Dewey, Disability and Democratic Education

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Academic Abstract

This dissertation is comprised of three manuscripts that coalesce around the topics of

Dewey, Disability, and Democratic Education. Each manuscript is formatted for publication and

the dissertation itself is prefaced by information that explains my background and how it

connects to my current research. As such, the work contained in this dissertation is a product of

my experiences as a social studies teacher, special educator, and administrator. Henceforth, my

work focuses on Dewey, Disability, and Democratic Education. My research interests culminate

in a three-article dissertation. The first paper is entitled, "Using Dewey to Problematize the

Notion of Disability in Public Education." A version of this paper is currently under review for

publication. In this paper I situate Dewey's theoretical underpinnings in the conversation around

special education. Previous scholars of Dewey and disability have examined the ways in which

his work speaks to educational growth and educational opportunity; my work adds to this body

of research. However, my work is unique in that not only do I discuss pluralistic,

communicative, participatory democracy as it pertains to students with disabilities, I also

examine how Deweyan democracy can take shape, specifically within the context of an

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting. I conclude by arguing that Deweyan democracy is

not only ideal, but realistic, attainable, and necessary, especially in the lives of students with

disabilities.

In my second paper, I use the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) dataset in a paper

entitled, "Can We Meet Our Mission? Examining the Professional Development of Social

Studies Teachers to Support Students with Disabilities and Emergent Bilingual Learners." A

version of this paper has been accepted for publication in *The Journal of Social Studies*

Research. In this work, I first examine the social studies scholarship looking at students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners, as well as research about the nature of professional development within the social studies. I then analyze the number of students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners that we support in the social studies to provide a portrait of the field. Next, I examine the extent to which social studies teachers receive professional development to support those student groups, as well as the extent to which the social studies teachers found the professional development to be useful. My findings indicate that social studies teachers do not receive substantial professional development to support the learning of *all* students, as evidenced by the limited amount of professional development received focusing on students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners.

In my third paper, I build on previous research examining the possibilities and benefits of participating in informal learning spaces such as Twitter in a paper entitled, "'So I Feel Like We Were Theoretical, Whereas They Actually Do It': Navigating Twitter Chats For Teacher Education." A version of this paper is also under review for publication. In this paper, specifically, I examine the experiences and perceptions of pre-service social studies teachers who participated in a discipline specific Twitter chat known as #sschat. My findings indicate that pre-service teachers found value in the chat when they were able to share resources with practicing teachers and build professional learning networks. However, there were instances when the pre-service teachers felt like they contributed little because they did not have direct experience with teaching. Additionally, the pre-service teachers expressed dissatisfaction with using Twitter as a platform for professional chats. However, I still contend and conclude that the utility of such chats outweighs the negatives. Therefore, this study sheds light on the potentiality and necessity of utilizing Twitter chats as a space to provide ongoing and systematic support to pre-service

teachers to help not only them, but the field of social studies education move forward. These

papers when considered together form a foundation of scholarship and further inquiry focused on

Dewey, Disability, and Democratic Education, on which I plan to build in the years to come.

General Audience Abstract

When I completed my undergraduate social studies teaching program, the job market appeared bleak in the coalfields of southwest Virginia. Coal, no longer king, had driven the economy for years. With its decline, my community barely managed to survive. My advisor at the time, honest and plain-spoken, told me that unless I obtained a license in special education, I would most likely not obtain a teaching job. Unlike many other areas of the country, in my hometown unless you could do other things like coach or drive a bus, a license to teach social studies was of little value. There was not much money and a new hire had to be willing to do many different jobs to prove his or her worth. Luckily, I had gotten my Commercial Driver License (CDLs) through a training program offered by the county school board, and I was consequently able to obtain a position, although not as a social studies teacher.

I started my career in education as a special educator and substitute school bus driver. In this position I worked in an alternative education setting and taught vocational skills to secondary students with significant disabilities (in the institutional meaning of the word). From the start of my career, I aspired to become an administrator, so I enrolled in and completed a degree in Administration and Supervision. As I was working on that degree, I moved to the general education high school level, where I held a position teaching social studies and special education in an inclusive setting. Shortly thereafter, I obtained a job as an assistant principal. The part I enjoyed most about this position was working with and thinking about how to help teachers become better at their craft. At this point is when I decided to pursue a PhD in social studies education, so I could develop my interest into a body of research and eventually a career.

Two years into my PhD program I was still grappling with who I was as a scholar. As I familiarized myself with social studies scholarship, I discovered that in my first position as an

alternative education special educator, I was essentially preparing my students for the responsibilities of citizenship, which is the mission of the field of social studies (NCSS, 2013). Nevertheless, it was not until I started reading the work of John Dewey that I truly realized the complexity of what I experienced when I taught in the alternative education setting. That position allowed me to examine an element that I otherwise, would not have had the privilege to see; the complexity and intellect required for physical labor (Rose, 2004) and the inter-workings of true, vibrant, Deweyan democracy. Dewey's work sparked a new interest in me and I started developing a deep-seated curiosity about how his theoretical underpinnings related to disability and democratic education.

