (or for) itself but by some one for some (other) body opens it up to questions of its production: how is the “real”

produced and maintained? Addressing discourse as means of storying the past, allows those involved in the educative process to examine under what conditions and through what means one comes to know; how history is storied and how some stories become “legitimate” history(ies) while others are relegated to the periphery of history, history making, and history telling. How one stories the past, as much as who stories it and for what (and whose) purpose, therefore, becomes inseparable from the knowledge being produced and the opportunities this knowledge allows other – different – interpretations to be cultivated (Segall, 1999, p. 369).

As stated, it has been argued that many secondary U.S. History teachers present the curriculum based upon traditional notions of the nation’s past, primarily that of “the ‘winners,’ or those who have achieved political or military glory, great wealth, fame, or title” (Crocco, 1997). Scholars have pointed out that traditional story lines within the curriculum have a tendency to portray Others as disempowered, victims, extinct, and/or unintelligent. These story lines have been told and retold until they become “truths” within the curriculum.

To those who might ask, what is the danger in this? The answer is found in the observation that,

In this way, teachers and students teach and re-teach themselves their social assignments or *status quo* placements according to the raced, classed and gendered knowledge bases of schooling which serve to limit the life chances of some students while privileging the life chances of others. (Swartz, 1996, p. 398)

In a 1989 report, the *Task Force on Minorities* stated that Eurocentric history is a contributing factor to minority children's low self-esteem in urban schools (Singer, 1990). However, this more inclusive method of presenting history in secondary classrooms is not without controversy. In fact, there is considerable debate from others about the inappropriateness of a multiculturalist approach to social studies, specifically history. "How will class time spent on groups on the margins of history help to build a common vocabulary shared by all?" (Ravitch, 1989; Cheney, 1995).

In an example of how historical accounts may be rewritten, Swartz (1996) documented a textbook paragraph detailing Crispus Attucks, a man of African and Natick descent, killed during the demonstration against British soldiers in what became known as the Boston Massacre. In the textbook version, it is written that "Attucks was a runaway slave". Swartz argued that by mentioning his once-slave status, even though he had lived as a free man for 20 years prior to the Boston Massacre, the textbook version undercuts his leadership qualities.

This example is one of many that should be critically examined within the history curriculum so that underrepresented historical figures are "not marginalized or made an add-on to a story 'owned' by a dominant group through master-scripting" (Swartz, 1996, p. 405). Seixas (1999) added that not all historical accounts are equally valid; however, by facilitating students to utilize the tools of a historian, teachers are assisting in students' historical understanding.

By teaching "history as a constructed account of the past" (Seixas, 1999, p. 330), teachers make students aware of how history is (re)written and (re)recorded so they learn

*“how to know history”* (Seixas, 1999, p. 332). “Clearly, history must be subject to revision – to hearing new voices, rethinking old assumptions, and searching for more complete evidence. In a word, there is no ‘last word’ in history” (Levstik, 1997, p. 48).

### **Multiple Perspectives: Its Place within the Social Studies**

The social studies field has witnessed both an ontological, as well as an epistemological shift in its thinking. Upon naming and defining the “social studies”, educators were given the mission of citizenship transmission (Barr, Barth, & Shermis, 1978). More recently, however, there has been a push for educators to offer multiple interpretations and perspectives to students, who are asked to think like historians who must sift through multiple stories of the past in order to think critically about history.

Historians know that more than one story can be told about the same events and that interpretations will change over time; there simply is no single, unchanging story of history. Such ambiguity is regarded as an inevitable, productive, and desirable part of the search for historical knowledge. (Levstik & Barton, 2001, p. 6)

The ideas associated with a need for multiple perspectives is even apparent in the 1978 work of Barr, Barth, & Shermis.

While social studies as citizenship transmission is associated with idealistic, humanitarian values, in practice it is often identified in simplistic and largely negative terms of overt indoctrination through the use of gross propaganda. George Washington ‘never told a lie’, Lincoln was scrupulously honest; the U.S.

never started nor lost a war...In the hands of a dedicated teacher, such textbook passages can become unquestioned principles and are in practice used in conjunction with vast numbers of cues and conditioning to encourage the students toward the instructional goal, i.e., internalizing the 'right' values and attitudes. (pp. 40-41)

The authors continued, "Not only is the controversial and the disturbing ignored and omitted, but often what is studied is an exaggerated, idealized view of America's past" (p. 50).

With regards to controversial topics in social studies classrooms, Kelly (1986) presented and critiqued four different perspectives on how teachers present information, including controversial issues, to their students. This literature is pertinent to the study of U.S. History classroom teachers who present multiple perspectives to their students since, many times, these perspectives include controversial topics. These four different perspectives are as follows: exclusive neutrality, exclusive partiality, neutral impartiality, and committed impartiality.

Teachers who display 'exclusive neutrality' believe controversial topics should not be introduced into the curriculum; whereas, teachers who display 'exclusive partiality' deliberately present one side of a controversial topic and encourage students to accept that particular stance as correct. Teachers who display 'neutral impartiality' present multiple viewpoints, while not revealing their own viewpoints about the controversial topic. Lastly, teachers who display 'committed impartiality' reveal their own viewpoints on controversial topics, as well as present as many differing viewpoints

as possible. Kelly supported the ‘committed impartiality’ perspective displayed by some teachers since they are not only revealing their own viewpoints about controversial issues, but are also presenting students with as many other perspectives as can be documented and supported.

This type of ‘committed impartiality’ is similar to what Bigelow (1990) described when he states that,

... all teaching *is* partisan. Whether or not we want to be, all teachers are political agents because we help shape students’ understandings of the larger society....Hence teachers who claim ‘no politics’ are inherently authoritarian because their pedagogical choices act on students, but students are denied a structured opportunity to critique or act on their teachers’ choices. (p. 445)

Bigelow (1990), a high school teacher in Oregon, co-authored several books with his teaching partner, Linda Christensen. These curriculum materials are supportive of multiple perspectives and can enable students to “rethink” much of what they have learned about historical people, places, and events.

According to Paxton (1999), “students rarely question the trustworthiness of their textbooks, nor do they question authors’ intent or search for possible bias. When reading history textbooks, students tend to act as acquiescent assimilators of information, merely scanning the page in search of facts and explanations” (p. 321). Therefore, teachers have an obligation to teach students to read history with a ‘critical eye’ rather than accepting all information at face value.

According to Giroux (1996a), history should not be “about constructing a linear narrative but about blasting history open, rupturing its silences, highlighting its detours, and organizing its limits” and possibilities (p. 51). These “silences” that are, at times, continued and reinforced in social studies classrooms are the result of hegemonic forces that keep those in power (i.e., those dominant stories within traditional notions of U.S. History). Hegemony addresses whomever has the dominant power, thus control, in a society (Gramsci, 1971; Apple, 2004). “...hegemony acts to ‘saturate’ our very consciousness, so that the educational, economic and social world we see and interact with, and the commonsense interpretations we put on it, becomes the world...the only world” (Apple, 2004, p. 4).

Giroux (1996b) further explained that counter-hegemonic pedagogy is a two-fold device. While many consider it to be of value for underrepresented populations, Giroux argued it is as much a need in the dominant culture as it is for society members who are oppressed. A person is not capable of changing what they cannot see or acknowledge; therefore, counter-hegemonic pedagogy works to reveal injustices prevalent in society. These injustices include both what is maliciously imposed upon others, as well as what is unintentionally imposed upon others due to structural advantages already established within society. As such, curricular materials that include multiple perspectives within U.S. History classrooms serve as counter-hegemonic pedagogy for students.

Deever added, “the question is not ‘How do we eliminate hegemony?’ but rather ‘How do we make the structures work towards a radical agenda of equity, equality and democracy?’” (1996, p. 187). Gathering data from U.S. History teachers who open their

classrooms to more inclusive forms of teaching and learning may be a place to begin to answer Deever's question.

Apple (2004) argued that schools, as products of hegemony, work to reproduce inequities within society due to 'hidden curriculums' that favor dominant members of society. The way in which the 'hidden curriculum' is prevalent within the curriculum of U.S. History is recognizable. One may simply ask any young, school-aged child about historical figures from their schooling, and they will rattle off such names as: Christopher Columbus, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln. These historical figures have become synonymous with history classrooms throughout the existence of the educational system. The mention of these names is not a suggestion for their removal from the curriculum; rather, it is simply a demonstration that hegemony maintains the status quo in favor of traditional notions of historical figures and events. Therefore, by offering multiple viewpoints of historical people, places, and events, teachers will move away from the 'hidden curriculum' as described by Apple.

As an example of how the hidden curriculum works within school, Ahonen (2001) described her 1990-1992 study of Estonia after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Grand narratives were constructed by ideologues, often in the service of politics, to make sense of the past and to give direction to the future. People's historical consciousness...was thus manipulated through a 'conspiracy' between those in power and the ideologues serving them, and were widely affected by deterministic ideologies of one kind or another. Political leaders imposed a grand narrative on a community, using the common school as their instrument...but such narratives

were developed in a way that ignored the experiences of each 'nation's' ethnic and social minorities. (p. 180)

In contrast, a counter-hegemonic curriculum opens up possibilities and forums for more inclusive ways of teaching and learning social studies concepts, as well as history. This type of transformative teaching and learning is derived from the work of hooks (1994), who stated that educators must work "to transform the curriculum so that it does not reflect biases or reinforce systems of domination" (p. 21). While hooks is specifically referring to the academy, I believe her work is applicable and beneficial for secondary educators as well. As such, educators who participate in the process of "uncovering and reclaiming subjugated knowledge, ...lay claims to alternative histories...in order to transform educational institutions radically" (Mohanty; quoted in hooks, 1990).

However, educators must also be aware that isolating Others' stories and perspectives may result in another form of 'Othering', thus rein-scribing notions of domination through appropriation and interpretation (hooks, 1990, p. 125). Instead, educators must "radicalize" their students "so that they learn to think critically, so that they do not perpetuate domination" (hooks, 1990, p. 132). Swartz advocated that teachers need to be "response-able" by reworking "'standard' school knowledge whose monocultural and monological content, and the pedagogy that accompanies it, obstruct questions, imagination and critically conscious thought" (Swartz, 1996, p. 397).

Instead, transformative pedagogy that includes presenting multiple perspectives to students within the social studies encompasses many notions of critical pedagogy: emancipatory pedagogy (Freire, 1970); multicultural education (Grant & Sleeter, 1998;

Sleeter & Grant, 1999); culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994), etc. “Critical pedagogy is a general term that refers to, among other things, revisionist education history, the ‘new sociology’ of education, reconceptualist curriculum theory, cultural studies, feminist scholarship, Critical Theory, and various forms of postmodern and poststructuralist analysis” (Stanley, 1992, p. 2).

In a study of young people’s historical understanding, Epstein (1997) interviewed students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History classes, and found that African-American and European-American students constructed very different perspectives of U.S. History based upon the information presented in class. With regards to naming the credible resources for historical data, African-American students named family as the most reliable sources, followed by teachers. Students stated that they believed the textbook left out important information about African-Americans, which left them skeptical of its reliability. On the other hand, European-American students ranked the textbook, teachers, and library books as the most reliable sources for historical data. Students shared that since textbooks are written by “experts” in the field, and since teachers studied history in college, both must be reliable resources.

In addition, Epstein documented that many of the African-American participants maintained a “double historical consciousness” in which they created two perspectives or views of historical people, places, and events. One perspective, consistent with what was taught in class, was utilized when taking tests and presenting information to teachers. The other perspective, not consistent with what was traditionally taught in history courses, was utilized when participating extra-curricular settings and/or activities.

According to Levstik (1997), multiple perspectives presented by social studies teachers, however, is not always well received by students. Presenting multiple perspectives and multiple stories may frustrate students who need to know “the truth”. From the moment many students enter school, they become accustomed to learning “correct” answers, then regurgitating those “correct” answers for a test. Learning multiple perspectives may run counter-intuitive to many students’ traditional way of learning. In addition, Levstik argued that this type of teaching might be “risky business” for teachers as they facilitate students’ questioning historical information rather than simply accepting “official stories” sanctioned by school district textbook and curriculum adoptions.

To conclude, Levstik (1997) addressed teachers’ role in presenting multiple perspectives within the social studies,

Our task as social studies educators is to prepare all our students for active citizenship in an increasingly complex and interdependent world. We cannot afford a history curriculum that ignores or de-emphasizes the impact of racial, ethnic, gender, and class distinctions in the past or present. Nor can we afford a history curriculum that renders some of our students invisible and voiceless. (p. 50)

### **Contemporary Research: Related Studies**

Research addressing the topic of multiple perspectives/narratives within the U.S. History curriculum is well documented by many prominent scholars within the field of

social studies. However, after a thorough review of the literature, I was unable to find studies that included secondary U.S. History teachers' perceptions of their own classrooms as a 'space' for discussions of multiple perspectives/narratives within the curriculum. Rather, a plethora of contemporary research was found which in some way relates to the topic at hand, but also differs in some way or another, including the source of research participants.

Because the focus of this research study is on teachers' perceptions of how they bring multiple perspectives to the classroom, it is most useful to contemplate the additional research already in existence based upon teachers within the social studies profession. However, while most of this research is tied to presenting multiple perspectives within the classroom, none of the existing research is based upon teachers' perceptions of what and how they bring these multiple perspectives to their students.

Therefore, it is evident that all research pertaining to developing some form of multiple perspectives within the social studies is pertinent, whether or not the research focuses upon students (Stevenson, 1990; Keedy, et al, 1998; Barton, 1997; Leigh & Reynolds, 1997; VanSledright, 1997; Yeager & Doppen, 2001; Levstik, 1997; Seixas, 1997; Gabella, 1994), pre-service teachers (Field & Singer, 2006; Tamura, 2003; Halagao, 2004), or practicing teachers (Noboa, 2006; Wilson & Wineburg, 1993; Davis & Yeager, 1996; Howard, 2004; Branch, 2004; Merryfield, 1998; Makler, 1994; Warren, 2006; Lindquist, 1997; Burstein & Hutton, 2005). As such, research with each group is further discussed below.

### ***Research with Students***

In a study of students' perspectives about schooling, Stevenson (1990) conducted interviews with forty-five students from five different high schools in order to learn what types of academic tasks they found to be the most engaging. Stevenson found that unless a subject matter is of interest to students, they will not be engaged. In addition, he also found that students prefer to be actively involved in the learning process with challenging curriculum that facilitates them in the interpretation, analysis, and manipulation of information. Therefore, social studies classrooms that offer multiple perspectives in which students may 'see and hear' their own histories will be of greater significance and interest to students. By presenting multiple perspectives, teachers automatically engage students in interpreting and analyzing historical information that facilitates critical thinking and awareness of the multiplicities of historical data.

In another study of student perspectives, Keedy, et.al. (1998) found that the majority of students from their study of nine U.S. History students appeared to understand that history was not simply a collection of dates, facts, and events to memorize. Rather, the majority of these student research participants "seemed well aware that history is power and social relationships" (p. 632). Based upon this study, teachers should keep in mind that students have an understanding of the construction of history, and therefore, need a presentation of multiple resources displaying multiple viewpoints of historical people, places, and events.

Barton (1997) cited large differences between the history instruction of two elementary-aged students. While the first student received instruction that strengthened

her historical understanding, the second student received instruction that reinforced common misconceptions about historical people and events. These misconceptions led the second student to think of historical events as “discrete episodes...Moreover, each topic was studied from a single perspective – the American Revolution from the patriots’ perspective, the westward movement from the settlers’ perspective” (Barton, 1997, p. 16).

Barton concluded that teachers must facilitate investigations within the history curriculum and build upon what students already know, while simultaneously addressing students’ misconceptions about what they think, but do not actually know.

While this type of instruction is challenging for both teachers and students, it is possible. Several studies have demonstrated students’ ability to grasp complex issues and relate these issues to their own lives. As an example, Leigh and Reynolds (1997) described their work with students as an attempt “to transform history from an accumulation of names and dates in textbooks to a series of windows on the past” (p. 45).

In doing so, their students created personal timelines, build a time capsule, interview a grandparent, and explore their own local history. These teachers found these activities helpful in an attempt to offer multiple perspectives to their fourth grade students.

VanSledright (1997) conducted a research study with thirty U.S. History students, from across three different grade levels, including 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and high school. His research agenda centered on students’ understanding of the purpose for studying American history. After conducting interviews with the students, VanSledright

concluded that the majority of students responded with the famous motto about history, “those who fail to learn the lessons of the past are condemned to repeat them” (p. 530).

Based upon the data, he concluded that only a small portion of the students’ teachers seemed to think of their role as more than facilitators of the memorization of dates and facts. Therefore, he advocated that teachers need to learn more about the current debates concerning history and historical significance via professional development.

Yeager and Doppen (2001) described their research with eight high school juniors enrolled in a U.S. History course. The focus of the study was to see if students’ empathic responses differed depending upon the types of materials they were given when studying about a historical event. All participants were given materials to read about Harry S. Truman’s decision to use atomic weapons during World War II; however, one group received the course textbook and the other group received a variety of primary and secondary resources.

Students who were given the textbook version of events responded to researchers’ questions with simple, straightforward answers directly from the textbook. In their answers, there was only one decision for Truman to make in order to save more American lives in the use of the atomic bombs. On the other hand, students who were given a wide variety of resources to read did not answer the researchers’ questions with simple, black and white answers. Instead, these participants appeared to distinguish more depth in the arguments for and against the use of atomic bombs during World War II.

Students who were exposed to multiple perspectives expressed increased empathic responses to the decisions made by Truman. Yeager and Doppen (2001) concluded that “the traditional role of the teacher as the deliverer of knowledge must be reexamined and transformed into one in which he or she guides the students towards the construction of personal, yet reasoned, perspectives and explanations” (p. 111).

As an example of how difficult teaching with multiple perspectives may be, Levstik (1997) considered her study from a “Was Columbus Famous?” inquiry project,

It is not always the case that students respond so positively to history seen from different perspectives. One problem is that perspectival history runs counter to children’s perceived need to know ‘the truth.’ Children are trained to seek correct answers to their questions more often than they are asked to consider multiple perspectives. As a result, many children find this kind of historical approach unfamiliar and even threatening. They may demand that the teacher ‘just tell us what you want us to know’ (Levstik, 1997, p. 50).