My interest in disability then caused me to ask other questions about social studies in relation to special education, which made me reflect on my prior experiences as a social studies educator. Although I had a license in special education, there were many instances in which I felt unprepared and unsupported in addressing the needs of *all* students in my classes which included general education students, students with disabilities (SWDs), and emergent bilingual learners (EBLs). I began to wonder if my feelings of unpreparedness and lack of support were in isolation. As I parsed the literature, I found that there was not a significant amount of research focused specifically on the extent to which social studies teachers felt they were prepared and supported to address the needs of *all* learners in their classroom. Additionally, my experience in both public education and teacher education gave me insight to realize that school systems do not have funding to provide specialized professional development and similarly, teacher education is under financial constraints as well. Therefore, I began examining what informal spaces such as Twitter offer educators in terms of professional support and development. My interests and curiosity fueled my scholarly work and eventually culminated into three distinct, but

interconnected manuscripts. The three manuscripts that follow coalesce around my interests in

Dewey, Disability, and Democratic Education.

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Using Dewey to Problematize the Notion of Disability in Public Education

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Abstract

My paper looks at ways in which students with disabilities have the capacity to be full, contributing citizens within a participatory, communicative, and pluralistic democracy. In many instances, institutions such as schools provide barriers that disallow and dissuade students with disabilities from full participation which prevents them from becoming co-creators of their educational experience. However, I argue that in a Deweyan democracy, all students must have not just the right, but the capacity to develop into fully participating, contributing citizens. My hope is that by situating disability and special education within Deweyan democratic discourse it will be possible to render it more genuinely inclusive.

Keywords: democratic education, citizenship, special education, civic education, social foundations

"The democratic faith in human equality is belief that every human being, independent

of the quantity or range of his personal endowment, has the right to equal opportunity

with every other person for development of whatever gifts he has" (LW 14:226-227).

"The belief in the capacity of our people, then, requires a continual affirmation,

and a sensitivity to the ways it can be diminished" (Rose, 2004, p. 214).

John Dewey's concept of democratic education is realistic, even necessary for all students. I witnessed this necessity as a social studies educator, special educator, and administrator. This paper draws on that experience and uses students with disabilities (SWDs) as a focus point to exemplify what it would look like if we extended citizenship beyond legalistic boundaries commonly associated with civic engagement (i.e. voting). I therefore begin with a discussion of Dewey's pluralistic, participatory, and communicative democracy. Next, I examine citizenship in American society and Deweyan democracy. I then interrogate the nature of citizenship by critically evaluating an example of a typical (undemocratic) Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting. I conclude by arguing that by enacting Deweyan democracy in public education, schools can help SWDs develop their potential as fully participating citizens and leaders.

The Current Status of Disability: Two Diverging Models

Extensive involvement by the United States Federal Government in the education of individuals with disabilities begins no later than the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA, 1975). In 1990 Congress reauthorized EHA as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). Since that time, the rights of students with

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disabilities "had to be reinterpreted time and time again" (Bérubé, 2003, p. 55). Under the current authorization, IDEA (2004) has 14 categories of disability including: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, developmental, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disability delay, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment, including blindness. A student is considered to have a disability once he or she meets the federal guidelines and criteria, and is eligible for special education services once this identified disability adversely affects his or her educational performance (Center for Parent Information and Resources, 2017).

Recent scholarship has identified IDEA as an effective framework from which to support students with disabilities (Ben-Porath, 2012). Nevertheless, there is scholarship that is critical of the very nature and underpinnings of special education. For example, Gabel and Connor (2008) indicate, "many critical scholars question the very foundation of the field of special education" (p. 377). This is because some scholars believe that "Once captured by the special education industry, the individual becomes an unending object of study for a well-intentioned cadre of professionals" (Baglieri, Bejoian, Broderick, Connor, & Valle, 2011, p. 2133). The system of special education has often been seen as an overall failure, and giving it a nominal distinction within the field of education professionalizes this failure (Baglieri et al., 2011). While these issues are of importance and merit further scholarship, addressing this ongoing controversy is beyond the scope of this paper. Here, the goal is to expand avenues and possibilities of Deweyan democracy while operating within this unsettled, ever shifting configuration of public

education. In pursuit of such an expansion of democratic possibilities, it is useful to reflect on the dominant models of disability.

Currently there are two dominant models through which to examine disability: The Medical Model of Disability and The Social Model of Disability. My paper more closely aligns with latter. Advocates of the Medical Model approach disability as if it were a disease that needs treated, with the ideal outcome being an individual achieving "normality" (Shyman, 2016, p. 367). Furthermore, the focus in the field of education in general has long tended to be on what students cannot do in a given situation (Garrison, 2010). Therefore, a student's performance is assessed by a series of observations and checklists; such pathological societal assessments are prevalent in addressing disability in public education (Garrison, 2010). Moreover, in public education, once a student has been identified as having a disability and is deemed eligible to receive special education services, the goal then is to help the child "catch up" to their peers. Therefore, the impression is given that having a disability is a condition that prevents one from achieving at an ideal level.

In contrast, advocates of The Social Model posit that disability is a societal construct (Danforth, 2008). That is not to say biological factors such as dysfunctional limbs do not affect individuals from doing certain activities, such as climbing stairs (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2013). Nevertheless, "Justice requires that we repair the environments not the people" (Lekan, 2009, p. 216). If individuals with disabilities have issues accessing physical structures, or struggle to have academic success, it is the environments that need altering, not the individuals. My paper suggests altering the social and political environments to be more pluralistic, participatory, and communicative.