With regards to historical significance, scholars are developing ways in which educators may seek out what students are most able to connect to within the history curriculum. For instance, Seixas (1997) developed a two-part questionnaire for teachers to give to students in order to assist in the determination of future instruction based upon students’ responses. Predicated upon his findings concerning students’ understanding of historical significance, Seixas (1997) argued that as historians have widened their look at previously underrepresented people within the ‘pages’ of history, there has also been an

increase in the documentation of the lives of women, the poor, and ethnic minorities; thereby, revealing a shift in the definition of “historically significant”.

In another research study in which the definition of “historically significant” widened, Gabella (1994) met weekly with six 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. history students for an extended period of time. The research participants were in a class where the teacher presented a wide variety of resources in order to present multiple perspectives as well as multiple aspects of what may be defined as historically significant. These resources included music, paintings, photographs, films, and poetry. Gabella wanted to know if these varying types of resources provided unique kinds of understanding to the students in what they understand to be historically significant. She concluded that by presenting multiple resources, including multiple forms of artwork, to students, it serves “as an invaluable means of helping students question their assumptions about historical knowledge, and to engage in critical reasoning about history and historical inquiry...to provide students with an alternative vision of history...” (p. 354).

### ***Research with Pre-Service Teachers***

According to Field and Singer (2006), pre-service teachers “are often troubled by the disjuncture between what they learned in school as children and what they are learning now [in social studies methods courses]” (p. 24). However, whatever connections pre-service teachers make to historical people, places, and events, directly influences the curriculum and content chosen and taught in their classrooms (Evans, 1988).

When contemplating how to explain ‘history’ and the historical process to her students, Tamura (2003) acknowledged that many high school and college history textbooks are fact-driven [the what and when], without much room for questioning the motives, thoughts, and differing perspectives [the why and how] of historical figures and events. At the conclusion of her study, she noted that her students “came to see history as ‘complex’, ‘comprehensive’, and ‘multi-faceted’, ‘not just a list of facts in chronological order.’ Some said that they would be more cautious when talking about ‘facts.’ To my surprise, many like the idea of history as interpretation...” (Tamura, 2003, p. 90).

In line with the notion that more research is needed that examines the experiences of “Others” learning about their own history, Halagao (2004) interviewed six Filipino American college students at a large urban university in the Northwest United States. These participants were enrolled in a multicultural curriculum and education course in which Filipino history and culture were the main foci. While these participants were learning material to use in their own professional careers, they were, at the same time, being exposed to Filipino history and culture that was, at times, new to them.

When holding up the mirror to their ethnic selves, students need to not only see themselves reflected in mainstream historical texts and curricula, but also to realize they can take charge of the kinds of images they project. This study asserts that linking social action with learning about their ethnic history and culture enables students of color to be active contributors to the making of history, rather than simply consumers of history. (Halagao, 2004, p. 479)

As the findings emerged, Halagao (2004) concluded that these pre-service teachers were able to make curricular connections while “filling in the blanks” of what they did not know about their own histories. However, many also experienced cultural collisions when confronted with differing stories and interpretations of events as they had previously been learned. Lastly, the participants expressed a sense of empowerment from social action. Halagao described this sense of empowerment as not what the participants felt for themselves when learning about their own history, but how they planned to utilize that information as they entered the education profession and planned to teach their future students about Filipino history and culture.

### ***Research with Teachers***

Noboa (2006) researched teachers’ perspectives concerning their U.S. History courses in an effort to explore what is “left out” of the curriculum with regards to Latino contributions to historical events. With data analysis, he concluded that the lack of time consistently played a role in teachers’ decision-making regarding the curriculum. Many participants felt that they did not have the time to cover the required content, much less additional content, such as multiple perspectives and viewpoints from a variety of resources.

In a larger study with two high school history teachers, Wilson and Wineburg (1993) analyzed the teachers’ responses on three performance assessments of teaching, including the evaluation of student papers, their use of primary and secondary resources, and a textbook analysis. During the second part of the study (teacher’s use of

documentary materials), the researchers gave the two teachers thirty minutes to review a collection of documents concerning the Battles of Lexington and Concord. The documents included eight written and three pictorial sources about the battles.

After the allotted time period, the teachers were asked to describe how they might utilize the documents in their U.S. History courses, as well as the “story” of the documents (Wilson and Wineburg, 1993, p. 743). Upon analysis of the data, the researchers described the two teachers’ differing interpretations of how the documents might be utilized in their classrooms. One teacher described the discrepancies within the documents as too difficult for his “regular history classes”, but something that he could possibly use in his AP (Advanced Placement) classes (p. 744). On the other hand, the second research participant thought the documents might provide all of her students with a better understanding of the discrepancies that are always present when discussing and interpreting historical events. However, she felt that she could not simply start with the presentation of these particular documents. Instead, she described how she would begin such a lesson with a discussion of contemporary events related to her students’ lives (i.e. the differing descriptions of a recent news story; the differing descriptions of a recent school assembly, etc.) Once her students understood how people describe and interpret contemporary events differently, she would then be able to present the collection of differing documents from the Battles of Concord and Lexington. By teaching about different perspectives from the onset of the lesson, the second teacher “repeatedly emphasized the building of connections between history and students’ lives, and the need to create situations that help students see the relevance of past to present” (p. 748).

Following upon the research of Wineburg (1991), Davis and Yeager (1996) provided a framework for analyzing the experiences of history teachers through the use of three profiles. Similarly to Wineburg's study, the researchers presented eight documents concerning the Battle of Lexington to U.S. History teachers, who were asked to "think out loud" about each document, as well as to rank each one in order of credibility.

The three profiles that emerged included: History as construction of meaning; History as entertainment; and History as a search for accuracy. With regards to history as construction of meaning, the participants acted like historians in that they used all the documents to (re)construct the events described by the varying resources, with attention to perspectives, circumstances, and context. For those who were described in the history as entertainment category, they reacted to the different resources based upon their own preferences and whether or not they liked or disliked something. Lastly, for those who saw history as a search for accuracy, their emphasis was focused upon the credibility of each resource rather than upon students' possible use of each source (Davis & Yeager, 1996).

While the authors separated each profile into three distinct categories, might it also be possible for social studies teachers to exhibit all three profiles? It seems as though all three profiles concerning history as construction of meaning, for the sake of entertainment, and as a search for accuracy are all valid responses to historical documents and a teacher's need to evaluate each document before presenting it to her/his classroom. In addition, Davis & Yeager (1996) pointed out that,

...teachers' actual classroom use of historical texts and different genres of historical literature – including biography, fiction, letters, diaries, and secondary texts – constitutes a rich area for further exploration. The possible implications of teachers' thinking about and use of historical evidence in the study of highly controversial topics are especially interesting. (p. 163)

This call for additional studies is supportive of more research involving history teachers who teach for/about multiple perspectives by providing varying resources and curriculum materials to their students.

In a study of a secondary U.S. History teacher who facilitated students' understandings of the historical and contemporary issues of race and racism, Howard (2004) identified one teacher, Ms. Washington, in a racially diverse school campus who sought out ways in which to teach around the framework of "U.S. history and its influence on contemporary race relations" (p. 489). During the course of the study, Howard interviewed both the teacher and ten of her students, as well as observed the teacher-student and student-student classroom interactions.

Upon analyzing the data, three themes emerged, including the invisibility of race; the role of the social studies; and the improvement of intergroup relations. With regards to the invisibility of race, students shared that issues of race were completely ignored in social studies courses prior to Ms. Washington's course. Her course was their first opportunity to openly discuss issues of race and racism in their educational experiences. Ms. Washington shared that she was able to tackle "big issues" in her own social studies schooling; therefore, she felt an obligation to do the same for her own students.

Howard (2004) asserted, “One of the key understandings to be discerned from this study is the very real need for educators to help students engage in the complexity of social issues that they encounter on a daily basis” (p. 498). In order to ensure this type of pedagogy, Howard made four recommendations for social studies educators: problematizing race; acknowledging the historical legacy of racism; engaging students in critical conversations; and a commitment to democracy.

Teachers who make a commitment to presenting multiple perspectives to their students will be able to benefit from the recommendations as a way to problematize and acknowledge multiple stories within history. From there, teachers have the wherewithal to engage students in critical conversations about these stories in an effort to reinforce a commitment to democracy, as stated in the goals of the social studies field.

In another related study with a practicing secondary U.S. History teacher, Branch (2004) interviewed a Japanese-American teacher who included research projects in the curriculum that facilitated the development of students’ ethnic identities. This particular teacher “made the history of her students central to their study, and the students responded by clamoring for ‘real history’...[she] facilitated this inclusiveness when she reminded her students that their stories – their history – *is* real history” (p. 540).

From this research, Branch’s (2004) goal was to build theory regarding teacher-facilitated ethnic identity development within the social studies curriculum. With this case study, Branch made three recommendations in working towards this process. First, teachers are more likely to facilitate students’ ethnic identity through the social studies curriculum once they are able to see the inter-connections between race and ethnic

identity and the social studies. Second, teachers are more likely to facilitate students' ethnic identity if they have experienced positive resolutions to any ethnic identity conflicts in their own lives. Third, teachers who give students the ability to make positive ethnic identification decisions have also provided positive multiethnic content knowledge within the social studies curriculum.

Each of the recommendations set forth by Howard (2004) and Branch (2004) apply to social studies educators who want to create conversations within their history classrooms about how historical and contemporary events have been influenced by race, racism, and one's own perception of self and other's ethnic identities. These same recommendations are pertinent to wider discussions within the social studies curriculum, such as issues concerning gender, class, religion, etc.

With regards to teachers who teach with global perspectives in mind, Merryfield (1998) stated,

Although much has been written about the need to infuse global perspectives in education..., few scholars have studied the actual practice of social studies teachers as they teach global perspectives or tried to understand the contexts of their instructional decisions. (p. 342)

She continued with the data and findings from her study, in which teachers and pre-service teachers were interviewed concerning global perspectives. From these participants, she found that "students need knowledge and appreciation of multiple perspectives, multiple realities, and conflicting viewpoints on issues, events, and people under study" (Merryfield, 1998, p. 352). As such, it is important to develop research with

teachers who are actually bringing multiple perspectives to their students in order to ascertain why and how they are able to teach in this manner.

In another study with teachers, Makler (1994) looked at social studies teachers who provided multiple perspectives with an emphasis on social justice projects. The research participants included eighteen middle and high school social studies teachers. Makler (1994) sought to determine “how social studies teachers conceptualize justice and whether justice is included deliberately in their lessons” (p. 251). Data included teacher interviews, classroom observations, and student interviews. She concluded that teachers feel they contribute to teaching about social justice in two ways: the topics and materials chosen and covered and their own interactions with their students.

While many research articles describe teachers who are presenting some form of multiple perspectives within their classrooms, few actually assist teachers in making a plan to teach in this manner. Warren (2006), on the other hand, described varying types of resources teachers may utilize when teaching about multiple perspectives with Native American history. Lindquist (1997) recalled how historical fiction works well when presenting multiple perspectives to social studies students. Likewise, Burstein and Hutton (2005) described how teachers should go about finding materials to utilize in a social studies curriculum that includes multiple perspectives. First, teachers should increase their expertise on the subject matter by researching and finding as many primary and secondary resources as possible. With these resources, teachers should then use the varying content to develop appropriate pedagogy for the intended grade level and learning objectives. Burstein and Hutton then proposed that teachers should gather and

analyze as many varying accounts of historical events through the use of children's literature. The last step in developing curriculum that includes multiple perspectives is to create activities that best capture students' use of creative thinking skills. With these strategies, teachers have a plan to carry out when teaching social studies content with multiple perspectives.

### **Chapter Overview**

As described, there is a great deal of research within the social studies profession that pertains to multiple perspectives, or issues closely related to multiple perspectives. Researchers have studied students, pre-service teachers, and practicing teachers in an effort to understand how and why multiple perspectives are important to the social studies field. Each study described within this literature review adds to the notions contemplated in the design of this research study. However, I believe that by asking teachers about their perspectives of U.S. History as a space of interruption, as well as how they articulate their decision-making within this space, it adds a new dimension to the field of social studies research.

No matter the type of research participant or focus of the research study, multiple perspectives within social studies classrooms is a pertinent topic to address. Crocco (1997) stated, "While the last two decades have witnessed a profound shift away from this elitist representation of the past at the university level, again my experiences suggest that the impact at the secondary level has been more limited" (p. 32).

While I agree that the impact of a shift in representation has been limited at the secondary level, I also believe there are many teachers who are quietly going against the norm to teach in more inclusive ways. It is from these particular types of teachers, we have a great deal to learn.

Hahn added, “it is time to build on the cumulative quantitative data from surveys, correlational studies, and curricular evaluations with richer, deeper qualitative descriptions of classroom interaction, students’ perceptions, and teachers’ thinking” (1991, p. 478). This call for research provides an impetus for this study, which includes rich qualitative descriptions of teachers’ thinking. Therefore, this study fulfills a need in the social studies field by addressing U.S. History classroom teachers who teach for and about multiple perspectives.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### Qualitative Framework

As discussed earlier, because of my background in social studies education, I developed this collective case study (Stake, 1995; 2000) to seek answers to the following two questions:

- a) What are the perspectives of U.S. History teachers regarding the social studies classroom as a space of interruption and teaching differently?
- b) How do these teachers articulate their decision-making within this space?

In order to answer these questions, it became apparent that a qualitative framework is an appropriate research tool in order to facilitate conversations with secondary U.S. History teachers. These teachers can offer in-depth and insightful information about why and how they bring multiple perspectives to their students, in addition to reactions they receive from school and community members.

According to Patton, “In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument” of data collection (2002, p. 14). As such, I, the researcher, was the instrument of data collection in this study. Data emerged as I employed a collective case study approach (Stake, 2000, p. 437) to examine the perspectives of five purposefully selected secondary U.S. History teachers. By utilizing a case-study approach, I employed several methods including interviews, document analysis, and researcher journaling.

Denzin and Lincoln teach us, “qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (2000, p. 3). By interviewing teachers and studying the documents offered by them, this research study sought to share, analyze, and interpret their perspectives and ideas about their own classroom experiences. In keeping with that notion of qualitative research, the next chapter will include participants’ words and ideas as they relate to the two research questions re-stated above.

### **Paradigmatic Framework**

The way in which I view the world determined how I went about designing this study: finding participants, collecting the data, and analyzing participants’ words and ideas. Drawing upon the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), Mertens (1998) describes questions to ask in order to assist in defining one’s paradigm. After much reflection and study, I believe I have designed and carried out a study that is aligned with my beliefs concerning research in education.

Epistemologically, I believe what we know and how we know it are all socially constructed; therefore, the teachers and I worked together to collect the necessary data that was used to share with others about the possibilities associated with a different type of history curriculum within the social studies. These connections between teachers’ stories emerged via the methodological tools employed in this collective case study analysis (Mertens, 1998, p. 6).

This interpretivist study is based upon my understandings of the participants' perceptions of their pedagogy within the U.S. History classroom. While I strive to develop an interpretivist understanding, I also desire this to be "research that challenges"; rather than research that accepts the status quo. I seek to use this research to reveal possibilities that are in contrast to the traditional notions of K-12 history education (Crotty, 1998, p. 113).

## **The Research Design**

### ***Participants***

Participants for the study included five secondary U.S. History teachers from public schools districts, both urban and suburban, within the state of Texas. Specifically, the participants all teach within the Austin or Houston areas. Initially, I collected a list of names that included over one hundred secondary social studies teachers. From there, I narrowed the pool to a list of ten potential participants based upon a number of issues, including if they taught U.S. History.

All participants were initially interviewed in order to determine two issues: did they teach with multiple perspectives and were they willing to participate in the research study. The initial interview was fifteen minutes in length, on average, and consisted of a list of three quotes that I asked each participant to read and respond to (See Appendix C). After each initial interview, I was able to determine if the participants would become one of the final five participants. The final pool of five participants participated in a lengthy

interview concerning why and how they teach for/about multiple perspectives (see Appendix D).

This process lasted two semesters and culminated with five remarkable U.S. History teachers who teach for/about multiple perspectives concerning race, class, gender, and religion. This collective case study has been written with rich detail to include the participants' rationale, successes, and failures in teaching in a manner that includes multiple perspectives within the history curriculum. A brief explanation of how each participant became part of the study will follow in this chapter, with a more in-depth profile of each participant to follow in Chapter 4.

#### *Nomination Process*

The five secondary U.S. History teachers who participated in this study came to do so in a variety of ways. From the onset, I had a list of secondary social studies teachers in the Austin and surrounding area. From that list, I noted teachers I had worked with through the PDS (Professional Development Sequence) at The University of Texas, while supervising student interns and apprentice teachers within the social studies. In addition, I sought nominations from a variety of colleagues, including professors and fellow graduate students. In each instance, I asked colleagues to identify secondary U.S. History teachers who teach for and about multiple perspectives. From that point, additional participants for this study were determined via snowball sampling, in which the researcher inquired with other social studies educators to recommend history teachers with whom they have had contact (Patton, 2002). In addition, one particular participant

was added to the study after I attended the annual conference of the Texas Council for the Social Studies.

Based upon the recommendations of colleagues, as well as my past experiences with some teachers through the PDS, ten potential participants were pre-interviewed to determine if they believe they address critical issues (race, class, culture, religion, etc.) and/or multiple perspectives within the curriculum. After contacting and meeting many recommended teachers, I narrowed the study to the remaining five participants. At that time, data was collected through a series of three different encounters: the initial interview, the study interview, and member-checking, which took place via email and/or postal mail.

### *Settings*

All initial interviews and study interviews took place during the 2005-2006 school year. Each interview took place at a pre-determined time set by the participants, including Saturdays and after school, during the weekdays.

The initial interviews were on average, fifteen minutes in duration. These interviews were scheduled to simply determine if the potential participants met the requirements for the study, and to determine if they were interested in further participation in the study. The later study interview was on average, two hours in duration and took place in venues that were all quiet places to ensure sound quality for later transcription, and included public libraries and university classrooms. Subsequent

member-checking was accomplished through the use of postal mail and/or email communications with participants.

### *Interviews*

“The purpose of qualitative interviewing is to capture how those being interviewed view their world, to learn their terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experiences” (Patton, 2002, p. 348). Through the use of interviews, I sought to explore each participant’s understanding and perceptions of their practice with regards to presenting multiple narratives within the history classroom. This collective case-study is the result of a three-step interview process: an initial interview, a two hour, face-to-face interview, and follow-up questions for clarification via mail and/or email for member-checking.

For the initial interview, I presented potential participants with a list of three quotes from prominent researchers in the field of social studies education (See Appendix C). These quotes were recorded during a presentation at the 2005 annual conference for the American Educational Research Association.

*Many students embrace the ‘easy’ story – a Disney version – rather than the complicated versions. How might a different approach...prepare students to focus on big issues that continue throughout time such as race, gender, dissent/compromise, etc.? (Linda Levstik)*

*Teachers should teach about/with ‘critical perspectives that do not explore WHAT is ‘true’, but WHY and HOW something becomes known as ‘true’...a story of multiplicities’. (Avner Segall)*

*Not a new idea, but rare and risky. (Terrie Epstein)*

Each potential participant was asked to read and respond to these quotes. Based upon the discussions that followed, I was able to gain an understanding of their perceptions of what and how they present multiple perspectives within their own classrooms. While potential participants signed a consent form for the initial interview, these discussions were not tape recorded due to time constraints. Instead, I followed each interview with copious notes in the researcher journal.

Once the final selection of five research participants was chosen, I set up the lengthy interview based upon the participants’ schedules. The study interviews were on average, two hours in length, and each interview was recorded with a traditional tape recorder and boundary microphone to ensure sound quality for later transcription.

The interviews were both structured and unstructured (Fontana & Frey, 2000). During the beginning of each interview, structured questions generated from an interview protocol were asked of each participant (See Appendix D). Based upon the answers and subsequent discussion, more open-ended questions emerged that yielded “in-depth responses about people’s experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge” (Patton, 2002, p. 4).

According to Glesne, “Your greatest challenge is to create questions that your respondents find valuable to consider, and questions whose answers provide you with pictures of the unseen, expand your understanding, offer insight, and upset any well-entrenched ignorance” (1999; p. 75). As such, I sought to keep the attributes of a “good interviewer” in mind (Glesne, 1999, pp. 82-88).

### *Data Sources*

According to Glesne, “Documents corroborate your observations and interviews and thus make your findings more trustworthy” (1999, p. 58). For this study, documents included lesson plans, textbooks, literature, various curricular materials, and the researcher’s journal. These documents added to the study’s depth in ways that supported, expanded, and at times, even contradicted the data collected in the interviews. As such, these documents created another springboard for follow-up questions and added layers to the emergent coding and analysis. “...documents prove valuable not only because of what can be learned directly from them but also as stimulus for [other] paths of inquiry” (Patton, 2002, p. 294).

### *Lesson Plans*

Based upon my experiences, every teacher’s lesson plans are different. Therefore, when appropriate, or when I wanted to follow-up about a portion of an interview, I asked participants to share lesson plans. These lesson plans varied in detail; however, from each, I gained an understanding of how the participants plan for teaching in a secondary

U.S. History classroom. In addition, I was able to see the literature, materials, prepared questions, and modes of assessment each planned to utilize when teaching with activities that prompted discussions of multiple perspectives. All lesson plans that were requested of participants were done so during the member-checking phase of the research project.

### *Teacher Materials*

In addition to lesson plans, additional materials were requested of certain participants to provide insights into what and how various topics are included in their history classroom. These materials included worksheets, project assignments, tests, rubrics, and/or cooperative group activities. I was completely open to all types of teacher-made materials the participants were willing share, especially those relevant to the study.

Requests for these additional materials were made during the member-checking phase of the research study. Also included were children's literature, curricular materials, and in-depth descriptions of classroom events that were mentioned by participants during the study interviews.

### *Researcher's Journal*

In accordance with Glesne (1999), I strive to make my field notes descriptive, rather than judgmental about the observations I made concerning the participants. My notes are full of description, observations, and questions that all enabled me to return to the journal and visualize the participants during the analysis of the data.

Included within the researcher journal are analytic notes (Glesne, 1999, p. 53) that were recorded after each participant interview, both initial interview and study interview. These notes enabled me to record my personal reflections, questions, impressions, and ideas concerning each participant.

### ***Chronology***

During the initial phase of this research study, I was introduced to an organization by the name of Facing History and Ourselves, headquartered in New York City. This group publishes curricular materials for teachers to utilize while teaching about historical events in U.S. History. Their curriculum is presented from multiple perspectives, and I decided it was important to attend one of their seminars to connect with teachers who were *actually* teaching in this manner. Therefore, during the summer of 2004, I journeyed to a one-week seminar at Bard College in Upstate New York that was attended by staff members from Facing History and Ourselves. The week was rewarding both professionally and personally since I was able to meet the most amazing teachers, mostly from New York and Westchester County Public School Systems.

I decided these teachers epitomized the type of social studies teachers I needed to find to participate in this research study. They were knowledgeable about historical and current events, and most of all, open to the discovery of new findings about both historical and contemporary occurrences throughout the world.

During the fall of 2004, I decided that if I could find one possible participant in the area – one social studies teacher who taught with multiple perspectives – then I could

definitely make “a go” out of the research study. Therefore, I inquired with a middle school English teacher in Austin who appeared to have taught in this manner. He was a cooperating teacher of a student teacher I supervised during the PDS at The University of Texas. Since he appeared to teach with multiple perspectives in his English classes, I decided he might know a social studies teacher who also taught in the same manner. He recommended a fellow teacher who taught 8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History, and I visited with him in order to design my future research questions and study methodology. (Research Journal, p. 6)

From that point, I was able to write the proposal, which was defended and approved during the spring of 2005. Data collection and member-checking took place during the 2005-2006 school year, with data coding, analysis, and writing during the spring, summer, and fall of 2006.

### **Participant Introductions**

Each of the five participants is a dynamic educator who strives to bring multiple perspectives to her/his students. Each participant was inspired in different ways, and each participant approaches her/his pedagogy in a different manner. Therefore, it was of the utmost importance to sit with each of them during the lengthy interview and allow each the opportunity to share their successes, failures, and expertise in teaching U.S. History.

While there is a full profile of each participant in Chapter 4, it is beneficial to introduce each participant’s entrance into the research study at this time.

*“Stephanie”*

Since I was so motivated by the organization, Facing History and Ourselves, I decided its educational director would be the best place to begin my search for secondary U.S. History teachers in Texas who might teach with multiple perspectives. The educational director, who graduated from The University of Texas at Austin, was able to find an old file with several Austin teachers’ names from a professional development she conducted while still living in the area. I ‘Googled’ and searched local and nearby school directories for each of the names, and was able to find one of the teachers still teaching at an area suburban middle school. After several email exchanges, “Stephanie” agreed to meet with me concerning this study.

Upon first meeting Stephanie, I heard her distinctive French-Cajun accent, which surprised me since she had a Hispanic surname, which I soon learned was her married name (Researcher Journal, p. 8). Stephanie grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and completed her schooling at Louisiana State University. Although she student taught in history, she ended up teaching special education for two years in Baton Rouge and for four years in Cedar Park, Texas. After those six years, she was able to begin teaching 8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History at a suburban middle school near Austin, Texas, where she just completed her 35<sup>th</sup> year of teaching.

*“Lisa”*

In October of 2005, I attended the Texas Council for the Social Studies annual conference in Galveston, Texas. At the conference, one particular session caught my eye,

“Using Picture Books in the Secondary Classroom”. The participants included a high school U.S. History teacher from an urban school district in the Houston area, as well as the district social studies coordinator.

The session was particularly interesting to me because I had always taught secondary social studies with picture books as an introductory tool to historical people, places, and events. Throughout the session, “Lisa” received positive feedback from the audience, who was there to learn and find new ideas for their own secondary classrooms. She reacted to this positive feedback by telling the audience that she had “been laughed at” for these same ideas presented at a professional development session for her school district. This statement, along with her teaching ideas, prompted me to approach her about participating in this research study. She welcomed the idea, which soon prompted a trip to the Houston area to interview Lisa for the study. (Researcher Journal, p. 13)

Lisa, a white female who grew up in the Houston area, graduated from a high school in the same district as the one in which she is currently a teacher. I knew Lisa was young, but I was surprised to learn that this was only her third year of teaching, all of which have been U.S. History at the high school level.

### ***“Zach”***

“Zach’s” participation in the study came as an accident since another male participant pulled out of the research study due to family commitments. Zach’s name was on a long list of Austin area social studies educators; however, since I had never worked in his high school, I had never had the opportunity to meet him. When the other

participant pulled out from the study, I phoned Zach's high school office to verify if he taught U.S. History or one of the other social studies. Luckily, he did teach U.S. History, so I phoned his classroom directly to see if he might be interested in meeting with me for a pre-interview. I gave him the condensed description of my research study, and he agreed to meet with me about the research study. (Researcher Journal, p. 18)

Zach describes himself as Hispanic, and he attended middle and high schools in Harlingen, Texas. During his schooling, he became involved in academic decathlons and other extracurricular events, including band. He completed his education and teacher certification at The University of Texas at Austin, graduating and procuring a secondary social studies position in 1997. He has been at the same urban high school ever since, teaching World Geography for two years, World History for five years, and U.S. History for the last three years.

### ***“Linda”***

From the moment I entered “Linda’s” classroom during the 2002-2003 school year, I knew she was an excellent teacher. Her walls were covered with two types of items: World Geography facts, figures, and maps and a multitude of military photographs. At first glance, I thought the photographs were all of past students, currently serving in the military; however, upon a second look, I realized that several of the photos were larger than the rest, and two were from distinctly different generations when compared to the modern, color photographs of recent men and women serving in the U.S. Military. After visiting her classroom on several occasions to observe student

interns, I learned that she was the daughter of an Army veteran, the wife of a Navy veteran, and the mother of 5 Marines. Those photographs represented her father, husband, sons, and former students who were all prominently displayed in her social studies classroom. (Researcher Journal, p. 23)

I knew Linda brought multiple perspectives to her students, along with a military perspective - unlike most people. I knew that, at one time, she had been an 8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History teacher, and I learned that she had recently transferred from World Geography to U.S. History at her large, urban high school. With that information in mind, I contacted Linda about participating in the study. During our initial meeting, I also learned that she just embarked upon a new level of ‘Marine Mom’, as her youngest two sons are now both stationed in Iraq.

### *“Lucy”*

Throughout the year that I prepared for this research study and looked for participants, I continually thought about “Lucy”. Similarly to Linda, I met Lucy during the 2002-2003 school year while supervising secondary social studies interns and apprentice teachers. The thing that intrigued me the most about Lucy was her urban high school classroom. Throughout the room, she had pop culture items, including movie posters, period clothing, bumper stickers, and memorabilia from her worldly travels. Lucy definitely taught with multiple perspectives and was perfect for the study; however, she taught World Geography rather than U.S. History. For this study, I was looking specifically at U.S. History teachers.

After an exhaustive search for participants, I expressed my frustrations to a fellow graduate student who currently supervises secondary social studies interns and apprentice teachers. She suggested that I contact Lucy who recently transferred to U.S. History. Although she was in the middle of preparing for her National Board Certification, she agreed to meet with me and participate in the research study. (Researcher Journal, p. 28)

Lucy, a white female who grew up in a small East Texas town 70 miles south of Houston, is in her seventeenth year of teaching, thirteen of which have been in the social studies, including U.S. History, World Geography, World History, Economics, and Government.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to make sense of the data collected throughout the study, I routinely visited the data to look for emerging themes brought on by connections among the interviews and documents (Patton, 2002). "...making meaning is always an 'ongoing accomplishment'. 'The conclusion, therefore, is that all objects are made and not found and that they are made by the interpretive strategies we set in motion'" (Fish, 1990, p. 191; quoted in Crotty, 1998, p. 47). By coding, "a progressive process of sorting and defining...collected data" (Glesne, 1999, p. 135), I arranged the data into a meaningful sequence as connections were made between each of the participants.

The data, consisting of interviews, documents, and the researcher's journal were pulled together to form the collective case study narratives (Patton, 2002). From these

narratives, I employed cross-case analysis, which “lead to categories, themes, or typologies that conceptualize that data from all the cases...” (Merriam, 1998, p. 195).

### **Ethics and Validity**

According to Glesne (1999), “Feminist researchers ask questions of the role power and relationship play not only at a societal level, but also at the level between researcher and researched...and how those relationships shape the story being told” (p. 13). As such, I shared my own stories of (not) teaching for/about multiple perspectives with the participants, including the successful and unsuccessful accounts.

In addition, I worked to meet the eight verification procedures outlined by Creswell (1998, p. 201-203; quoted in Glesne, 1999, p. 32)):

- Prolonged engagement: I conducted interviews and collected artifacts throughout the 2005-2006 school year.
- Triangulation: For this study, the data was triangulated through interviews, documents, and the researcher journal.
- Peer review and debriefing: Throughout the process, a writing group of fellow graduate students, as well as the chair of my committee critiqued my writing.
- Negative case analysis: I was always open to find the ‘unexpected’ or data that interrupted my previously held notions.

- Clarification of researcher bias: As a proponent of multiple perspectives within the social studies, I must bring my biases to the ‘table’ both prior to and during the entire research process.
- Member checking: After I transcribed each interview, I sent the transcript to each participant for verification.
- Rich, thick description: As this is a collective case study (Stake, 1995), I attempted to describe each participant in detail in order for the reader to gain a better sense of how and why they do what they do in the classroom.
- External audit: Throughout the process, my writing group colleagues and committee chair were able to audit the research data and findings, if desired.

Throughout this study, I was open about my “willingness to consider how who [I am] affects what [I am] able to observe, hear, and understand in the field and as an observer and analyst” (Patton, 2002, p. 299).

### ***Data Triangulation***

The collection of data via a variety of methods “contributes to the trustworthiness of the data” (Glesne, 1999, p. 31). In addition, the multiple methods (interviews, data collection, and researcher journal) served to ensure triangulation of the data (Glesne, 1999, p. 31) “as the strengths of one approach can compensate for the weaknesses of another approach” (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, p. 79-111; quoted in Patton, 2002, p. 306).

### ***Member-Checking & Auditing***

Audiotapes of interviews were transcribed and audited by a colleague. Once the transcripts were determined to be correct, I sent copies of each transcript to the participant. I asked them to member-check (Patton, 2002) the transcripts to ensure their original intentions were provided. Data from these transcripts were used only upon the approval of the participants. After verification from the participants, data was then coded and interpreted based upon the researcher's own understandings and interpretations.

### ***Emic/Etic Status***

The emic/etic, or insider/outsider, paradox is always a little tricky for researchers. As a researcher, "The challenge is to combine participation and observation so as to become capable of understanding the setting as an insider while describing it to and for outsiders" (Patton, 2002, p. 268). On the one hand, I am a former social studies educator who didn't always succeed in teaching for/about multiple perspectives. On the other hand, I am a university researcher interested in the possibility of how the participants perceive how and why teaching with multiple perspectives works in her/his own classroom. I am part of the education system, yet I am no longer a K-12 social studies educator.

### ***Trustworthiness of Data***

Prolonged engagement, including three encounters with each of the three research participants increased the trustworthiness of the data that emerged from the study

(Glesne, 1999; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In addition, “Continual alertness to [my] own biases, [my] own subjectivity, also assists in producing more trustworthy interpretations” (Glesne, 1999, p. 151).

### **Limits of the Study**

As with any type of research, this study, too, has its limitations. To begin, I must attend to what Visweswaran (1994) describes as the “crisis of representation”. As a researcher, I am simply translating the participants’ stories; each case study is my attempt to represent the participants. The participants’ stories are what give life to the research so that researchers and readers may learn and extend their own understanding of how to advance the field. Participants’ stories are rich data (Carter, 1993).

However, when we examine the layers of input brought to these stories by the participants, the researcher, and the reader, we realize I, as researcher and writer, have not captured the ‘true’ representation of anyone. The reader is simply interpreting their own version of the researcher’s version of the participants’ versions of themselves.

The portrayal and analyses of the data is presented through my lens. While the layers upon layers of this study, like any other study, are limiting, the acknowledgement of these layers is purposeful and necessary to contribute to additional and deeper understandings.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND THEMES

### Introduction

Each of the five participants is a social studies educator with a great deal of insight to share concerning more inclusive ways of teaching U.S. History. Prior to me inquiring about this study, I do not believe that each of these individuals would have necessarily described her/his classroom by saying, “I teach with multiple perspectives.” Instead, I believe teaching with multiple perspectives is simply something that each incorporated into her/his teaching naturally, which has now been identified and highlighted through this study.

When I approached each of these participants with the question, “Do you believe you teach with multiple perspectives with regards to race, class, gender, religion, etc.?” each replied in the affirmative, but had never labeled their pedagogy in that manner. For the most part, each participant felt the manner in which they approached U.S. History was conducive to students’ interest-levels and abilities to relate to the subject matter.

While each participant was briefly introduced in the previous chapter, a more in-depth profile of each secondary U.S. History teacher precedes the data and analysis that emerged from the research study. In all, three contacts were made with each participant: the initial interview, the lengthy interview, and the member-checking. From each of these contacts, I was able to gain a wealth of information that suggests why and how these teachers bring multiple perspectives to their classrooms.

After each recorded interview, transcripts were created and member-checked to ensure validity of each participant's words and representation. From these transcripts, data was coded according to similar themes that emerged amongst the five participants. While each individual approaches multiple perspectives differently, and each participant gave differing reasons behind her/his pedagogy, a collection of themes began to emerge that supports each of the research questions. As such, each of the six themes will be further explained and supported by data, following the participant profiles.

## **Participant Profiles**

### ***“Stephanie”***

Upon first meeting Stephanie, I heard her distinctive French-Cajun accent, which surprised me since she had a Hispanic surname, which I soon learned was her married name (Researcher Journal, p. 8). Stephanie grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and completed her schooling at Louisiana State University. Although she student taught in history, she ended up teaching special education for two years in Baton Rouge and for four years in Cedar Park, Texas. After those six years, she was able to begin teaching 8<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History at a suburban middle school near Austin, Texas, where she just completed her 35<sup>th</sup> year of teaching. When I asked Stephanie how the teaching of history has changed throughout the years, she replied,

I think more and more hands-on, more writing, drawing, not just, you know, tests and quizzes for evaluation. I think how I present the materials has certainly

changed. I've gotten a lot more freedom to do that...pulling in different sources, using different types of media to present materials to the kids, getting the kids more involved, letting them act out a slide or transparency, holding new conferences. I think that has changed because, you know...way, way back, you read the book, you did some worksheets... (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 9)

Currently, she is the Department Head for her campus and the Middle School Teacher of the Year, awarded by the Texas Council for the Social Studies (TxCSS). Not only is Stephanie very involved in her local chapter of the TxCSS, she is also involved with Law Related Education (LRE), an organization that promotes civics education financed through the State Bar of Texas. She attends LRE workshops, as well as writes lesson plans for them.