Such a Deweyan approach confronts and rejects the Medical Model. For instance, O'Brien notes:

> Furthermore, instead of focusing on what children cannot do, educators would view all children as strong, capable, and competent. And "disability" would be thought of as an addition to the concept of diversity, that is, a difference in degree, not type. (O'Brien, 2016, p. 481)

Therefore, examining disability from this non-pathological perspective problematizes the notion of how the citizenship of individuals with disabilities is approached in an institutional setting, because "inclusive education is about the participation of *all* children and young people and the removal of *all* form of exclusionary practices" (Barton, 1998, p. 84-85).

Dewey and Disability

Examining Dewey sheds light on possible ways to reconstruct the environments that prohibit and discourage individuals with disabilities from achieving participatory democratic citizenship. Although Dewey did not discuss disability directly, his theoretical underpinnings help to situate him within the discourse of disability, aligning him more closely with the Social Model of Disability. To Dewey, the focus of education should be "continuity of growth" and that looks different for every student and cannot be measured by a standardized assessment of any sort (Garrison, Neubert, & Reich, 2016, p. 186). Given the uniqueness of each individual, there is no test that could provide a valid assessment of growth in every person. Besides, it is not up to a test to determine growth, but it is up to the teacher to identify "what experiences best promote growth" (Mason, 2016, p. 92). Additionally, growth can be observed and "is present wherever life exists"

(Danforth, 2008, p. 58). For example, if one day a student is not able to do a given task and then later that student can complete it, simply put, that student has experienced growth.

Furthermore, Dewey had "discomfort with intelligence testing" because the results are used as evidentiary support to label or categorize someone as inferior or superior (Danforth, 2008, p. 50). Danforth (2008) indicates that these labels serve as stigmatizations "while claiming scientific neutrality" (p. 59). Additionally, "labeling directs the teacher's attention to conformity instead of the uniqueness of each person" (Furman, 2015, p. 62). In fact, no one has a disability until he or she takes an IQ test (Garrison, 2012). Dewey argues that inferiority and superiority can only be in relation to a task (Danforth, 2008). As Dewey argues:

> There are many modes of superiority and inferiority as there are consequences to be attained and works to be accomplished. And until society becomes static new modes of activity are continually developing, each of which permits and exacts its own specific inferiorities and superiorities. There is doubtless some degree of correlation between traits which promote superiority in more than one direction. But the idea of abstract, universal superiority and inferiority is an absurdity. (MW 13:49)

Consider a student I taught, Justin.[1] The intelligence test he was given indicated that he had an intellectual disability, which suggests that he was intellectually inferior when compared to his same-age peers. However, Justin knew how to do a variety of tasks valued in the social context of the vocational classroom, such as, but not limited to,

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[1] Here and elsewhere in the paper, pseudonyms have been used to protect the student's or teachers' identity.

stacking lumber, sawing, hammering, and sweeping. His peers probably did not know

how to do many of the aforementioned tasks. So given a variety of tasks to complete in a

woodshop, who then is inferior, Justin or his peers of putatively "normal" IQ's? This

example explicates Dewey's argument about superiority and inferiority. One cannot

simply say that a student is either inferior or superior based off a standardized

assessment, as it requires contextualization to actually make any logical sense. However,

in many instances education leaves the logic behind and proceeds with the labels.

Deweyan Democracy

Pluralistic Democracy

Within a Deweyan democracy, perceptions of ability and disability labels begin to break

down and lose meaning. However, the word democracy is often spoken, but rarely truly heard,

understood, and applied. Most American citizens are familiar with the term because they are

familiar with the notion of American democracy. In fact, "we tend to think of democracy as

something that exists somewhere else, typically in Washington, D.C., or the state capitol, and is

supported by the voting of dutiful individuals" (Stitzlein, 2014, p. 66). Although the ideal of

democracy is related to government, it is more so a way of life or a way of looking at the world.

Democracy is something that emerges and, should it thrive, repeatedly occurs; it is not something

to be statically preserved. It is a place where experiences are blended and realities constructed

and then reconstructed.

When speaking of democracy, Dewey proposes two questions as standards for evaluating

any society. The first (internal) standard considers: "How numerous and varied are the interests

which are consciously shared?" (MW 9:89). He asks this question as a way of assessing if an

occurring situation is actually a democracy. This question addresses the issue of whether

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everyone's interests are being represented and if there is a direct effort to ensure that these views are being shared among the members of the democracy. It urges the society to expand interests held in common. The second (external) standard considers: "How full and free is the interplay with other forms of association?" (MW 9:89). This standard asks whether the group has free and open exchanges with forms of life distinctly different from those currently found within the society. It urges openness to otherness and offers hospitality to strangers. Both standards point toward an inclusive pluralism.

Dewey examines his two standards by considering a non-pluralistic situation where interests are shared, but not varied or open to other forms of exchange. He asks us to consider a band of thieves. Thieves share a common interest in stealing. However, this common interest is limited and the thieves do not have any open exchanges with outside members. Doing so would result in the demise of the organization. Although each group member may have a voice, the group lacks diversity of perspective, and as Dewey notes, "Hence, the education such a society gives is partial and distorted" (MW 9:89). However, if a group forms where community organizations, for instance schools, such that, students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders are involved in a dialogic relationship, then Deweyan democracy starts to form. In this example, the interests are shared and varied and the exchange between the external (community) and internal (school) is open and unrestrained. Ideally, every citizen in a democracy begins to have a role and a contribution to help that democracy not just survive, but thrive. Dewey's two standards point toward a participatory, pluralistic democracy.

Garrison et al. (2016) argue, "We can say that a plurality of interests shared within a community is a necessary precondition of education for democracy" (p. 98). For example, the notion of plurality within a community is when those within a group share common interests.

This can be explained by examining educational decisions made within a school itself. When a school shares a common interest in helping students find their unique place in society, this school has the potential to provide democratic education. If this school is to provide effective education, the faculty has to make a concerted effort to include the voices of outside members such as social services, disability advocates, local colleges, parents, and other stakeholders. Garrison et al. argue, "The key point here is that for the development of its democratic relations and experiences, a given group, community, or society needs generous and unhindered exchanges taking place with other groups, communities and societies" (Garrison et al., 2016, p. 98). In order to educate for democracy these external exchanges are of utmost necessity.

Therefore, it is sufficient to say that a school, when educating for democracy, has an openness to the local, national, and global community. This relationship should benefit and edify both the school and the community. For example, consider a program that one of my colleagues had in which students with disabilities operated a consignment shop on the school property. The students did everything in the store from working with and waiting on customers to taking donations. The public would donate, buy, and interact with the students on a daily basis. This relationship helped to upset a binary present in modern society, which is the distinction between manual and mental labor. If we accept this binary, Rose (2004) posits:

> ….we miss so much: The mental processes that enable service. The aesthetics of
> physical labor. The complex interplay of the social and mechanical. The
> choreography of hand, eye, ear, brain. The everpresence of abstraction, planning
> and problem solving in everyday work. (p. xx)

This situation helped the public to not miss the choreography because they could observe the capacity of the students with disabilities. This dialogic relationship also allowed the students to

become fully engaged with the local culture and community. Therefore, the benefit of open communication between the school and community can only be positive and enriching to both groups.

Democratic Participation

In Deweyan democracy, everyone must not only have a right to participate; he or she must also have the capacity. When someone has a right to do something that simply means that her or his largely negative and formal, freedom is secured by law, such as the right to free speech in America. However, arguing that everyone must have the capacity adds an extra element because then the argument moves beyond formal rights secured by law, and towards the substantial notion that no one is exclude based on perceived lack of capacity thus everyone can be a contributing citizen. If the capacity is lacking it must be developed whenever possible.

Educating individual democratic capacity is essential to any vibrant democracy. It enables positive, active, substantive freedom. For example, Dewey posits, "It is the aim of progressive education to take part in correcting unfair privilege and unfair deprivation, not to perpetuate them" (MW 9: 126). It is clear that Dewey was not in favor of anyone being excluded; instead, he supported the inclusion of all that are affected by a policy, individual decision, or law. However, the inclusion of all is only possible in a creative democracy. Garrison et al. (2016) speak to the nature of democratic education when they say, "Education in a democratic sense has to prepare sufficient opportunities for individuals to realize their autonomy *de facto* in the complex contexts of modern power constellations" (p. 148). Therefore, the individual citizen must realize that he or she has autonomy within a genuinely pluralistic democracy.

In American democracy, not everyone can participate, even in the restricted legal sense; sometimes it is claimed because he or she intrinsically lack the capacity. In this

paper, the focus is on the participation of individuals with disabilities, in the institutional meaning of the word. In fact, there are laws in certain states that prohibit and restrain individuals with disabilities from civic engagement such as voting. This is an example in which individuals have the right to vote because they are an American of proper age, but the law sets parameters around their capacity. For example, Disability Justice (2016) notes:

- 7 states deny the right to vote to: **"idiots or insane persons"**

- others deny the vote to those of "**unsound mind, non compos mentis"**, or those who are not of "**quiet and peaceable behavior**"

- 16 states bar **those adjudged mentally incompetent or incapacitated** from voting

- 4 state constitutions bar people "**under guardianship**" from voting (Par. 5)

Therefore, when looking at the concept of participation, one should consider exactly what it means to be a democratic citizen. If participation is defined and limited to traditional civic engagement, such as voting, what then does this exclusion mean for the citizenship and active civic participation of individuals with severe disabilities? Nussbaum (2010) takes up this argument and identifies three levels of impairment: one in which the person can fully participate; one in which the person may be able to make a political decision, but needs the assistance of the guardian; and the last in which the person is completely dependent upon the guardian to speak on behalf of the individual with a disability (Nussbaum, 2010). In any case, Nussbaum argues that every person should have a vote. Nussbaum (2010) even goes on to say in the case of individuals with significant disabilities, "There is no good reason to refuse a surrogate arrangement in this area, and very strong reasons to accept it" (p. 93).

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Democratic Communication

Full citizenship for individuals with disabilities is not possible unless communication is present. For example, Dewey notes, "communication insures participation" (MW 9:7). Without communication among all members of the democracy neither of Dewey's standards can be addressed democratically. As Dewey notes, "In order to have a large number of values in common, all members of the group must have an equable opportunity to receive and take from others. There must be a large variety of shared undertakings and experiences" (MW 9:90). Without full and free communication individuals cannot know if they have a shared interest. Additionally, open and unhindered exchanges are stifled because communication is essential in this component as well. Dewey argues, "Lack of free and equitable intercourse which springs from a variety of shared interests makes intellectual stimulation unbalanced" (MW 9:90). Therefore, communication is a must to maintain the integrity of the democracy. So when considering individuals with disabilities, he or she has to be able to communicate, to the fullest extent possible, his or her needs, desires, and aspirations.