I found Stephanie quite remarkable in that throughout her career she had taken the time to seek out a great number of professional development opportunities not only through TxCSS and LRE, but also through the National Endowment for the Humanities, Facing History and Ourselves, as well as several other organizations. (Researcher Journal, p. 9)

During our conversation, she shared how she incorporates multiple perspectives within her classroom discussions,

I want to give the kids a love of history and to see...that their view of history does matter. I don't want it to be dry and sterile so that they can't appreciate it...I want to create thinkers. I want them to be able to evaluate events and times and be able

to make their own decisions...and we'll never just have one point of view in my classroom...because I want them to make the decision. I don't want them to make a decision based on what mommy and daddy said or what their best friend said. (I want them to ask) what does it mean to you? (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, pp. 4-5).

Stephanie shared how her love of history emerged from her family's love of history. She fondly remembered childhood family trips throughout the United States in which history was a focus. In addition, her southern upbringing entailed stories of the Civil War passed down from one generation to another via her grandmother.

During the interview, Stephanie shared a funny story about an uncle who was mentioned in one of her college history textbooks covering Louisiana history. This particular uncle ran for election in the governor's race on the "Red Beans and Rice" ticket as a fund-raiser for the Audubon Zoo in New Orleans. While he did not win the election, he did manage to raise enough money for the zoo to purchase a gorilla (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 3).

Stories such as this one give history "meaning". For Stephanie, her uncle's escapades being mentioned in her collegiate textbook were not only amusing, but were also an avenue to making history more meaningful to her. Stephanie's years of experience teaching U.S. History are pertinent to this research and serve as an example of the successes a teacher may experience when she/he incorporates multiple perspectives based upon a wide range of curricular materials into the classroom.

*“Lisa”*

Lisa, a white female who grew up in the Houston area, graduated from a high school in the same district as the one in which she is currently a teacher. Upon first meeting Lisa, it was obvious that she was a young teacher, but I was surprised to learn that this was only her third year of teaching, all of which have been in U.S. History at the high school level. Since we first met during a TxCSS (Texas Council for the Social Studies) conference session at which she was a presenter, I wrongly assumed she had been teaching for more than three years (Researcher Journal, p. 13). When asked to describe her educational philosophy, she replied,

I know that I really love my kids and I want my kids to do well. I don't want them just to pass TAKS [Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills], although that is a measure of success, I understand that, but I want them to be good citizens and to connect with history. I want them to feel like they were there, so I use a lot of multiple perspectives. I do lots and lots of different kinds of activities in my classroom. My philosophy of education is: just to do what works to make my kids successful, and that's not the same in every class... (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 7)

Lisa completed her studies and teacher certification at The University of Houston-Downtown Campus, with a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies and a minor in Education. However, she has an equal number of education hours and history/political science hours, which Lisa attributes to her passion for history and social studies content. In fact, she explained that her strong content background enabled her to present multiple perspectives

and viewpoints with confidence. Lisa felt that while pedagogical methods are important, they are actually useless without strong content knowledge.

I think a content background is probably more important because when...every time a new teacher comes here, even though I am a pretty new teacher myself, the principal always says (to the new teacher), 'You're going to do what she does.' And when I find myself trying to explain something, I have to really go back and teach them the content, which is kind of surprising... (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 3)

Lisa added that while she considered content background to be more important than pedagogical skills, the end result of a lesson was still very dependent upon the personality of a teacher. She described how she has taught lessons before that worked really well for her, but did not work so well for another "phenomenal teacher" down the hallway, and visa versa. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 7)

In addition to teaching with multiple perspectives, Lisa also utilizes many hands-on activities from various organizations, including History Alive and Law-Related Education. Another interesting aspect about Lisa is that she works very closely with the district secondary social studies specialist, who just happens to be her former teacher, and someone who inspired her to teach with multiple perspectives. When I asked about the impetus for teaching in a hands-on manner, she replied,

I taught swimming lessons and gymnastics, and I had sort of paid my way through college doing that, and I have a lot of experience with...that's active

teaching...swimming lessons, active teaching, so I think that's the way I learned how to be a teacher. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 16)

Lisa's connection between actively teaching swimming and gymnastics and actively teaching U.S. History is insightful. Teaching both swimming and gymnastics requires a teacher to facilitate students in "doing" rather than passively learning. For Lisa, teaching U.S. History is very similar. She shared that she could not simply sit at her desk all day while her students read from a textbook. Instead, she and her students are up and around the room, actively involved in activities that require talking, moving, and working.

When asked what she wanted her students to take away from her U.S. History course, she replied, "A personal connection to history....I just want them to know how they are – who they are – and I think that's what history teaches us. All the lessons I love are connected to that in lots of ways" (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 27).

### ***"Zach"***

Zach's interview took place on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin as his high school debate students moved from one event to another at a district UIL meet. His rapport with his students was obvious as they checked in with him before moving on to another task. While these students were not necessarily his U.S. History students, it did give an indication of the professional, yet personal connection he appeared to have with his students. (Researcher Journal, p. 19)

Zach self-describes himself as Hispanic. Originally from Harlingen, Texas, Zach credits his experiences in academic decathlons and other extracurricular events, including band as what inspired him to attend college. He completed his education and teacher certification at The University of Texas at Austin, graduating and procuring a secondary social studies position in 1997. He has been at the same urban high school ever since, teaching World Geography for two years, World History for five years, and U.S. History for the last three years. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, pp. 2-3) The high school is structured with both neighborhood students and students from all over the city, who come to attend the Liberal Arts and Science Academy, which is a magnet program. As such, Zach teaches Advanced Placement (AP) courses for both the high school and magnet programs. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 5) Zach believes his connection to the magnet program provided an impetus for his teaching with multiple perspectives.

...I was fortunate in my first two years in teaching World Geography...to be in the magnet program...and this is before the liberal arts kids came over, so it was only science and math kids. So, you had these science and math kids who, and this is 20/20 perspective – after the fact – for me, who have always been taught to question...to prove it. How does this all fit in? And so, couple that with a new teacher that easily gets off track, and so, it wasn't so much that I taught in multiple perspectives from the beginning, but my students took me down that road in the beginning, and not knowing any better, I went ahead and answered questions, and they enjoyed it because they were getting me off topic, but I enjoyed it...I like to have these discussions. I wanted these kids to be

informed...They were constantly questioning and asking and wanting to argue, and so, it kind of came out like that. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, pp. 9-10)

According to Zach, the teaching profession was his first choice. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 1). However, when Zach began his university schooling, he originally majored in psychology, which actually falls under the social studies composite TExES (Texas Examinations of Educator Standards) exam. He explained that he enjoyed the “idea of questioning”, which probably also contributes to his inclusion of multiple perspectives in his classroom (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 14). When I asked Zach what it meant to teach with multiple perspectives, he replied by giving an example of an occurrence in his classroom.

It’s more than just saying, ‘Okay, here’s what happened.’...immigrants coming over...we could sit here and just say, ‘A bunch of immigrants came over, and their life was better’, but really was it? ...what did they have to struggle with to get here? What was the process like once they got here? We would just let them in? And so, it’s...yes, immigration happened, but let’s look at it from the eyes of people that went through it...and that’s the whole primary source...reading documents...diaries. To me, it’s more...when someone says ‘multiple perspectives’ it means more than just me telling you what happened...it’s more than just a perspective of someone looking back...but from the perspectives of the people who were there as they saw it in contemporary times.” (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 4)

Zach's insistence that his students "question everything" (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 11) is at the core of what it means to teach with multiple perspectives. This philosophy probably stems from Zach's participation as both a student and teacher in debate. Even so, the skills required in an excellent debater also make for an excellent historian, who must question every source that comes before them.

In closing, it is also important to add something that Zach shared during the interview about being a minority and a male in the teaching profession.

I'm Hispanic so I can do this...I sit there and go, 'Eduardo stop being a lazy Mexican', but I can do that because....there are certain things as a male teacher that I can get away with that a female teacher couldn't, so there are advantages to being a minority [and] to being a male in the teaching profession (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 17).

From Zach's descriptions of his classroom interactions, he has established a rapport among his students that is respectful and focused on schooling. He described his students seeking his classroom as a space to discuss controversial subjects since many other teachers would not approach uncomfortable subjects. He credits that position to two things, his gender and his minority status.

Since the other four participants in this study, who happen to be female, also approach controversial topics with their students, I question if his male status is truly what enables him to have conversations such as the one above (Researcher Journal, p. 22). However, he did describe his classroom debates of controversial topics with greater confidence than did the female participants. Even so, there is definitely something to

ponder concerning what enables Zach to confidently approach controversial subject matter with honesty and a willingness to “lay it all out on the table” for students to consider. That, no matter where it derives, is interesting to consider when it comes to how and why U.S. History teach with multiple perspectives.

***“Linda”***

Linda describes herself as Hispanic and the mother of eight children, five sons and three daughters, ranging in age from 33 to 18. She lived in both San Marcos and Austin during her childhood and teenage years. Linda has been a teacher for thirty-five years, seventeen of which have been at the same urban high school in which she currently teaches. In those thirty-five years, she has taught World Geography for nineteen years and U.S. History for sixteen years at both the middle and high school levels. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, pp. 1-2). When I asked Linda about her decision to enter the teaching profession, she credited two opportunities she had in high school, teaching catechism and becoming a babysitter/mentor/teacher to two Spanish-speaking young girls who lived next door to her Austin, Texas home.

I don't know why I thought I could be a teacher...I had never had a Hispanic teacher in the twelve years that I was in public school...I'd see the Anglo kid warm up to their teacher and they'd be friends...and I would see that relationship and go, 'Gosh, that's so neat.' I don't know where I got the idea that maybe I can be a teacher and I can be like that teacher to some of the Hispanic kids...so they could have somebody that they could identify with because I never had that

growing up. I never had a Hispanic teacher. I had good teachers that influenced me academically, but I never had one that I could say, ‘She was my really good friend’...and so I felt like, ‘why not?’...maybe I could be that friend to some of the Hispanic kids. They could identify with me...so I was going to go out and save my people. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 6).

Linda completed her university education and teacher certification at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas, and after thirty-five years in the classroom, she can still say that she thoroughly enjoys the teaching profession. Throughout the years, she has had many opportunities to accomplish her goal of mentoring young Hispanic students, including her current sponsorship of the Young Latino Leaders Organization at her high school (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 26).

When our conversation moved to her inclusion of multiple perspectives in her classroom, she said, “As a teacher, it means that you have to have more than one view of everything...You have to be able to be diverse in viewpoints.” (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 9)

In order to be diverse in her viewpoints, Linda explained how she continually uses experiences in her own life and history as examples.

It’s [Linda’s life experiences] still very valid and still real. It may not be what they want us to cover, but it’s still covering the material. I guess because I am a minority in the classroom, I can associate with everybody, and I’m not uncomfortable using myself as an example, which makes it easy for the kids to understand things. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 19)

As an example, Linda described how she and her mother visited a pharmacy when she was a child because she was hungry for something to eat. Although her mother purchased a can of soup from the drug store, they were told to eat it in the back of the store rather than in the eating area. Linda described how her mother did not complain or question the drug store clerk. Instead, she followed instructions without disagreement (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 17).

You know, we've [the United States] had some rough chapters in our history, but my God, we've come a long way, and so, every opportunity I get or when there's a situation, I always bring it in.... 'You're lucky to live in this country and many of you have never felt any discrimination, but I have.' ....I'm still angry at the fact that I didn't know people were discriminating, and I lived in this little protective wall. My parents never dwelled on discrimination....I was never bitter, and so when I got to the age where I understood what was happening, I was like, 'Oh, my goodness. No one's ever going to take advantage of me or my kids ever again because I'm going to get an education where I can speak and I know I'll be speaking with authority because I know my history' (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 15).

She said the students connect to her life as she describes her own experiences simultaneously with historical events such as, her father changing his name in order to enter the Army; her first experience in public school when she did not speak English; accompanying her father to the voting poll to pay his Poll Tax; the 1960 Presidential election in which John F. Kennedy asked the famous question, "Ask not what your

country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country”. These events shaped Linda into the teacher and person she is today and add depth to her students’ classroom experiences.

In addition, these experiences are not something that are included in textbooks. Students can read about how people had to change their last names in order to find work during World War II; students can read about how certain people had to pay Poll Taxes in order to vote (and in order to keep Others from voting); students can read about the 1960 presidential election; however, without Linda’s personal stories, these historical events lack perspective.

Linda’s life experiences bring depth of meaning to her history lessons. This depth of meaning can be accomplished via stories such as those described by Linda and by including multiple resources that cover a multitude of perspectives concerning historical people, places, and events.

### ***“Lucy”***

Lucy, a white female who grew up in a small East Texas town 70 miles south of Houston, is in her seventeenth year of teaching, thirteen of which have been in the social studies, including U.S. History, World Geography, World History, Economics, and Government (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 1).

The social studies have always been of interest to Lucy; therefore, she entered Stephen F. Austin State University with the intention of majoring in archaeology. However, she ended up with a major in the Humanities, with the addition of a secondary

teaching certificate. Via the Humanities, Lucy was able to take many history courses, which prepared her for the content knowledge necessary for teaching with multiple perspectives (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, pp. 2-3).

Lucy described her student teaching experiences in an 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History classroom in which she was able to make curricular decisions concerning content and methodology. When I asked if her university supervisors encouraged multiple perspectives, she explained her experiences were very different from the experiences of her current student teachers, who come to her classroom from the university with resources and a desire to include more viewpoints within the curriculum. She said she remembers her student teaching experiences to include more of the ‘how to’ with regards to the profession – laminating, splicing filmstrips, copying with the mimeograph, etc. “...other perspectives weren’t really as relevant, and primary sources weren’t...they were around but not like they are now...bringing in multicultural and multiple perspectives” (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, pp. 11-12).

Nowadays, however, Lucy strives to bring in multiple perspectives and viewpoints by utilizing multiple resources.

I use videos, DVDs, clips off of universal streaming, photographs, newspaper articles, articles out of historical magazines, basically anything that I can lay my hands on....It takes time, and it’s begging, borrowing, and stealing.... It’s making connections with and networking with other teachers because nothing in education is original. (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 6)

Teaching in this type of manner was something that evolved, as described by Lucy. She discussed her first couple of years of teaching in which she relied heavily upon the textbook. As her teaching experiences increased, her resourcefulness in finding additional teaching materials also increased (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 10). In addition, Lucy credits a fellow teacher and mentor at her current campus for introducing her to a number of resources and techniques.

Lucy and this other teacher worked together to plan instruction throughout an entire school year. By co-creating curricular materials, the two were able to work collaboratively to bring their students a great number of additional resources, which provided multiple perspectives regarding historical events.

In addition, Lucy mentioned James Loewen's book, *Lies my teacher told me: Everything your American history textbook got wrong* as a great departure point for dispelling myths about U.S. History. "The James Loewen book and even Howard Zinn are not insulting. It's just another point of view about an historical event or person..." (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 15).

In closing, Lucy shared that by bringing multiple perspectives to her students, she realizes,

That I'm actually doing something right and that they're learning something, and I'm doing the right thing. I always have this doubt whether I'm contributing to society and when they have those 'aha' moments, then, yes, I'm contributing to society. I'm making a difference even though some days I don't feel like I'm making a difference. (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, pp. 5-6)

## **Data Analysis & Emergent Themes**

Throughout the months of data collection for this research study, several themes began to emerge from the participants' words and ideas. In accordance to Merriam (1998), data collection and analysis were simultaneous activities in which the emergent themes were fluid and changed with the addition of each participant to the study, enabling me, as researcher, to keep an open mind about the similarities and differences between each participant's perspectives and classroom practices. From these themes, a distinctive set of four findings began to emerge, which will be further discussed in Chapter 5. While the themes and findings are reciprocal in answering both research questions that prompted this study, two findings and supporting themes generally address the first research question, and the other two findings and supporting themes generally address the second research question.

Each of the three phases of data collection (initial interview, lengthy interview, and member-checking) provided further insight into why (Research Question #1) these teachers teach U.S. History with multiple perspectives and how (Research Question #2) these teachers teach U.S. History with multiple perspectives.

### ***Themes: Research Question #1***

The first question this research study sought to address is as follows: **What are the perspectives of U.S. History teachers regarding the social studies classroom as a space of interruption and teaching differently?**

With regards to this question, three themes emerged that address the participants' perspectives: the influence of participants' educational experiences; participants' love of subject matter; participants' commitment to challenging institutional and other forms of resistance. In the pages that follow, I will address each of these themes by utilizing the participants' words and ideas.

*Theme: The influence of participants' educational experiences*

While each theme emerged as the interview transcripts were analyzed and coded, one initial theme that was somewhat expected was the influence of participants' K-12 and university experiences. Research shows that teachers are highly influenced by their own educational experiences and disciplinary fields (Wilson and Wineburg, 1998), and these participants were no exception.

The data suggests that three of the five participants had experiences in high school that led them into the teaching profession, specifically the social studies field. Linda, for example, recalled several years of social studies classes in her high school experiences, including 9<sup>th</sup> grade world geography.

I just loved learning about the world because I was really sheltered. I didn't travel much. My parents couldn't afford to go...I'm originally from San Marcos, so we'd go to San Antonio and come to Austin. Those were the only two places I ever saw as a child...I didn't travel much. I didn't see much of the states, but geography in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade was like...ooh...there's more to see around the world and to see in the United States... (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 3)

Linda actually ended up teaching World Geography for sixteen years at an urban high school, where she currently teaches U.S. History. Linda continued with her high school social studies experiences in her 11<sup>th</sup> grade government class,

I learned about the government, and I thought, ‘Woah, so that’s how it works.’ It really opened my eyes to see how things functioned around me...and I wanted to know more of what was going on in the world and what were our rights, and even though I grew up when there was discrimination, I never felt discriminated against because my parents never made a big issue about it, you know, but then as I got older, I’m going, ‘Woah, gosh, they did that to us?’, and I wanted to know more. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, pp. 3-4)

Linda’s need “to know more” actually led her into taking many history courses throughout her university schooling. Research shows that once students discover history that is contrary to what they have previously learned, many want to know more (Bigelow, 1990; Epstein, 1997; Yeager and Doppen, 2001).

As part of the “shocking history”, Linda stated that although she grew up at a time when Hispanics were openly discriminated against, her parents sheltered her and “never made a big issue about it.” However, Linda described an incident from childhood that she did not connect with discrimination until years later. In the incident, her father had to go to New Braunfels, Texas (thirteen miles from her childhood home of San Marcos, Texas) for medical treatment. While he received treatment, Linda and her mother walked into the local pharmacy to purchase something to eat. While the sales clerk sold and heated a can of soup, he asked them to eat it in the back rather than the front of the

pharmacy. Linda related how her mother agreed and followed his directions, never indicating a problem with their treatment to Linda, who did not connect the incident to discrimination until years later. (Researcher Journal, p. 25)

According to Linda, taking history courses at the university level increased her depth of knowledge about discrimination in the United States.

And that's when I realized and then started to appreciate more with the courses that I took. I started to think, you know, and thinking back of incidences that happened to my mother and me, and I'm going, like, she never complained. She never said anything. She just went along with whatever, and you know, she never said anything that I was affected by it, so I grew up in this little bubble that everything was okay, you know, I didn't grow up bitter or anything like that or 'people are against me'...that kind of thing. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 8)

Similarly to the Filipino university students in Halagao's (2004) study, Linda's university experiences enabled her to "fill in the blanks" of what she did not previously know about her own history. For Linda, her university history courses offered a departure from the history courses she took during her K-12 schooling, where her history was "invisible" as described by Urietta (2004) and Howard (2004). In Urietta's (2004) research with educators who self-identified as Chicana/o "activists", he identified invisibility as one of three sources of "disconnection" to "American" citizenship. In addition, Howard (2004) also identified three themes from his research with a secondary social studies teacher, of which one was invisibility.

In Linda's case, however, the data suggests that this invisibility did not become apparent to her until she encountered history courses at the collegiate level. This difference between Linda's K-12 and university experiences is in agreement with Crocco's (1997) assertion that there are been a more limited shift towards presenting multiple perspectives at the K-12 level when compared to the university level.

According to Field and Singer (2006), pre-service teachers "are often troubled by the disjuncture between what they learned in school as children and what they are learning now" (p. 24). For some people, this disjuncture may be negative; however, for Linda, the data suggests that the disjuncture became empowering for her. She used the newly learned information as an empowering tool to become a teacher where she could share the history and contributions of Hispanic people. As shared by Evans (1988), whatever connections pre-service teachers make to historical people, places, and events, directly influences the curriculum and content chosen and taught in their classrooms.

For Zach and Lisa, both had teachers who highly influenced their decisions to become teachers of social studies who teach with multiple perspectives. Both described teachers who did not simply lecture about facts from history; both described teachers who "did" history by allowing their students to experience history in various ways.

...my 10<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History teacher...she loved to teach outside the box, if you will. I mean, when it was time for World War II, for two days we played Axis and Allies, a board game. When we were studying the 20s, we spent two days learning how to do the Charleston...and so the idea that history was more than just facts; that you had to experience it, is what I got out of her, and...led me to

wanting to find how to do that when I started teaching. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 4)

Similarly to Zach, Lisa described her own experiences from high school social studies,

I had a teacher the first part of U.S. History...and he told terrific stories, so the perspective he taught in was more of a storyteller, and then for the next semester, I had Ms. Patterson, who was active, touch it, do it, you know...not so much the storyteller as – figure out the story. So, in U.S. History, I had multiple perspectives. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 4)

In addition, Zach credited his senior psychology teacher for prompting him to think in other ways about every occurrence.

...taking psychology in high school and the way he taught it really drove home that things aren't what they seem. There's a reason 'why' for things. People just aren't bad. People just aren't this. There is a psychology behind it. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 3)

Every participant had definite influences from the university level. However, the data suggests that these influences to teach with multiple perspectives did not come from their education courses. Instead, these influences came from their history courses, which also relates to the second theme: Participants' love of subject matter, which will be further discussed later.

While an undergraduate at Louisiana State University, Stephanie described her experience in a history course,

...I was lucky to have some fantastic history professors. One of them was T. Harry Williams who wrote the Pulitzer Prize winning biography of Huey Long...and he used to dress up in confederate uniform and teach a Civil War class, and he just got so excited about history, and it was really fun...I just loved it. I was fascinated. I could go sit in history class and just be awed by what they were telling me, and I guess I [was] sucked into the time period...and most of my electives were history in college. I didn't do some other things I would have benefited from, but I really wanted more history classes. (Stephanie transcript, November 15, 2005, pp. 2-3)

Just as Stephanie thoroughly enjoyed her university history courses, Lucy also remembered her university history courses with great fondness.

...when I went to Stephen F. Austin State, my professors there were more characters and had these huge personalities, and the history experience with them was...so much better. Dr. Malpass...she would take us on walking tours of Stephen F's campus and lecture, like be lecturing as we are out taking walking tours and then take us to the UC...and buy us a Coke and then go sit us under the trees and lecture... (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, pp. 2-3)

In hindsight, Linda said she should have studied for two different teaching fields, as many secondary education majors currently acquire. Many secondary education majors leave the university with two teaching fields (i.e., social studies and language arts or science and math). Linda, on the other hand, studied for three social studies subject matters, with a major in Government and Geography and a minor in History (Linda

transcript, March 28, 2006, pp. 7-8). Luckily, Linda has always been employed as a social studies teacher, even without a second teaching field. However, her willingness to study three social studies fields is a testament to her desire to include more and more social studies courses to her university experiences.

Similarly, Zach took many history courses during his studies at The University of Texas at Austin, including Ancient Civilizations, Daily Life in Ancient Israel, History of UT, Government during the Peloponnesian War, Civil War History, etc. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 2). The participants for this study all appeared to share a commonality in that they didn't take "ordinary" history courses; instead, these participants all sought out in-depth courses that covered specific time periods or historical events rather than survey courses that covered huge periods of time.

*Theme: Participants' love of subject matter*

While love of subject matter may seem to be an obvious choice when it comes to themes that should emerge from this study, it was actually a pleasant surprise that continually reappeared throughout the coding and analysis of the data. Stevenson (1990) found that students are more engaged in a subject matter if it is of interest to them. Likewise, teachers enter the social studies profession based upon the fact that the subject matters that fall under the umbrella of social studies are of interest to them.

Stephanie, a native of New Orleans, recalled how she relates personal stories to her students about Southern history and family Civil War stories. She recounted an experience she had while attending a history course at Louisiana State University. Her

professor started discussing a past Louisiana governor's race and mentioned one of Stephanie's great uncles, who was simply running for governor as a gag to raise money to purchase a gorilla for the local zoo on the "Red Beans and Rice" ticket (Stephanie transcript, November 15, 2005, p. 5). While stories such as this may bring laughter, this type of story also demonstrates Stephanie's love of telling stories from the past.

Similarly, Lisa was fascinated with her own parents' stories about the Civil Rights Movement and found it helpful to bring in local history about desegregation. She described how she teaches about the Civil Rights Movement.

I love to teach civil rights on a local perspective...I teach it through children's books and then also using that dissertation [written by a community member] ...about people that the kids know that are important to this community, like Linda Sherrard. Linda Sherrard's niece is an Assistant Principal here, and in the dissertation, she talks about...the first year of desegregation at Galena Park High School... (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 5)

When Lisa described this particular lesson, she became very excited and enthused about the local history. She described how her students enjoyed hearing about the desegregation of their community high school and recognizing names of individuals who still live in the area. This local history is the story of Lisa's childhood community as well as the story of her students' childhood communities. For this reason, she brings a perspective rarely heard when it comes to the Civil Rights Movement, that is, the perspective of those most affected by choices made by people who still live in the

community in contemporary times. When describing another favorite moment in history, Lisa replied,

I love the Progressives. I love everything about Teddy Roosevelt...that he is so multifaceted and that the kids get to see...you know, here, football is a big thing. We won the state championship a couple of years ago, and it's like – if you can talk football to the kids, you can get through to them. So, I always tell them the story about Teddy Roosevelt saying, 'Hit the line hard', you know, and so then they sort of connect to that, so I love Teddy Roosevelt. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 4)

When talking about various incidents and lessons that have occurred in his classroom, Zach's appreciation for history and enjoyment of debate within history came through in the coding of data.

...the key for these students is being able to feel that their culture and their voice is being heard through history, and that's where a lot of my African-American students first come in. A couple of them will come to me [and ask,] 'and so is this going to be like an all-white history kind of thing, or are we going to learn about everybody else?' They'll actually ask me that on the side, early on, and I tell them, 'No, we're going to do everything. We're going to look at it from different ways.' I want these kids to question. I want them to think, and everything else arises out of that...Once they realize that history is a story and that it's just a big soap opera...All these little stories, these little tales, peak their interest, and they

came back. I don't have a lot of attendance problems because they want to learn. They want to know. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 22-23)

Zach's experience supports the work of Epstein (1997) who interviewed students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History classes. Similarly to Zach's students, Epstein found the African-American students to have very different perspectives from the European-American students of what each group deemed to be a credible source of history. In Epstein's study, the African-American students credited family as the most reliable source of historical information, while European-American students credited the textbook and teachers as the most reliable sources of information.

When Zach's African-American students ask him, "is this going to be like an all-white history kind of thing, or are we going to learn about everybody else?", the research suggests they are expressing that they are skeptical of the curriculum materials already in place, such as the textbook, and possibly even the teacher. However, because Zach is Hispanic, his African-American students feel comfortable enough to ask if the history course will include "everybody else".

Zach continued,

One of the discussions I have every year – this is a good one for my kids. They start calling Hispanics a race. Hispanic is not a race. There are only three races. You're either Caucasian, Asian, or African. That's it. Well, where do Hispanics fit? Well, Hispanics are generally Caucasian...so the Native Americans are Asian, okay? And the Spanish come from Europe, white or Caucasian. They mix, okay, so they're really kind of a mixture of Asian and

Caucasian, and so we get into these discussions, and they're like...and so from then on, I'm calling all my Hispanic kids white, which drives them nuts, you know, but, you know, they enjoy that information. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 23)

According to Lucy, her love of history was sparked early by two activities: watching old movies and reading biographies of historical figures. "...I would read any little biography I could get hold of in elementary school" (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 4).

Lucy described how she wanted to teach about history in a way that she believes will be interesting to her students; if not, she said that it would be simply boring. She added, "if I'm bored, they're definitely [bored] because they get bored so much easier than I do..." (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 15). In order to keep her students from becoming bored, Lucy has created power points full of photographs, graphs, and websites about certain people, places, and events.

I have spent hours up here or at home sitting on the couch with the Internet putting this [power point] together...looking for this stuff just because I don't like the textbooks. They [the textbooks] don't tell you everything. It's like when I did the one on the Harlem Renaissance, they didn't tell me everything. They didn't include Lena Horne...or Eartha Kitt, [they didn't] throw in the fact that...'remember the re-runs of the original Batman with Pow and Zap? Remember the black Catwoman?...That's Earth Kitt.' The textbook doesn't tell you in the little parenthesis after you see a picture of Eartha Kitt from the Harlem

Renaissance that she was the original back Catwoman...they don't tell you stories. (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 7)

First of all, Lucy's notion that she does not want to "bore" her students is supportive of the research of Stevenson (1990). His research suggests that students prefer to be actively involved in the learning process with challenging curriculum that facilitates them in the interpretation, analysis, and manipulation of information. In addition, Lucy is finding and developing extra curricular materials to enhance the curriculum set in place by her school district, namely the textbook. According to Paxton, (1999), students usually do not utilize a critical eye to question the trustworthiness of their textbooks. Instead, students tend to take all textbook information at face value.

This notion is also supported by the work of Yeager and Doppin (2001) who presented two groups of 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History students with differing curriculum materials (the textbook versus a collection of primary and secondary resources). Not surprisingly, the group who received the textbook regurgitated answers straight back from the text when questioned about the content. The research suggested that these students did not attempt to critically examine any of the textbook information. Therefore, social studies educators must work to find and/or develop curricular materials that encourage students to become critical thinkers about historical people, places, and events (Seixas, 1999). As such, Lucy strives to do this by incorporating additional materials and resources that are not covered by the textbook.

Although Lucy's passion for history partly grew out of her love of old movies, she mentioned that her students do not seem to share her appreciation of black and white movies.

I've noticed these kids and even last year's kids...they like seeing things...real stuff, not just telling them. They want to see actual photographs and pictures...movies, if it's only the real footage will they like it. Movies, if it's in black and white, they're not hot on black and white movies, only black and white if it's real film footage, and it has to be real...But I think it's the MTV generation...they've grown up to be visual...Not auditory learners like most of us were in our generation. (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, pp. 7-8)

These participants' passion and love of history becomes quite obvious in their words and self-described classroom interactions. Several spoke about dressing up and "getting into character" as they presented lessons about historical people or events. They all appeared to have a desire to ignite their passion for history within their students by providing instruction that is fun and exciting, yet historically meaningful.

In addition, these participants' passion for history appeared within the data as they spoke about encouraging students to think for themselves about history.

Figure this out. Hitler. World War II. Mussolini, etc. etc. etc. You know...Question. Think...The only way they're going to be able to defend themselves in an ever-growing information world, because it is that – minds and hearts and stuff – people aren't going to be won over with military. They're all going to be won over with people telling them what's right and wrong and then

say, 'Oh, okay.'...so the only defense I can give them is that ability to question...to say, 'But are you right? Is that the way it should be?' Should I have a chip implanted under my skin so that I can...have access for security? But, what does that really do to me as a person? Does that just make me a number? Does that do this? Does that do that? What about my rights? Is the fact that one hundred people die enough to say, 'Okay, I want to curtail my rights now', or is that the sacrifice for my rights, you know, and have them [the students] really truly weigh these things, and you, of course, a lot of this has risen out of my debate coaching experience, but again, that's where I have the uniqueness of having a social studies background... (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, pp. 21-22)

Controversial subjects such as the ones described above may cause fear in some teachers; however, each of these five participants expressed their desire to include such matters in her/his classroom discussions. Each participant appeared to make a commitment to include critical conversations (Howard, 2004; Levstik, 1997) in her/his classroom discussions. These critical conversations included the inclusion of multiple resources to spark students' interest in viewing multiple perspectives concerning both historical and contemporary events. When asked about how she approaches controversial subjects, Stephanie remarked,

I have to be very careful [when discussing religion]...we don't get into doctrine, but they can talk about it and what does it mean, and some of the kids have very strong points of view, and of course, a lot of it, you know, comes from home, but

that's okay. Just let them be able to defend it and think about it. I think a big challenge we have is tolerance of other people's points of view. That's something I try to work on – we may not agree with this, but let's talk about it, and I think when I teach to some extent, especially the language arts teachers and myself, we try to show that we can disagree on certain topics and laugh about it and model the behavior for the kids. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, pp. 5-6)

Both Zach and Stephanie approach controversial subjects in their classrooms in a similar manner according to Kelly (1986), who proposes four different ways in which teachers present controversial issues to their students: exclusive neutrality, exclusive partiality, neutral impartiality, and committed impartiality. According to each of these descriptors, the research suggests that Zach and Stephanie display neutral impartiality in that they present multiple viewpoints, but do not reveal their own opinions about the controversial topic. Kelly's (1986) four perspectives are helpful when analyzing the approaches teachers utilize when discussing controversial topics with students. Neither participant felt their personal viewpoints were necessary to share with their students, nor did they want their own opinions to unnecessarily influence the rich discussions that would occur when their classroom debates turned to controversial issues.

*Theme: Participants' commitment to challenging institutional and other forms of resistance*

During the initial coding of each interview transcript, challenges to various forms of resistance from a multitude of entities continued to reappear from the participants'

words and experiences. These entities included pre-service supervisors, administrators, fellow teachers, and parents. Most of these stories offered by the participants' stemmed from one question in the interview protocol: Are there risks involved when teaching with multiple perspectives?

Of course, some participants had more to say about challenging resistance than others, but all five participants did respond to the question with examples of people who have resisted their pedagogy in one way or another. With regards to pre-service experiences, Zach stated that he continues to challenge the structured teaching protocol that is prevalent in some university pre-service programs.

I buck a lot of the typical 'this is how you're supposed to teach' system because, to me, once you start teaching in this little confined little box...then it really limits the teacher's creativity...It prevents the teacher from adapting to the classes as each class comes in. Each class is different...they might want to focus on something more than another class, so you have to be adaptive and flow with the kids. (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 8)

Lisa and Stephanie shared similar stories of creative mentor teachers during students teaching, coupled with university supervisors who, on the other hand, wanted to observe "straight by the book" teaching rather than creative lessons that present multiple perspectives and viewpoints. Lisa explained that her university supervisor always wanted to see a model, so she resisted by teaching in both ways – one way for her university supervisor during scheduled observations and another way for her mentor teacher (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, pp. 16-17).

Stephanie added,

When I did my student teaching...I had a wonderful supervising teacher who did a lot of differentiation...but my college supervising professor did not like the way she [mentor teacher] taught, and so I would have two sets of lesson plans. One set I would write for him [university supervisor] and one set I would write for her [mentor teacher], and when she was in the classroom, I taught like she wanted, and when he came out, I had to teach like he wanted. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 10)

The data suggests another form of resistance that several participants challenged was from administrators. Three of the five participants told of incidents in which they continued the status quo in their teaching although an administrator questioned their method of teaching, "I even had one administrator one time ask me, 'Why do you even teach history? It's not important. Maybe you should just concentrate on geography'" (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 13).

When asked, "How did you respond?", Stephanie said that she replied, "Yes, Sir.", and then went about teaching in the same manner in which she has always presented history lessons to her students. She shared that she responded to the administrator in the affirmative rather than confront him on the issue, then proceeded to ignore his suggestion. That way, an ugly confrontation was avoided, and Stephanie, instead, resisted in silence by continuing to teach U.S. History in the manner in which she felt most comfortable.

According to Lucy, who has taught the subject of female rights in other countries, she feels comfortable in presenting information on female genitalia mutilation. However, she also said that the subject matter is one that would not be allowed by administrators in certain school districts and on certain school campuses. When I asked if her administrator had an issue with her presenting the information to her students, she replied, “I just added it. I didn’t ask...But I knew that if I just kept it straight and simple and the facts and didn’t get explicit that it would be okay...” (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 18).