The importance and benefit of communication is exhibited powerfully by Dewey when he says:

> Society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication. There is more than a verbal tie between the words common, community, and communication. Men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common. (MW 9:7)

For a society to persist, communication has to persist in tandem. Communication in a community creates new shared interests, as well as revealing already existing interests.

The notion of communication becomes problematic when thinking of individuals with severe disabilities, especially if this individual cannot communicate in the usual sense of speaking or writing. This person can still be a contributing and participating citizen in a creative democracy and in this instance, one must refer back Dewey's statement in which everyone has not just the right, but also the capacity to be a member of a democracy. The first step in this process is the individual being present during the unhindered and open exchanges between the members of the democracy, because as Dotts (2016) notes, "[democratic education] changes the participants involved in interaction" (p. 112). Additionally, Garrison et al. (2016) argue, "At the bottom of this understanding of deep democracy lies the insight that direct face-to-face encounters are powerful experiences" (p. 105). These face-to-face encounters are often necessary for someone to fully consider the needs of someone else. As Dewey notes:

> The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest
>
> so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action
>
> of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking
>
> down of those barrier of class, race, and national territory which kept men from
>
> perceiving the full import of their activity. (MW 9:93)

Here Dewey explains the power of individuals with severe disabilities being present during face-to-face interactions. In these instances, everyone has to consider how her or his actions will affect the person with a disability even if that person may not know his or herself. This point is crucial in identifying that a person who has a severe disability,

which precludes him or her from traditional forms of communication, can participate in an exchange by solely being present in the room.

To tie the forgoing notion of a pluralistic, participatory, communicative democracy together, one should consider another observation Dewey makes:

> An undesirable society, in other words, is one which internally and externally sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience. A society which makes provision or participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. (MW 9:105)

Some could look at this statement made by Dewey and find it too rigid or dichotomous. However, as already noted, Dewey expects and believes that democracies should be constructed and then reconstructed. Therefore, when a democracy fails to serve the interests of the citizens, it should be reconstructed so that it does. If there is not free exchange inside and outside of the formation, then that society is undesirable because it does not and will not allow for the development of a satisfactory democracy.

Notice Dewey also argues that all members are to be on "equal terms" (MW 9: 105). If individuals with disabilities are involved in the exchange, his or her interests and insights should be considered as valuable as the "experts" or those in positions of authority. This concept of equality allows everyone at some point to assume a position or a voice of leadership. Everyone can be a contributing citizen in a pluralistic, participatory, communicate democracy.

An Aristocracy of Everyone

When a pluralistic, communicative, participatory democracy forms within a school, students can realize their unique potential and make their unique contribution to the society in which they live. Dewey argues that in such a society every citizen has something to provide. For example, Garrison (2012) states, "The specific needs, desires, and interests, along with moral, artistic, and cognitive development give each individual a unique perspective on existence; hence, the unique ability to make a unique contribution" (p. 354). The notion of unique contribution means that every person has not just an important place in society, but possesses something so significant that once society experiences it, the society is unable to live fully without it (Garrison, 2012). It is only possible for a student to find his or her unique contribution when presented with numerous opportunities to explore interests. When these opportunities are presented, the student is then able to realize his or her unique potential and the democracy can work to cultivate the citizen's potential to develop it into a unique contribution.

There is tremendous power in students finding their special contribution for the reason that when this occurs, the individual—every individual—is able to discover his or her capacity for leadership; everyone is capable of being a contributing citizen and a leader (Barber, 2012). Leadership does not just lie in the elite. Leadership is imbedded and present within every individual, varying only with context. Benjamin Barber speaks to such potential of this in his book *An Aristocracy of Everyone*. Similar to Dewey, Barber (2012) argues everyone has not just the right, but also the capacity to govern his or her own lives and become citizens. Barber (2012) argues:

Citizens are women and men educated for excellence-by which term I mean the

knowledge and competence to govern in common their own lives. The democratic

faith is rooted in the belief that all humans are capable of such excellence and

have not just the right but the capacity to become citizens. (p. 5)

Barber (2012) is not being idealistic. In fact, he recognizes that, in some instances,

students may be unable to master the content, but they can in the very least, be self-

governing and master their own lives. Barber (2012) argues, "Not everyone can master

string physics or string quartets, but everyone can master the conduct of his or her own

life" (p. 13). Therefore, no matter the person, situation, ability, or disability, every person

has the capacity to become a contributing citizen and an aristocrat in his or her own right.

The notion of unique contribution can be exemplified by re-considering Justin, a

student with an intellectual disability to whom I taught vocational skills. In a vocational

class there are activities such as sawing or hammering that require objects to be held in a

vice. Hammering objects in a vice easily jars the objects out of the vice and onto the

floor. Justin was the only person in the class capable of tightening the vice enough that

objects could not break free. He was also the only one who could loosen the vice once it

was tightened. In regard to being able to operate the vice, Justin was an aristocrat and a

leader.

In the previous example, Justin realized some of his unique potential, found his

unique contribution, and this in turn allowed him to find a trait, within himself that

allowed him to assume a position of leadership. By doing this, he not only helped the

others be more productive, but also helped the other students to see that they too had a

unique ability that, once discovered, would allow them to assume a similar position in the classroom.

Democracy For and By the People

Much of what is called democracy today is only democratic in name, as Parker (1996a) argues, "Yet it is not so much 'we the people' who govern in these fledgling democracies as it is power elites that govern" (p. 182). Therefore, arguing that everyone has the potential to be a leader disrupts the status quo present in modern politics and education, because essentially this position infers that government can and should not only be constructed for the people, but also by the people.