It is interesting to note Lucy’s resistance to acquire permission to approach a subject matter that some might deem controversial. Rather than get a ‘no’ from her administration, Lucy simply presented the information with reliable and factual information in order for her students to learn about a contemporary issue that is based upon historical events affecting the lives of women. She said,

I didn’t get graphic about it...I just sort of – matter of fact – that this is happening and gave them statistics and gave them the consequences of it, and then also read the statistics that it is becoming more prevalent in the United States as we get more and more refugees from Africa and the Middle East... (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 17)

Lisa described a lesson in which she was engaged in an activity about trench warfare. The activity is loud and messy and requires students out of their seats as they assemble trenches out of their desks (Trench Warfare Lesson Plan). This particular activity allows the students to grasp new meanings about trench warfare from a multitude

of perspectives. During the activity, an Assistant Principal walked in for an informal observation and apparently had a negative reaction to the non-traditional history lesson.

When I asked Lisa about the Assistant Principal's reaction, she replied,

...I don't care what their [the administration] opinion is, and if I told what the person wrote me to my principal, my principal would support me, so I am okay with whatever that administrator says. I have one administrator that's not supportive. She's not going to change her mind. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 25)

Three out of the five participants shared experiences with fellow teachers who, according to the data, resisted the notion of teaching with multiple perspectives. According to Levstik (1997), this type of teaching is "risky business" for teachers as they facilitate students' questioning historical information rather than simply accepting "official stories" sanctioned by school district textbook and curriculum adoptions.

Although Lisa is a young teacher with only three years of public school teaching experience, she has taken a lead in her department, partly by choice and partly by suggestion (Researcher Journal, p. 17). While she has voluntarily presented teaching ideas at the state social studies conference and at district professional development sessions, she has also been volunteered by her campus principal to mentor teachers new to the campus, even teachers who have more teaching experience than Lisa. In fact, Lisa shared that her principal has told other teachers, "Do what Lisa does..." (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 23). While she is flattered by the suggestion that she is a role model for other teachers, she also shared that she is uncomfortable with the resistance it

creates from other teachers. "...it is a hard position for me to be in to tell somebody who has taught for twenty years..." (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 24).

However, rather than shrink away from the resistance, that data suggests that Lisa has continued to challenge it since she feels strongly about the ways in which she presents information to her students. One particular favorite lesson that she presents to her students every year is a trench warfare activity, adapted from History Alive curriculum materials. This lesson will be described further in this chapter, however, it is mentioned at this point since it created resistance from a fellow teacher who observed the activity upon the request of the campus principal. Apparently, this particular teacher was asked to observe several teachers, including Lisa. From her perspective, the trench warfare activity is a strong lesson that includes multiple perspectives, full coverage of historical facts, and provides an emotional connection for her students. The teacher, however, did not seem to have the same positive reaction to the lesson. Rather than ignore his resistance to try an interactive activity, Lisa challenged him by supporting her teaching methodology with the positive aspects of what the students were actually learning from the activity.

...[after] he sat through the trench warfare activity, he said, 'What are the kids getting from that? What on TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) do they need to know out of that activity?'...and I was like, well...'there are things I did that are TAKS related, like, in order to earn the ammo they have to answer who was on what side, what were the years, so that was very TAKS driven, but they also made an emotional connection...I promise you, they're not

going to forget this, and when they are sitting with the TAKS test in front of them, and there's a question about trench warfare, they're going to actively remember what we did, and so, that's what was TAKS about it... (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 15)

Similarly, Lucy had an experience in which a fellow teacher resisted her choice of an additional resource in the curriculum when they were covering the Vietnam War. For the lesson, Lucy chose to include footage material from "Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam", a 1988 HBO movie that advertises the following on its front cover: "Hear the music through their ears; See the pain through their eyes; Live the war through their words." Lucy said, "It is the footage I grew up seeing on the news every night...Walter Cronkite and Dan Rather footage...[but her fellow teacher told her] 'that's too graphic and violent to show our kids.'" (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 17)

Lisa added that the social studies department meets regularly to plan together, however,

There is a lot of discussion about content, and then there is a lot of discussion about what we are going to do next...like how are we going to teach that, and I have to say that I'm usually the one who ends up doing it. We all talk about it. We plan it. We say, 'Oh, yeah, that will be really cool.' But, you know, like I said, when things get cut, that's what tends to get cut...but, I sort of do things different than everybody else, like the trench warfare activity nobody else will do. The idea of...like...an administrator walking in with paper flying just scares them, and I mean, I understand that it's scary, but maybe I just don't really

care...I do those things. We talk about how to make it more interesting to the kids, and everyone else will do foldables and all the other stuff that we do, but the trench warfare activity and History Alive – I’m pretty much the only one that does. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 9)

She continued,

...sometimes I don’t think they [fellow teachers] think I do it the ‘right way’. I think that they think paper balls flying...my students can’t be learning anything, and I think they think I’m young, and it’s fun, and that’s what I’m doing...and they don’t really see the content behind it. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 24)

Stephanie shared the same sentiment, “They [fellow U.S. History teachers] won’t do it. They are very resistant. They don’t feel comfortable enough in their classroom to let the kids out of their seats...” (Stephanie transcript, p. 12).

Because teaching with multiple perspectives involves multiple resources, prior traditional notions of how a classroom should “look” may no longer be applicable. By encouraging students to “do history” (Levstik & Barton, 2001), each participant described how learning activities required students to be out of their desks and actively involved in learning.

Three of the five participants have had experiences with parents who have also resisted the notion of multiple perspectives and viewpoints in the U.S. History classroom. Some have experienced parents who have asked how class time focused upon Others’ history will assist in the building of a common vocabulary and common history shared by

all (Ravitch, 1989; Cheney, 1995). Others propose that students are, instead, surrounded by ‘one history’ via the hidden curriculum (Apple, 2004), therefore, multiple histories would, in fact, be necessary in order to allow all students to see themselves within the history curriculum.

Because learning multiple perspectives may also run counter-intuitive to many students’ traditional ways of learning, many parents may also find this type of pedagogy unsettling. Multiple perspectives do not encourage “correct” answers; rather, multiple perspectives encourage critical dialogue concerning multiple accounts of historical events. For students and parents, this may be frustrating since traditional modes of testing requires one “correct” answer as a way to seek “the truth” (Levstik, 1997).

For example, Stephanie remarked when asked about parents’ reactions to some of her curriculum,

...[when studying about the] Salem witch trials...a parent just finally complained and said, ‘This is not how you should teach history. All you’re teaching is violence. You should not include any violence in the teaching of history.’ And I was just wondering – when did history become benign because violence and ugliness is just part of history...whether for good or bad, you have to talk about what happened. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 13)

Stephanie continued with another example of parental resistance that surfaced at the end of an interdisciplinary unit covering the Holocaust.

...we taught about the Holocaust in our 8<sup>th</sup> grade history classes to complement when language arts teachers were studying Night and The Diary of Anne Frank,

as the kids had no idea why these people were being treated that way, and we would do the history of anti-Semitism...We had culminating projects, and a couple of parents were, 'Why are you doing this? It's violent. It's ugly.' You know, their attitude was – let's forget about some of these things. Let's ignore it. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 13)

Teaching with multiple perspectives is a difficult task that requires in-depth knowledge of content, access to resources, and a commitment to bringing diverse perspectives to the classroom that may or may not be opposite to what students have studied prior to entering these classrooms. This type of teaching is not easy; this type of teaching requires extra hours of work seeking out additional resources and information to share in class. Similarly for teachers, this type of teaching may require more of students, who will have to think beyond what they have learned about historical people, places, and events in the past. Lisa shared that a parent once told her, "...couldn't you just give her [child] a worksheet or couldn't I just tell her what to study. I am making her do too much work..." (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, pp. 25-26).

When covering a lesson during Black History Month, Linda had a student ask, "When is Anglo History [Month]?" Linda shared her answer, "Well...it's an everyday thing...as it's incorporated so much..." (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 26).

Linda's answer, "it's an everyday thing", is consistent with what scholars have described as the hegemonic force that controls much of what is in place within society (Gramsci, 1971; Giroux, 1996a, 1996b; Apple, 2004). "...hegemony acts to 'saturate' our very consciousness, so that the educational, economic and social world we see and

interact with, and the commonsense interpretations we put on it, becomes the world...the only world” (Apple, 2004, p. 4).

By not only covering Black History Month in her classroom, but also by acknowledging that “Anglo History Month” surrounds the curriculum, the research suggests that Linda is moving away from the ‘hidden curriculum’ as described by Apple (2004) and toward one in which multiple viewpoints are described and analyzed by students.

These participants also shared that they do not challenge various forms of resistance in order to rock the institutional foundations of universities, administrators, or parents. They simply desire to teach in a manner that is, at times, challenging the system, but also still enables them to keep their jobs as well as the support of the majority. Stephanie asserted,

...you have to be sensitive to the needs of all the population in the way you present things, but you are supposed to be teaching tolerance also, so you have to be careful...especially on the middle school level where parents are still really involved and concerned about what’s being said, and you have to watch how you’re saying different things. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 15)

***Themes: Research Question #2***

The second question this research study sought to address is as follows: **How do the teachers articulate their decision-making within this space?**

With regards to this question, three additional themes emerged that address how teachers go about including multiple perspectives within their classrooms: the vital impact of professional development; the inclusion of personal and family experiences; the re(tellings) of historical people, places, and events. In the pages to follow, I will address each of these themes by utilizing the participants' words and ideas.

*Theme: The vital impact of professional development*

Apparent during the first interview was a strong indication that professional development had a role in bringing multiple perspectives to the classroom. Therefore, subsequent interviews included more questions about professional development sessions or seminars that have prompted new ways of teaching (Researcher Journal, p. 12). All participants share experiences with the History Alive curriculum that is utilized by many school districts across the state. In addition, materials from organizations such as Law Related Education, Teaching Tolerance, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Facing History and Ourselves were cited as sources of information for teaching with multiple perspectives by various participants. The participants credited these types of curricular materials as supportive in their teaching since many come with accompanying references, videos, activities, and lesson plans (Researcher Journal, p. 33).

For many teachers, professional development is something brought to them by their school districts on certain days throughout the school year. For Stephanie, however, the data suggests that professional development is something she has sought out throughout her thirty-five years of teaching. Early in her career, Stephanie made an effort

to seek out resources available to her, as a social studies educator. One of her first experiences came in the form of an essay contest in which thirty social studies teachers from around the country were chosen to attend a three-day seminar in Washington, D.C. Stephanie's department head was not interested in the essay contest, so Stephanie submitted an essay, instead. She was chosen as one of the participants, and said of the experience, "It was wonderful...that's the first time I had been exposed to the different learning styles...and that certainly opened up a whole new vista for me in teaching..." (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 10).

Throughout the 1980's, Stephanie began attending various conferences as part of her professional development. She said that she was exposed to History Alive in 1993, and "that just opened up a whole new world..." (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 10). From there, she asked her department head to support her decision to utilize aspects of the curriculum, which was gradually utilized by her campus colleagues. A few years later, Stephanie and other social studies teachers requested funding for additional materials and professional development by making a presentation about what they were doing with it in their classrooms to the district superintendent, assistant superintendents, and social studies coordinator (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 12). Due to Stephanie's efforts, History Alive has become an influential aspect of the social studies curriculum in her school district.

Currently, Stephanie is now the social studies department head on her campus, where she is able to use her role to encourage new teachers to seek out professional

development in History Alive, as well as other resources from Law-Related Education and Texas Council for the Social Studies.

For Lisa, the catalyst to bring multiple perspectives into the classroom came the summer before her first year of teaching. During that summer, she attended a required professional development session for History Alive through her school district. She shared that she does not follow the History Alive curriculum precisely; instead, she utilizes her favorite activities that fit the learning styles of her students, coupled with curriculum materials from a variety of other sources (Lisa transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 18).

To enhance the History Alive activities that she chooses for her students, Lisa also adds many “foldable” activities to her curriculum. “Foldables” are paper folds that are made to create templates for note-taking during lecture activities, and are best known through the work of Dinah Zike, a retired Texas teacher whose creative “foldable” paper activities are popular among many social studies teachers (Researcher Journal, p. 33).

We do a lot of Foldables because, for me, I have to take notes that way...I just have to touch it and move it a little bit. I am very tactile, and so I think I do that a lot with my kids. I do Foldables. We do a lot of History Alive, lots of primary sources, and I love the experiential exercises on History Alive. Those are my favorite activities to do with my class. They are my classes' favorite activities to do... (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 8).

Lucy and Lisa shared several favorite activities from the History Alive curriculum, and like Lisa, Lucy utilizes the History Alive activities that best fit the needs

of her students. Lucy was able to secure funding for classroom materials by participating in the writing of a grant that supplied History Alive resources (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 9).

Zach described his first few years of teaching, before he started using History Alive materials, as difficult. “Obviously, the first four years of teaching...I’m just trying to stay alive, and then after that, someone showed me something called ‘History Alive’, and it’s been downhill ever since then. I mean, it’s a piece of cake” (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 4).

Based upon his first experiences with History Alive, Zach quickly became an advocate for their curriculum materials and was able to secure funding for resources and staff development for his campus. In fact, Zach has completed two phases of History Alive professional development, as well as half the coaching training (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, p. 12).

Stephanie feels that curriculum materials such as History Alive and Law-Related Education are especially helpful when new teachers join the social studies department at her school. As the department head, she described her role as to “encourage people to seek all that’s available...there are just lots of resources and training out there...some of it, like Law-Related Education...doesn’t cost anything...trying to get teachers involved in taking a week during the summer and going through that training” (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 13). Stephanie became interested in utilizing Law-Related Education materials several years ago.

Jan Miller came out and did a seminar on our campus, and then I started going to their February conferences and just gradually...wanting more and more training with them...and because they provide such wonderful materials...something you can go right back into the classroom and use...It's fun. The kids love their activities, and it's always getting the kids involved and making them think. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 11)

In fact, Stephanie has become so involved with Law-Related Education, that she regularly attends professional development sessions sponsored by them during the summer and school year. Through her increased participation, she has had the opportunity to write lesson plans and other curricular activities for them (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 10).

Lisa has also utilized professional development sessions offered to teachers in her district by Law-Related Education. She said that the organization comes to her district once per year for the social studies department. In addition, she seeks out their sessions at the annual social studies conference (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 19). Similarly to Stephanie, Lisa feels the materials are easy to use, fun and interesting for her students, and offer various perspectives of historical people, places, and events.

Teaching Tolerance is another set of curricular activities utilized by several of the participants. Teaching Tolerance is supported by the Southern Poverty Law Center, and is very popular in many secondary social studies classrooms since the units of study are free to educators. Each unit contains a video, lesson plans, lesson guides, and primary source pictures and documents that are helpful in presenting multiple viewpoints to

students. Aligned with the ideals of the organization, many of the lesson plans cover stories of people who have been discriminated against or stereotyped in some form. Many of these stories are not well-known, and therefore, offer students additional information about historical events. Lisa utilizes the Teaching Tolerance materials when covering the Holocaust (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 18); while Lucy utilizes the Teaching Tolerance materials when covering the Civil Rights Movement (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 23).

*Theme: The inclusion of personal and family experiences*

When asked about how they go about teaching with multiple perspectives, the data suggests that most participants cited their own personal and family experiences. As discussed earlier, the coding and analysis of data indicated that every participant brings multiple perspectives to their classrooms because of various reasons – their own educational experiences, their love of history, and their commitment to challenge forms of resistance to this type of teaching. With regards to how these teachers teach with multiple perspectives, it became apparent that the participants all generated ideas through various forms of professional development, as well as their own personal experiences.

Lucy has traveled extensively throughout the world, many times collecting resources for her classroom. Her classroom is filled with memorabilia from many cultures, religions, and countries, which she said other people might consider “junk”; however, according to Lucy, every item is worthy of discussion and representative of another’s idea or perspective (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 6).

Stephanie's childhood memories of New Orleans provide a backdrop for sharing family Civil War stories passed down through generations. She said that her parents and grandparents shared their love of history with her and reinforced her curiosities with travels to history museums and historical sites throughout the South and Northeast. In fact, according to Stephanie, "there was history talk at the dinner table, always" (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 2).

During the study of the American Revolution, Stephanie enjoys retelling a story from a 1983 trip that included a visit to the Tower of London. Her students enjoy hearing about the tour guide who throughout the tour continuously called Stephanie a "colonial" in a teasing manner. For Stephanie, this is a perfect example of differing perspectives – one from an American point of view and one from a British point of view. Nonetheless, Stephanie's students also enjoy the next part of the story when the tour group entered the armaments room, which contained arms from every war that Britain ever fought in, including the Battle of 1812, according to the tour guide. To that, Stephanie spoke up and said, "Oh, gosh, the War of 1812...the Battle of New Orleans...oh, yeah, our six hundred guys killed one thousand of your guys and sent your commander back to you in a barrel of rum." Stephanie said that was, indeed, the last time the tour guide called her a "colonial" on the tour (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 11).

Zach shared a personal story about an assignment in which his students were to research and write a paper either in favor or against dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II. For his students, one aspect of the assignment involved interviewing people to gain their perspectives about the historical

events that altered many lives, both positively and negatively. Soon after the assignment, Zach received a letter from one student's parents who thanked him for prompting a lengthy discussion in their home and for remaining open to multiple perspectives and open discussions in his classroom. Zach shared that he believes his students gain the most from class discussions and debates, as well as learning how to question others (Zach transcript, March 17, 2006, pp. 16-17).

As discussed earlier, Linda's initial purpose for entering the teaching profession was to serve as a role model for Hispanic students since she did not have any Hispanic teachers throughout her educational experiences. As such, Linda enjoys using personal stories with her students in order to engage them in conversation about how and why people react to others differently in life. One particular story shared by Linda involves a personal experience that took place twenty-five years ago. She shares this incident with her students before they cover cultures and stereotyping other cultures.

I went with my husband for dinner with his company...all the females get together, and we don't know each other well, and we are introducing each other and just chit-chatting, and we came around to the subject of where we work...and I said, 'I work at Bedichek'...And an Anglo who was standing there looks at me and says, 'Oh, do you work in the cafeteria?' And I said, 'No, I've been teaching at Bedichek for ten years. I've been a teacher for ten years.' She turned red. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 29)

Linda said she especially enjoys sharing this incident with her Hispanic students when she wants them to know how good it can feel to break a stereotype others may have

about Hispanics or any other group, whether it be about gender, race, or religion. She continued describing the incident with her students' reactions,

And the kids are going, 'You didn't cuss her out, Miss?' I go, 'I didn't need to'...When I said I was a teacher, she got totally embarrassed. She couldn't find a hole big enough to crawl into because she knew she had made a fool of herself to assume that because I was Hispanic I worked in the cafeteria. And they tell me, 'Did you get mad?' I say, 'No, why should I?' She was totally embarrassed by herself. Isn't it good that I had an education? Isn't it good that I went to high school and that I graduated from college? And, this is what I want for you because this will shut anyone else down, anytime...there are stereotypes to be maids, to be the drug dealers...you know...we've got to change that. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 29)

While this personal experience is not the "history" someone will find in a U.S. History textbook, it is still Linda's personal history that accompanies the facts and figures of people's struggles within the United States to find equality. While the textbook section on stereotypes may not be remembered by Linda's students, one may be certain that her story about a dinner party twenty-five years earlier will remain etched in their memories for many years. It is those types of perspectives that are so valuable to the social studies classroom.