In Dewey's time, as in ours, many believe in government by a superior class comprised of the intellectual elite (Westbrook, 1993). These so-called "democratic realists" identified a putative problem with democracy, that problem being that the average citizen was not capable of governing (Westbrook, 2012, p. 293). Therefore, Dewey "turned to a democratic realist with whom he had the greatest affinity, Walter Lippmann, trading on Lippmann's descriptions and explanations of the plight of democracy while rejecting his solutions to it" (Westbrook, 2012, p. 294). Lippmann's solution was to transition decision making away from ordinary citizens and give authority to the "governing elites" (Westbrook, 2012, p. 299). However, Dewey argues that in instances when the masses are not capable of governing, the solution is to educate the masses. As Westbrook argues, "The enlightenment of the public, he [Dewey] said, took precedence over the enlightenment of government administrators" (Westbrook, 2012, p. 310).

Lippmann's notion of democracy is more likely to occur in school systems where education is created strictly *for* the students, instead of *by* the students. If students with disabilities are placed in situations where "experts," such as administrators, teachers,

school psychologists, or central office personnel construct education for them, instead of providing opportunities for the students to co-construct their educational experience, a class of democratic elitists is formed. As Dewey notes, "The man who wears the shoe knows best that it pinches and where it pinches, even if the expert shoemaker is the best judge of how the trouble is to be remedied" (LW 2:364). Therefore, the voice of the student is of utmost importance, as without that voice the group cannot fully know the extent of the problems "to be remedied" (LW 2:364).

Experts have a place in a democracy. When commenting on Dewey's position, Westbrook argues, "The role of the expert was not as a policy maker but as a technician who would discover and make known to the public and its representatives the facts on which policy making depended" (Westbrook, 2012, p. 312). However, the position of the expert can set a radically different tone depending on how he or she is first encountered. For example, in many instances, before a student qualifies for special education services, experts evaluate him or her. When the meeting occurs to discuss the results, the experts often lead and dominate the discussion. This meeting can send a strong message to the student about her or his role as a student and a citizen. In this type of situation, the student learns from an early age that being a citizen means that he or she is expected, even required, to take a passive role.

Schools that frame the education of students by relying primarily on the insight of "experts" initiates a cycle in which decisions are made by the more knowledgeable, and those decision are felt by the others deemed "incapable" to make decisions for themselves. As Garrison (2012) notes, "We must cease believing that leadership means government by an elite group of experts. Instead, we must seek government not only for,

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but also by the people" (p. 373). Along the same lines of sentiment, democratic education

is not possible in school systems where education is strictly for the students; all

participants must have an opportunity to speak and be heard. Nevertheless, students with

disabilities are often caught in this cycle, ironically when the conversation turns to how to

best meet their needs. In these instances, the school often focuses on how it is best to

govern the student's life, instead of allowing him or her to govern his or her own life.

How can schools educate responsible citizens when the educational system robs them of

the responsibilities of citizenship?

Views of Citizenship

One main mission of American schools is to produce future citizens. As Parker

(1996b) notes, "citizenship education is probably the most popular stated mission for

schooling in the United States" (p. 104). So then the question arises, exactly how is

citizenship defined? Answering this question proves difficult, as many scholars disagree

on the precise definition of citizenship. This is because the concept of citizenship, similar

to disability, is a contingent societal construct. Johnson (2016) notes, "….citizenship is a

societal construct that functions within the political world of a democracy (at least by

Western standards)" (p. 48). Since democratic citizenship is a complex and contingent

construct, attempts to define the concept are ongoing.

The discussion around citizenship falls on one of two sides of a conceptual divide. Parker

(1996b) identifies that this division has produced two standard views of citizenship: the

traditionalist view and the progressive view. In the view of traditionalists, students should be

taught about citizenship. In contrast, the progressives want more opportunity for students to

practice holding the "office of citizen" in order to help them to become contributing members of

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society (Parker, 1996b, p. 111). In summation, "Traditionalists want more study, progressives want more practice" (Parker, 1996b, p. 112).

In both views, citizenship or the teaching of citizenship, occur in public education. The traditionalists would argue that students are learning information that they will put to later use when they engage in the act of citizenry. An example of this could be students learning about the responsibilities of civic participation, so they know the ways in which they can engage in the act of citizenry when they are of legal age. Progressives, on the other hand, would argue that the school serves as a space for students to engage in a simulation where citizenship is practiced. The way each group conceptualizes citizenship suggests that it is to be taught and practiced during school and experienced after graduation respectively. However, this becomes difficult, especially for students with disabilities who may have not had any opportunity to learn about or practice citizenship.

Deweyan Citizenship

Parker (1996b) sees both the traditionalist and progressive view of citizenship as flawed. Parker's (1996b) analysis of both views helps to start the conversation about what citizenship means and looks like through the lens of Dewey. Limiting citizenship to learning about and practicing citizenship may preclude certain individuals with disabilities from being a citizen. Therefore, it is only possible to discuss how to teach and practice citizenship after deliberating the question of who gets to be a citizen and to what extent can that person can engage in full citizenship?

Similarly, Dewey identifies the notion of "good citizenship", or "civic efficiency" (MW 9:127). Dewey argues that to be a citizen, one must have a position, function, or

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contribution to society. When citizens are classified in this manner, individuals with disabilities have the potential to be citizens. This is related to the earlier argument of vibrant democracies nurturing students' unique potential so that they can find their unique contribution, which helps them to engage in citizenry. As Dewey notes:

> The aim of civic efficiency has at least the merit of protecting us from the notion of a training of mental power at large. It calls attention to the fact that power must be relative to doing something, and to the fact that the things which most need to be done are things which involve one's relationship with others. (MW 9: 127)

Here Dewey ties many of the previous arguments together. For example, he emphasizes that for someone to acquire the position of a leader or an aristocrat, that individual has to be able to do something unique for that society, as in the example of the student with a disability who tightened the vice. This position is not given because of his or her family lineage or the amount of money he or she makes, but is acquired based on the contribution that person makes to the society in which he or she lives. Therefore, here one can see that Dewey views the position of education as cultivating students' unique potential, so they can find their unique contribution, and be not just a citizen, but a good citizen in a creative democracy.

Who gets to be a citizen and to what extent? By approaching citizenship through a Deweyan lens, there is no room for anyone to be excluded or prohibited from being a full citizen based on mental capacity because, as previously mentioned, every person, not just some, can make a unique contribution. Therefore, in Dewey's democracy, everyone is a citizen, although not in the restricted legal sense.

Democratic Citizenship and Disability

When the process of determining if a student is eligible to receive an Individualized

Education Plan (IEP) begins, the student is typically evaluated, which includes observations,

interviews, and cognitive assessments. The first IEP meeting a student experiences sets the tone

and expectation of what will occur in future IEP meetings. Typically, the student speaks little to

none, giving her or him a passive conception of citizenship. For example, Martin, Van Dyke,

Christensen, Greene, Gardner, and Lovett (2006) found, "Special Education teachers talked the

most, and special educators and parents talked more about student interests than did the students"

(p. 300). What is troubling about this is the IEP meeting provides the ideal opportunity to enact

Dewey's pluralistic, participatory, communicative democracy, and also provides the ideal space

for students with disabilities to learn about and practice citizenship. To exemplify this

potentiality, I am going to provide an example of two different IEP meetings that is a composite

of many, all too many, meetings I experienced during my tenure. The first meeting I will discuss

is one of which will be undemocratic and the other will be democratic.

<center>**Composite Case Studies**</center>

An Undemocratic IEP Meeting

Henry has struggled in school for years. He has been pushed along by every teacher that

he has had up to this point. He is quiet. Quiet kids do not often draw attention to themselves.

Each year when Henry had been on the edge of failing, teachers reflected and thought, "He is

such a good kid; he deserves the extra boost to pass." Although his teachers have always liked

Henry and did not want to see him fail, passing him along has done very little to help him. Now

Henry, who is in 8th grade, has gotten to the point where he needs more than just a few extra

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points to pass. He barely made a 40 the first half of the semester in English, and his teacher Ms. Jenkins, is not one to just push students along.

One day after class, Ms. Jenkins asks Henry to stay behind and she talks to him about ways in which she can help him be successful. Henry does not know exactly what he needs, so he speaks very little, and keeps his head down during the conversation, making little eye contact. Since Ms. Jenkins cannot figure out exactly what to do, she requests a child study to be conducted. In a child study, the school psychologist does a series of assessments and observations to determine a student's mental ability. The school psychologist speaks with Henry and tells him what is going to be happening in the coming weeks and Henry is startled. He knew was not good at school, but he never thought that he had something wrong with him.

In the coming weeks, Henry starts acting out in class, and develops into a "problem child" in many of his classes. He is beyond frustrated because he now realizes that he has something "wrong with him." His brother is in law school, his sister has just started college, and he thinks to himself, "I will be the village idiot and never amount to anything."

Shortly thereafter, Henry is told he is getting an IEP, which to him, is a document stupid kids get; kids like him. On the day of the IEP meeting, Henry is called to the assistant principal's office and is greeted by a host of people, which include his mother and father, his English teacher, a special education teacher, the school psychologist, the school counselor, and the assistant principal. He walks in and sits down and the special education teacher starts speaking. She said, "Henry welcome to your IEP meeting. We are all here to help you succeed. You remember how you were given a series of tests a while back? Those tests indicate that you have a specific learning disability…." After Henry hears the words disability he stops listening. He thinks to himself, "I am officially an idiot…"

Examining the undemocratic IEP meeting. The example that was presented is typical of most IEP meetings in public education. From the beginning of the process, the student assumed a passive role. Consequently, he did not actively participate and had no opportunity to communicate his needs, desires, or interests; pluralism was not achieved. Hence, Dewey's pluralistic, participatory, communicative democracy was not enacted. While the IEP was developed *for* the student, it was not co-constructed *by*, or at least in conjunction with, the student. Therefore, it was a situation in which government was created strictly for the people and not by the people, giving the student a passive conception of citizenship Also, within the meeting itself, the expert silenced the other members. A democratic aristocracy of everyone was not achieved. Next is an example of a democratic IEP meeting, which has many of the same components of the aforementioned example, but takes a radical turn upon the entrance of the school psychologist, which is where the next narrative begins.

A Democratic IEP Meeting

The school psychologist speaks with Henry and tells him that in the coming weeks he is going to be spending some time observing his class and asking him to do a series of tasks, so he can determine how to help him succeed. Henry is a bit startled, but he is also somewhat relieved because he knows he needs help, but does not know exactly what kind of help he needs.