In keeping with Linda's desire to bring personal anecdotes to U.S. History, she also shares her father's experience of paying his Poll Taxes before voting when she was a child.

My dad was making fifty cents an hour in construction work and...saved up his money to always pay for his Poll Tax...In order for people to vote they had to pay a tax, and my dad could do it , and he knew that it was important to vote. [Therefore,] there's no excuse for you guys [Linda imploring her students to vote since many are eighteen years of age]. (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 16)

When it comes time to discuss Reconstruction and the plight of the slave or the sharecropper, Linda said she always keeps a cotton plant in her classroom to illustrate what it really looks like since most students' concept of cotton is a soft, white t-shirt. She said she wants her students to see how hard and prickly a cotton plant is when one sticks her/his fingers inside the boll to pick the cotton. In addition, the cotton is so light in weight that it allows the students to grasp the idea of how much cotton one would need to pick to fill an entire sack. Linda shares with her students that in the summers, she used to accompany her mother to the fields to pick cotton in order to make extra money after work (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, pp. 16-17).

Linda shared that her students are always amazed at how much history she has experienced, but she tells them that "everyday is history" and everyone has experiences that correspond to the history that is taught in textbooks (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 16). For Linda, however, it is very important to reconcile and contextualize historical events with the personal experiences that make history exciting and relevant to contemporary students of history.

*Theme: The re(tellings) of historical people, places, and events*

Historical occurrences are often (re)told by the dominant regimes within society. According to Trouillot (1995) “history is a story about power, a story about those who won.” In addition, Swartz (1992) contends,

Master scripting silences multiple voices and perspectives, primarily legitimizing dominant, white, upper-class, male voicings as the “standard” knowledge students need to know. All other accounts and perspectives are omitted from the master script unless they can be disempowered through misrepresentation. (p. 341)

All participants involved in this research study shared lessons and activities in which they presented information in interesting activities in order to challenge students’ to think beyond ways in which they have had to think in the past. For some students, information may be completely new; while for other students, the information may be somewhat different from what they have learned in past lessons. Either way, via the coding and analysis of the data, it became apparent that these teachers share a common theme of presenting historical information with multiple, and sometimes new, perspectives (Lesson Plans). As stated by Lucy, she just wants her students to understand “that history or culture or geography is not just made up of old dead white guys...” (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 21).

When covering colonial history, Stephanie facilitated a conversation with her students that covered both historical and contemporary events by comparing colonial boycotts of English products to current efforts to boycott products from the major retailer, Abercrombie and Fitch, due to their advertisement campaign that some perceive as

derogatory to females. She described a lively debate that included several connections between what they have learned about colonial boycotts, infused with the passion they can bring to a discussion of something many feel strongly about in contemporary times, namely their clothing and style habits. According to Stephanie, “bringing in current events, I think, certainly helps them make the connection [to historical events]” (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 2).

In another activity covering the Declaration of Independence, Stephanie cuts the document into pieces so students must carefully read it in order to put it back together, like a puzzle. Once they finish, they must “translate” the colonists’ grievances in contemporary language, which enables them to fully think about the issues addressed in the Declaration. The final aspect of the activity involves a writing assignment in which students must answer the grievances from the British point of view, as if they were British officials. This extra part of the activity enables students to realize that there were two sides to the Revolution rather than the one-sided point of view that many U.S. History classrooms cover (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 11).

U.S. History classrooms are full of opportunities to discuss the effects of Westward Expansion upon the lives of the Native American population who inhabited the land now known as the United States. Stephanie takes every opportunity to debunk various interpretations of Native Americans, including the versions popularized by both Hollywood and Walt Disney (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 16). These interpretations of Native Americans are simplistic and one-sided, and certainly do not give the entire story of how these people lived and died.

This perspective is in congruence with the work of other scholars who have proposed more inclusive ways of teaching about Native American perspectives in the social studies (Rains, 2003; Warren, 2006). For Stephanie, colonization includes much more than the Spanish, British, and/or French perspectives; it also includes the Native American perspective (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 8).

During the discussion of Stephanie's slavery unit, she described how she is certain to include multiple perspectives, including the points of view of slaves, plantation owners, captains of the ships who carried the slaves throughout the Middle Passage, etc. She asks her students to participate in a simulation of a slave ship experience. As students lie on the ground with their eyes closed, she asks them to imagine they are traveling through the Middle Passage. As the students imagine, she reads excerpts from *Roots*. Afterwards, her students process their experiences by creating a poem from the slave's point of view (Lesson Plan).

Some kids have gotten emotional about it...they really buy into it and see things from a different perspective, you know, they know about slavery. They know slavery is wrong...and then making the connections to modern times...when I say that there is slavery in the world today, and they are shocked. They say, 'But you said we passed the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment and slaves are free', and I say, 'Yes. That's in our country', and so then some of them will do research and find out...there is slavery in Africa and Asia, and then we even talked about slavery in our country of illegal immigrants being brought in and used basically as slaves, and so, they

are shocked that something like that could still continue. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, p. 7)

Similarly to Levstik & Barton's (2001) notion of "doing history", the data suggests that Stephanie provides her students with the opportunity to "do history" and to actively participate in a role playing exercise in which students re-live a historical scenario. Likewise, Leigh & Reynolds (1997), describe interactive history lessons in which students are offered multiple perspectives when considering historical events. However, more than anything else, this particular activity evokes empathetic responses (Yeager & Doppen, 2001) from students, which probably would not have occurred by simply reading the textbook version of the same event.

When asked about students' reactions, Stephanie said,

It has made them curious, I think, to do that, and I think for some African American students...who have not had to deal with struggles and prejudice – their families are comfortable...I think it strikes a spark in them to know more about their history...I would say about fifty percent find out a lot of it for the first time. They know that, yes, there were slaves, but not the details, and I think they're shocked. And, I think they're shocked about the treatment. They're shocked that there were Africans involved in the slave trade...We go through and talk about that and why it changed, and they're shocked, which I'm glad, you know, because it is a shocking thing – of what one human does to another. (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005, pp. 7-8)

When covering the development and mechanization of industry, both Lucy and Lisa utilize a History Alive activity that replicates an assembly line. For the activity, Lisa brings in pipe cleaners for each row to create a product. Every person in each row is given a section of the product to create in an assembly line fashion, with an initial emphasis given to quality and quantity. However, in the interest of quantity, there is usually a decline in quality.

Let's say that they're doing a doll. The person in the first chair makes the doll's head with the pipe-cleaners and then passes it back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, and they have to mass produce it...there is factory music that goes along with it, and the lights are out, and I'm yelling and screaming...No bathroom break...They really do sweat, so they get the sweatshop idea, and the ones that are really lazy and don't want to do it, you know, whine and complain, and everybody in the row gets mad at them because now they've been fired and they have to do two people's jobs. And, we talk about it...I actually had a class last year...I didn't know what was going on, but they were quietly talking, and the next thing I know they all go on strike and they walk out in the hall. My whole class walking out, while I'm freaking out, thinking, 'Oh my God, somebody's going to come by; I'm going to lose my job.' So I go out to bargain with them, and we actually covered collective bargaining too, because I was going to be nicer, and let them produce less and turn on the lights and let them go to the bathroom...collective bargaining for them, and that was great that that happened...it leads really well into unions...

(Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, pp. 12-13)

In order to facilitate her students' understanding of trench warfare, Lisa adapted another History Alive activity for her students. She feels that by re-enacting a battle scenario, her students are able to emotionally connect with the many aspects of war. She describes how students may collect ammunition – paper balls – by answering questions about a prior lesson. Next, she divides them into opposing sides and tells them, “You have to come up with a military strategy” (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 8).

The students are given ten minutes, and most create their trenches on each side of the classroom by stacking their desks for cover. Next, Lisa passes out disposable masks for students to wear, as she cuts out the lights, leaving only holiday lights attached to the ceiling to simulate a night sky. She allows the students to then “war” with one another by throwing paper balls – ammunition – for a period of thirty minutes. At the end of the activity, Lisa then stops to have a discussion. She recalled that many issues arise such as, how hot they become with the “gas” masks and,

they see all of the material, like the balls, all end up in the middle in no-man's land, and so they have to think about how much money we waste and how they get stuck in the trenches, and we talk about trench rot and things like that when they're in there... (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 8)

Upon completion of the discussion, Lisa then asks everyone to find a quiet place to write their “death letter home” as if they were actually soldiers.

It's like dead silence, and there will be a three hundred pound boy sobbing. Because they have to write their death letter home, I think it connects them to history. I mean, throwing the paper balls was fun, but then they have to really

think about what they would want to say...I mean, we know they're seventeen year olds and they think like seventeen year olds, but occasionally when we ask them to, they can think like adults. And, they think about the children that they want to have and the things they're not going to get to experience, and, for me, that is the best teaching day. And, it takes in a lot of perspectives. (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 8-9)

As Lucy pointed out, many of her high school students are already enrolled in ROTC classes and have made commitments to join the military upon completion of high school. These students will benefit from thinking about the perspective of a soldier in the trenches of warfare.

One of Linda's favorite lessons to include multiple perspectives covers the Great Depression. Linda feels that much of the textbook and literature coverage of the Great Depression focuses upon the plight of white men and women. Instead, in her class, she offers other perspectives of minority populations in the United States during that time period.

We talked about the experiences that the minorities had gone through during the depression. I always said my parents went through a depression. They didn't know English. How did they get by? How did anybody get by during the depression?...And, if it was bad for the Anglo-Americans, how do you think it was for the black Americans, the African-Americans?...I mean, that was just as tough for them. Their plight isn't publicized as much, but it was tougher than

everyone else because, especially for the Hispanics – they had a language barrier.  
(Linda transcript, March 28, 2006, p. 22)

When Lucy presents World War II information to her students, she said that she strives to bring in other points of view, including those of German citizens. For that, she brings in films of several of his dynamic speeches in which crowds were excited and supportive of his ideals in order to aid students' understanding of why he was able to conjure up so much support in spite of what happened in the end (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 4). Lucy, Linda, and Stephanie all discussed ways in which they highlight the experiences of Japanese-Americans in the United States during World War II, including the creation of internment camps.

To highlight the build up of animosity, as well as weaponry between countries during the Cold War, Lisa enjoys reading a children's book to her high school students (Lesson Plan). *The Butter Battle Book* by Dr. Seuss follows his usual rhyming prose by discussing the Yooks and the Zooks:

*On the last day of summer,  
ten hours before fall...  
...my grandfather took me  
out to the Wall.*

*For a while he stood silent.  
Then finally he said,  
with a very sad shake  
of his very old head,*

*“As you know, on this side of the Wall  
we are Yooks.*

*On the far other side of this Wall  
live the Zooks.”*

*Then my grandfather said,  
“It’s high time that you knew  
of the terribly horrible thing that Zooks do.*

*In every Zook house and in every Zook town  
every Zook eats his bread  
with the butter side down!*

*“But we Yooks, as you know,  
when we breakfast or sup,  
spread our bread,” Grandpa said,  
“with the butter side up.*

*That’s the right, honest way!”*

*Grandpa gritted his teeth.*

*“So you can’t trust a Zook who spreads bread underneath!*

*Every Zook must be watched!*

*He has kinks in his soul!*

*That’s why, as a youth, I made watching my goal,  
watching Zooks for the Zook-Watching Border Patrol!” (Dr. Seuss, 1984, pp. 1-6)*

From that point in the children's book, the grandfather Yook re-tells the story of how each side made bigger and better weapons to intimidate the other side. The hatred between the groups increases as each side needs more and more resources to build their ever-growing arsenal of weapons. In the end, both the Zooks and the Yooks develop a bomb that will annihilate everything in sight, including themselves. One represent from each group stands on the wall with the bomb in hand, threatening to drop it for "victory".

Lisa finds that her students really enjoy the humor presented by Dr. Seuss in this children's book, that actually carries a heavy message about the destruction that can be created by people and countries who remain in ignorance of one another (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, pp. 22-23).

While discussing another unit of study, Lisa explained how she introduces historical events and figures related to the African-American experience during the Civil Rights Movement. She begins with a nationwide synopsis of the issues to establish the "big picture". Then, she introduces the local perspective, including the desegregation of the local high school. In fact, the Assistant Principal at Lisa's high school has an aunt who was a member of the first class to desegregate the local schools. Based upon interviews with this aunt, Lisa is able to retell stories and information about that particular time period. During the interviews for this study, Lisa discussed how interested her students are interested in the local history, especially since many know the people mentioned in the stories of struggle for civic rights within the community. She said that by utilizing their local civil rights and desegregation history, it allows students

to “really see history as affecting a person they know” (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006, p. 5).

Learning about history through the experiences of someone students know is the exact opposite of what Lucy has found when she covers the history of the Vietnam War with her students. This past year, she showed the documentary, “Return with Honor” about Vietnam Prisoners of War.

the kids got excited because they saw a black POW and a Hispanic POW...that it just wasn't white guys who were fighting in Vietnam and getting shot down and flying the planes, but it was like, ‘There's a black guy flying the planes and there was a Hispanic guy flying the planes’, and they were excited...they weren't just grunts. They weren't the guys on the ground carrying the weapons and firing the guns like “Platoon”. That they were also flying the planes there. (Lucy transcript, April 3, 2006, p. 5)

## **Chapter Overview**

The five participants who shared their thoughts and ideas provide an interesting insight into why and how they teach U.S. history with multiple perspectives. From their words, six themes emerged that address each of the two research questions. These themes directly reflect upon the four findings that emerged from the data. Each of these findings, as well as their implications for the field teacher education, social studies education, and my future research will be further discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

### Introduction

During the initial stages of this collective case study, I did not know if I would be able to find participants who taught social studies with multiple perspectives. Research suggests there are social studies educators who do teach in this manner via some form or another (Noboa, 2006; Wilson & Wineburg, 1993; Davis & Yeager, 1996; Howard, 2004; Branch, 2004; Merryfield, 1998; Makler, 1994; Warren, 2006; Lindquist, 1997; Burstein & Hutton, 2005). Similar studies have also been conducted with pre-service teachers (Field & Singer, 2006; Tamura, 2003; Halagao, 2004).

In addition, there are a multitude of studies that suggest students are capable of thinking beyond a single story line within history (Stevenson, 1990; Keedy, et al, 1998; Barton, 1997; Leigh & Reynolds, 1997; VanSledright, 1997; Yeager & Doppen, 2001; Levstik, 1997; Seixas, 1997; Gabella, 1994).

Although much has been written about various ways in which to include multiple perspectives within the social studies curriculum, there lacks a study that analyses the perspectives of teachers regarding the social studies classroom as a space to do so. While these studies are each similar to this research study in some form or another, none actually involve the perspectives of U.S. History teachers, as well as why and how they bring multiple perspectives to their classrooms. As such, this collective case study was designed to fill that void within the field of social studies research. Initially, I hoped to find one teacher who believed they taught in this manner. After a preliminary study, I

decided to complete a collective case study of five purposely selected social studies teachers.

Eventually I came to realize that it would be most interesting to narrow the study to U.S. History teachers since this subject matter is engrained with many traditional “stories” passed from one generation of students to the next. Although the term social studies encompasses many subjects including history, geography, economics, government, and sociology, for the purposes of this study, one subject matter, U.S. history, became the focus.

Many secondary U.S. history teachers were recommended by colleagues and principals, from which ten were pre-interviewed. After the pre-interviews, five were asked to participate in the study, which involved three contacts (pre-interview, interview, and member-checking), as well as the sharing of lesson plans in order to highlight various activities that demonstrate the use of multiple perspectives.

These five participants included four women and one man. In addition, four taught at the high school level and one at the middle school level. All were asked to share their perspectives on utilizing the U.S. history classroom as a space for teaching differently. In addition, they were asked to share how articulate their decision-making.

During the study interviews, the participants shared thoughts and lesson plans that led to a wealth of data. This data, along with my Researcher Journal, were coded and analyzed for themes that emerged to highlight influences upon the ways in which the participants relayed information that eventually spoke to each of the research questions. These themes that emerged are as follows:

Research Question #1: What are the perspectives of U.S. History teachers regarding the social studies classroom as a space of interruption and teaching differently?

Themes:

- The influence of participants' educational experiences
- Participants' love of subject matter
- Participants' commitment to challenging institutional and other forms of resistance

Research Question #2: How do the teachers articulate their decision-making within this space?

Themes:

- The vital impact of professional development
- The inclusion of personal and family experiences
- The re(tellings) of historical people, places, and events

## **Findings**

With these themes in mind, I continued with further analysis to learn how the data may apply to future social studies and teacher education research. As such, four findings emerged, as outlined below:

- Passion for History
- Resistance and Facing Resistance
- Lifetime Learning

- Reciprocal Stories of Inspiration

### *Passion for History*

The research suggested that students are more engaged in subject matter that is of interest to them (Stevenson, 1990). Similarly, the data from this collective case study suggested that each participant's experiences and rationale for utilizing multiple perspectives revolve around her/his love and passion for subject matter, namely history.

Every participant expressed the notion that they became a history teacher because something within history inspired them, whether it was family stories (Stephanie, Lisa, Linda), family vacations (Stephanie, Lucy), inspiring teachers (Stephanie, Lisa, Zach, Linda, Lucy), or courses studied (Stephanie, Lisa, Zach, Linda, Lucy). According to the data, this passion for their subject matter directly influenced their curriculum, as well as their pedagogy.

Based upon the themes that emerged from the data, each teacher believed their classroom was a space for the interruption of traditional notions of history, as well as dominant story lines within history. Multiple perspectives are welcomed in these teacher's classrooms in order to share their passion for history with their students.

In the literature that was reviewed for this study, researchers commonly sought answers to the question of how teachers incorporate a variety of activities that include multiple perspectives into their classrooms. These included the use of additional resources (Wilson and Wineburg, 1993; Lindquist, 1997; Burstein and Hutton, 2005); historical empathy (Wineburg, 1991; Davis and Yeager, 1996); historical thinking with

regards to race or ethnic identity (Howard, 2004; Urietta, 2004; Branch, 2004; Warren, 2006); and social justice (Makler, 1994).

Amongst all of these research studies, the question of why these teachers taught in this manner was never asked. While the findings for this collective case study cannot be generalized to all secondary U.S. history teachers, it is interesting to note the participants involved in this study shared the commonality of passion for their subject matter.

Upon reflection, this finding is something that seems to make common sense. After all, anyone who has ever attempted to do something they are passionate about may express positive feelings about the outcome. Likewise, anyone who has ever attempted something without passion for its success will likely find herself or himself just short of satisfaction. Therefore, this finding, passion for history, is an obvious conclusion that emerged from the wealth of data shared by the participants, and holds implications for those who consider the social studies field as a future program of study.

### ***Resistance and Facing Resistance***

Interestingly enough, the data suggested that every participant faced some form of resistance to multiple perspectives within the curriculum. Some participants described having to resist authority, while other participants described disagreement from others as to the material they chose to include within their curriculum.

Several participants described interactions with authority figures. These interactions included teaching in two different manners during pre-service teaching in order to “pass” through the system, while still offering more inclusive ways of teaching

when not being observed. The participants involved in this collective case study did not describe the type of “disjuncture” highlighted by Field and Singer (2006). Instead, the data suggested that several resisted the system put in place by field of teacher education in order to include more inclusive notions of history within the field of social studies during student teaching. Participants also reiterated that they could “close their classroom door” in order to teach in the manner most conducive to incorporating multiple perspectives within their curriculum.

With regards to others resisting the ways in which these participants presented their subject matter, several described incidents in which students, parents, and colleagues resisted the inclusion of multiple perspectives within the curriculum. Experiences were described in which parents or students resisted a history that was “storied” differently from how it had been learned in the past. Participants also described incidents when parents felt their curriculum was not focused upon “happier” events in history.

According to Field and Singer (2006), pre-service teachers “are often troubled by the disjuncture between what they learned in school as children and what they are learning now” (p. 24). The data suggested that this does not simply apply to pre-service teachers. Based upon the participants’ descriptions of various parental and student reactions, there may be a “disjuncture” for parents and students, as well.

Similarly to the first finding, the current field of research covers many aspects of how teachers incorporate various forms of multiple perspectives within the curriculum, but none asks for the rationale behind the pedagogy. This second finding, resistance and

facing resistance, is again, seemingly an obvious finding when considering the subject matters (slavery, war, civil rights, religion, politics, female rights, etc.) that many of the teachers incorporated into their curriculum. However, when data from other studies detailed controversial issues, the researchers highlighted other information besides how students, parents, and colleagues reacted to their participants' inclusion of such subject matters into the social studies curriculum. Therefore, this finding is pertinent to social studies educators who may decide to incorporate multiple perspectives into the curriculum.

### ***Lifetime Learning***

These participants epitomized the definition of lifetime learners. Whether it stemmed from continued professional development, traveling, or reading, the data suggested that each of the participants utilized a continued search for learning to enhance their U.S. history curriculum. While the study differed in its focus, Halagao (2004) found that once pre-service teachers learned something they believed would be of value for their students, they organized and planned how to utilize that information to teach their students.

As such, several of the participants described a rush of joy felt when they discovered something new for the classroom. This rush of joy can only be credited to the participants' desire to continue to learn and grow within the social studies. Stephanie shared her feelings of discovering new historical information during a trip she "won" during an essay contest for social studies educators. Lisa described learning about new

pedagogical methodologies during social studies conferences. Lucy shared artifacts obtained during her travels throughout the world that are used within her social studies curriculum.

This particular finding, Lifetime Learning, almost seems cliché considering that many educators utilize the term when describing their teaching philosophy. And, similarly to the other two findings, it is something that is not mentioned throughout the plethora of other research detailed within the literature review. However, the data suggested that the five participants involved in this research study each make a concerted effort to seek out additional materials and resources that enhances their curriculum. For this reason, it is note-worthy since it directly applies to individuals who consider how to enhance their pedagogy.

### ***Reciprocal Stories of Inspiration***

The final finding, reciprocal stories of inspiration, stemmed from the data that suggested these five participants share their own stories of inspiration, as well as are motivated by inspirational stories within history. With regards to sharing her own stories as a source of inspiration for her students, the data suggested that Linda (transcript, March 28, 2006) serves as an example. She shared how she incorporates her own experiences with history by almost overlaying her life within the timeline of historical events studied in U.S. History.

Included within these personal stories are experiences Linda's father faced when paying his poll tax in order to vote and changing his last name in order to serve in the

military. In addition, Linda also shared her own experiences with facing stereotypes and prejudices, first speaking a language other than English, serving as a military mom during times of war (Linda transcript, March 28, 2006). While each participant shared personal stories that serve as inspiration for their students, Linda's particular experiences serve as an excellent example.

However, not only did these teachers share their own personal stories of inspiration, they also shared inspirational stories within history that enabled their students to develop empathy (Davis, Yeager, and Foster, 2001; Yeager and Doppen, 2001) with historical figures. Included amongst these types of activities were a lesson "aboard a slave ship" (Stephanie transcript, November 5, 2005); a day of trench warfare (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006); and a study of local school desegregation (Lisa transcript, February 21, 2006).

Like the other findings that stemmed from the research data, this particular finding spoke to one's common sense, as well. Of course history is more interesting if teachers and students are all inspired by interesting "stories". However, it is not simply enough to present interesting stories. "...students need knowledge and appreciation of multiple perspectives, multiple realities, and conflicting viewpoints on issues, events, and people under study" (Merryfield, 1998, p. 342).

### **Implications for the Field of Social Studies**

What does this mean for the field of social studies?

I believe this conversation enhances the research field by bringing actual teachers' ideas and perceptions to the discussion. I also believe it would be valuable to continue this discussion with these participants as they reflect upon our discussions, and as I continue to grow as an educational researcher.

The social studies encompasses a great deal of subject matter, as well as a huge amount of information. For educators, it can be overwhelming as to what (not) to include within the curriculum. Therefore, many may become over-reliant upon one source of information due to the need for succinct information. These teachers may see a place for multiple perspectives and resources; however, in the interest of time, they may decide to continue with the status quo.

Therefore, the participants within this collective case study serve as an example of what may be accomplished by including multiple perspectives, viewpoints, and resources within the U.S. history curriculum. In addition, the study findings are unique, and while not generalizable for the field, are indicative of characteristics epitomized by this group of U.S. history teachers who teach for/about multiple perspectives.

### **Implications for the Field of Teacher Education**

As described by several participants in this study, pre-service teachers are simultaneously navigating through teacher education programs and social studies education programs during their college experiences. While the participants involved in this collective case study were practicing U.S. history teachers, each obtained their

teaching certification through a college of education secondary program that comprised of teacher education courses, as well as social studies methods courses.

Several participants described a mismatch between the philosophies and requirements of the two entities, although they are each integral components of any pre-service teacher within the social studies. What does this mean for the field of teacher education? How might the gap between the teacher education and social studies education be lessened? Might these experiences be unique, or shared by a wider number of social studies educators, both pre-service and practicing?

These questions are in need of answers. While this particular study raises many more questions than it answers, it does serve as a catalyst for the recognition that more study is needed.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Because this collective case study only includes secondary U.S. History teachers, I must also ask additional questions concerning other teachers within the social studies. What are the perceptions of teachers in the other social studies courses (geography, government, economics, sociology, etc.) with regards to multiple perspectives?

In the future, it must also be asked, what are the perspectives of elementary social studies teachers with regards to multiple perspectives? As demonstrated by a review of journal articles concerning elementary classrooms or activities that include multiple perspectives, Field (2001) demonstrated that the use of multiple perspectives at the

elementary level is occurring. Just how and at what level is another area in need of further research.

There is a great deal of research concerning white students' experiences in learning more about "Others"; however, "Rarely do we read about the curricular experiences of the very students of color highlighted in curricula as they learn about their ethnic history and culture." (Halagao, 2004, p. 460). This, again, is another area in need of further research.

In addition, further research is needed to enhance the conversation surrounding the findings that emerged from this collective case study. These teachers shared a passion for history, a desire to show and face resistance, a commitment to lifetime learning, and a desire to share reciprocal stories of inspiration. Might these findings appear through the data in future studies? How might social studies teachers react to conversations revolving around each of these findings? What might these findings mean for pre-service teachers? Within the social studies, these future research projects are worthwhile and of interest to researchers and teachers, alike.

## **Conclusion**

As I complete the analysis of the data from these five participants, I have to ask myself if I really learned what I set out to learn. I believe the data suggests these teachers have committed themselves to bring multiple perspectives to their students. In addition, I believe the data suggests they are accomplishing that goal. However, I also think I was anticipating more than I actually found.

I think I wanted to hear about huge debates and shocking epiphanies as students were confronted with new ways of thinking about people, places, and events throughout history. With graduate school, I became aware and interested in critical theory and pedagogy, while via this study, I became familiar with curricular materials such as the *Rethinking* series, *Teaching Tolerance* series, and *Facing History and Ourselves*. As such, I think I am in a different place – one in theory rather than the actual classroom.

However, I am sure that I did learn a tremendous amount concerning how and why these teachers do go against the “norm” and facilitate conversations – at whatever level of multiplicity – with their students concerning different notions and ways of considering U.S. History.

I also consider the emergent findings to be of value for enhancing the conversation about why U.S. history teachers are empowered and inspired to include multiple perspectives and stories within the curriculum. After all, hooks (1990) teaches us “...how important airing diverse perspectives can be...”

## APPENDIX A

**IRB #2005-05-0053**

**Informed Consent to Participate in Research (Screening Interview)**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

You are being asked to potentially participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The Principal Investigator (the person in charge of this research) will provide you with a copy of this form to keep for your reference, and will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Title of Research Study:** Interrupting traditional social studies classrooms: Perspectives of U.S. History teachers

**Principal Investigator(s) (include faculty sponsor), UT affiliation, and Telephone Number(s):**

Robin Robinson Kapavik, Ph.D. Candidate  
Lisa J. Cary, Ph.D.  
The University of Texas at Austin  
830-627-8636 (home); 210-410-6672 (cell)

**Funding source:** Not Applicable

**What is the purpose of this study?** The purpose of this study is to examine the perspectives of secondary history teachers and how they see the U.S. History classroom as a space of interruption in order to teach differently so that multiple narratives are explored, studied, and analyzed. This study will include 5 participants, all public middle or high school U.S. History teachers. For this initial screening phase, however, the researcher will pre-interview five to ten potential study participants who have been nominated as candidates for the study.

**What will be done if you take part in this research study?** The initial interview for the screening phase of the study will consist of one 1/2 hour interview to determine if the study is appropriate for both participant and researcher. If chosen as one of the final five participants, the actual study will consist of one, one-hour interview, which will take place in a public place, such as The University of Texas or public libraries. In addition, follow-up questions may continue via email and/or telephone communication. Interview transcripts will be confirmed via email.

**What are the possible discomforts and risks?** At this time, there are no perceived risks for participants. If you wish to discuss the information above or any other risks you may experience, you may ask questions now or call the Principal Investigator listed on the front page of this form.

**What are the possible benefits to you or to others?** There are no direct benefits. Even so, this study will offer participants the opportunity to reflect upon her/his practice. In addition, the knowledge shared by the participants may contribute to the field of education by demonstrating the possibilities of teaching history with multiple narratives.

**If you choose to take part in this study, will it cost you anything?** No.

**Will you receive compensation for your participation in this study?** No.

**What if you are injured because of the study?** There are no known risks.

**If you do not want to take part in this study, what other options are available to you?** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to refuse to be in the study, and your refusal will not influence current or future relationships with The University of Texas at Austin.

**How can you withdraw from this research study and whom should you call if you have questions?** If you wish to stop your participation in this research study for any reason, you should contact: **Robin Robinson Kapavik** at **(830) 627-8636**. You are free to withdraw your consent and stop participation in this research study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits for which you may be entitled. Throughout the study, the researcher will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or if you have complaints, concerns, or questions about the research, please contact **Lisa Leiden, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (512) 232-4383**. You may also contact the **Office of Research Compliance and Support** at **(512) 471-8871**.

**How will your privacy and the confidentiality of your research records be protected?** Each interview session will be audio taped for future transcription. Each cassette tape will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible. In addition, each cassette tape will be kept in a secure location (e.g., a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office), and will be heard only for research purposes by the investigator and her colleague, who will assist with member-checking. This colleague will be another graduate student in the Curriculum & Instruction Department at the University of Texas at Austin. Each cassette



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**Signature of Principal Investigator**

**Date**

We may wish to present some of the audiotapes from this study at educational conventions or as demonstrations in classrooms. Please sign below if you are willing to allow us to do so with your recorded data.

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Signature of Subject

Date

## APPENDIX B

**IRB #2005-05-0053**

**Informed Consent to Participate in Research (Actual Study)**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The Principal Investigator (the person in charge of this research) will provide you with a copy of this form to keep for your reference, and will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Title of Research Study:** Interrupting traditional social studies classrooms: Perspectives of U.S. History teachers

**Principal Investigator(s) (include faculty sponsor), UT affiliation, and Telephone Number(s):**

Robin Robinson Kapavik, Ph.D. Candidate  
Lisa J. Cary, Ph.D.  
The University of Texas at Austin  
830-627-8636 (home); 210-410-6672 (cell)

**Funding source:** Not Applicable

**What is the purpose of this study?** The purpose of this study is to examine the perspectives of secondary history teachers and how they see the U.S. History classroom as a space of interruption in order to teach differently so that multiple narratives are explored, studied, and analyzed. This study will include five participants, all public middle or high school U.S. History teachers.

**What will be done if you take part in this research study?** After an initial screening interview (previous consent form), five participants, including yourself, were chosen for this study. The study will consist of one, one-hour interview, which will take place in a public place, such as The University of Texas or public libraries. In addition, follow-up questions may continue via email and/or telephone communication. Interview transcripts will be confirmed via email.

**What are the possible discomforts and risks?** At this time, there are no perceived risks for participants. If you wish to discuss the information above or any other risks you may

experience, you may ask questions now or call the Principal Investigator listed on the front page of this form.

**What are the possible benefits to you or to others?** There are no direct benefits. Even so, this study will offer participants the opportunity to reflect upon her/his practice. In addition, the knowledge shared by the participants may contribute to the field of education by demonstrating the possibilities of teaching history with multiple narratives.

**If you choose to take part in this study, will it cost you anything?** No.

**Will you receive compensation for your participation in this study?** No.

**What if you are injured because of the study?** There are no known risks.

**If you do not want to take part in this study, what other options are available to you?** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to refuse to be in the study, and your refusal will not influence current or future relationships with The University of Texas at Austin.

**How can you withdraw from this research study and whom should you call if you have questions?** If you wish to stop your participation in this research study for any reason, you should contact: **Robin Robinson Kapavik at (830) 627-8636**. You are free to withdraw your consent and stop participation in this research study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits for which you may be entitled. Throughout the study, the researcher will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study. In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or if you have complaints, concerns, or questions about the research, please contact **Lisa Leiden, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (512) 232-4383**. You may also contact the **Office of Research Compliance and Support at (512) 471-8871**.

**How will your privacy and the confidentiality of your research records be protected?** Each interview session will be audio taped for future transcription. Each cassette tape will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible. In addition, each cassette tape will be kept in a secure location (e.g., a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office), and will be heard only for research purposes by the investigator and her colleague, who will assist with member-checking. This colleague will be another graduate student in the Curriculum & Instruction Department at the University of Texas at Austin. Each cassette tape will be retained for possible future analysis. If the results of this research are published in research journals or presented at conferences, your identity will not be disclosed.

If, in the unlikely event it becomes necessary for the Institutional Review Board to review your research records, then the University of Texas at Austin will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. Your research records will not be released without your consent unless required by law or a court order. The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

**Will the researcher benefit from your participation in this study?** Other than contributing to the completion of the graduate program, there are no benefits.

**Signatures:**

**As a representative of this study, I have explained the purpose, the procedures, the benefits, and the risks that are involved in this research study:**

---

**Signature and printed name of person obtaining consent** **Date**

**You have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks, and you have received a copy of this form. You have been given the opportunity to ask questions before you sign, and you have been told that you can ask other questions at any time. You voluntarily agree to participate in this study. By signing this form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.**

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**Printed Name of Subject** **Date**

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**Signature of Subject** **Date**

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**Signature of Principal Investigator** **Date**

We may wish to present some of the audiotapes from this study at educational conventions or as demonstrations in classrooms. Please sign below if you are willing to allow us to do so with your recorded data.

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Signature of Subject

Date

## APPENDIX C

*IRB #2005-05-0053*

### **Interview Protocol – Screening Process**

*These three quotes will provide a catalyst for conversation about teaching with/for multiple perspectives in U.S. History classes.*

What are your reactions to the following quotes:

“Many students embrace the ‘easy’ story – a Disney version – rather than the complicated versions. How might a different approach...prepare students to focus on big issues that continue throughout time such as race, gender, dissent/compromise, etc.?” (Linda Levstik)

“Teachers should teach about/with “critical perspectives that do not explore WHAT is ‘true’, but WHY and HOW something becomes known as ‘true’ ...a story of multiplicities”. (Avner Segall)

“Not a new idea, but rare and risky” (Terrie Epstein)

## APPENDIX D

*IRB #2005-05-0053*

### **Interview Protocol – Actual Study**

*These are basic questions that will each be accompanied by appropriate follow-up questions.*

1. Describe your experience teaching social studies (subjects; schools; grade levels; etc).
2. Describe your experience teaching U.S. History.
3. Describe your personal experiences as a student of U.S. History (elementary; secondary; collegiate).
4. Describe your educational philosophy.
5. What does it mean, to you, to teach with multiple perspectives in mind?
6. What does that look like in your planning & preparation?
7. What does that look like in your instruction?
8. Do you believe you have always taught in this manner?
9. Can you pinpoint the catalyst that brought you to teach in this manner?
10. What literature did you read to assist you in teaching with multiple perspectives?
11. What literature do you currently read to back up what you are doing in the classroom?
12. Where do you find the inspiration to teach in this manner?

13. Are there risks involved when you teach with multiple perspectives?
14. How do students react?
15. How do parents react?
16. How do colleagues react?
17. How do administrators react?
18. Why do you believe people have such reactions?
19. Why is it important to you to teach with multiple perspectives in mind?

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