In the coming weeks, the school psychologist has built a relationship with Henry and Henry actually looks forward to seeing the psychologist. Henry is hopeful that whatever comes out this situation will help him do well in school. Henry's brother is in law school, his sister has just started college, and he thinks to himself, "Hopefully I will start doing well in school and I will be able to go to college as well."

Shortly thereafter, Henry is told that he has a specific learning disability in reading, qualifies for special education services, and is eligible for an IEP. Henry is startled, tears up, and exclaims, "I am an idiot! I knew it!" The school psychologist explains to Henry that he is not an idiot, he just learns differently than others. The school psychologist explains that an IEP is a document he (Henry) helps design so that it helps him to be successful. Henry had always thought having a disability was bad, but the way the school psychologist explained it made Henry think that this was not going to be so bad after all. Henry is introduced to a special education teacher, which will be his case manager, and he works with her to develop his IEP and a PowerPoint for the day of the IEP meeting.

On the day of the IEP meeting, Henry is nervous, but also excited; he has never done anything like this before. Ten minutes before the meeting, Henry's new case manager comes and gets him from gym class, and they walk together to the assistant principal's office. Henry gets his PowerPoint ready and when everyone walks in, he greets them by saying, "Hello, my name is Henry, welcome to my IEP meeting. Having an IEP does not mean there is something wrong with me, it means I need specific things to help me be successful…." Henry goes on to explain his disability, his goals, and his needs. At some point in the meeting, every person shares her or his views and concerns. Henry concludes the meeting by saying, "We will review my IEP next year, or before then, if I am not doing well in my classes. Thanks for coming." At the beginning of this process, Henry was startled, but by the end of it he felt empowered. This was the first time he had ever he felt in control of his education.

Examining a democratic IEP meeting. The example of the democratic IEP meeting exhibits a situation in which the student assumed an active role in the process, which is of significant value for the student. Martin et al. (2006) note, "By learning to actively participate

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and lead their own IEP meetings, students demonstrate goal setting, planning, self-evaluation, mediation, public speaking, and self-advocacy" (p. 300). Therefore, working to implement Deweyan democracy in this context has more benefit than solely having democracy for democracy's sake.

So then the question is raised: In what ways did this IEP meeting resemble Deweyan democracy? First, the student shared his needs, desires, and interests, which were reflected in the IEP and the meeting. Throughout the process, there was participation on behalf of the student and the other members, giving the student an active conception of citizenship. Additionally, communication was free and unhindered in all stages of the development of the IEP.

Although the IEP was developed for the student, it was also co-constructed by the student. By helping to create his own IEP, the student could identify his goals, which allowed him to pursue his educational interests. Upon exploring these interests, the student can discover his unique potential, and the IEP team can help cultivate this potential into a unique contribution. In the event the IEP fails to support the needs of the student, it can be revised (reconstructed). Also within the meeting itself, there was a place and necessity for the expert, but the expert helped to form the policy (IEP), instead of dominating the conversation and silencing the other members. The other members had an opportunity to share, participate, and communicate their points of view, thus producing an aristocracy of everyone.

Conclusion

This paper examined the nature of disability and education, and then provided a conceptualization of the underpinnings of Dewey's pluralistic, participatory, and communicative democracy. It then interrogated the concept of citizenship as it pertained to American society and Deweyan democracy. Deweyan democracy should occur everywhere, all the time. Enacting

Deweyan democracy has powerful possibilities, especially in the lives of students with disabilities. Although there are laws and policy initiatives that focus on how to support and protect individuals with disabilities, those efforts do very little if students lack opportunities to explore their educational interests, which, in turn, allows them to realize their unique potential and contribution.

Every student has the capacity for citizenship and that capacity is not fixed or static, but malleable. Students who engage in democratic education can build their capacity so that they can become contributing members of a vibrant democracy. The result is the production of citizens who are capable of leadership. If education maintains the status quo, then it will be caught in a perpetual cycle of mediocrity. Nevertheless, engaging in a true, thriving, democracy has the potential to produce a citizenry where everyone has not just the right to lead, but also the capacity.

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Can We Meet our Mission? Examining the Professional Development of Social Studies Teachers to Support Students with Disabilities and Emergent Bilingual Learners

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Abstract

In this paper, I conduct a secondary analysis of The Institute of Educational Sciences' (IES) 2011-2012 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) data, a self-reported, nationally representative database to examine: (a) the average caseload of students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners within and across social studies content areas, as well how social studies teachers' caseloads compare with other content area disciplines and (b) the extent and perceived utility of professional development opportunities social studies teachers receive to support both students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners.

Keywords: social studies; students with disabilities; emergent bilingual learners; Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)

Students with disabilities (SWDs) and Emergent Bilingual Learners (EBLs) are two complex and heterogenous populations within public schools that cut across such categories as socioeconomic status (SES), gender, race, and ethnicity.[2] The Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) specifically collects data on both of these populations to help document the Condition of Education in the United States (NCES, 2018a, 2018b). Murphy and Haller (2015) note that these two "populations have traditionally been provided with extra learning support as compared to their general education or mainstream peers" (p. 511). Significantly, these two populations are acknowledged and protected by policy and law including at the national level with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) (Minarik & Lintner, 2016; Salinas et al., 2017). The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) identifies that in 2014-2015 SWDs represented 13% of the total population of students in the United States (NCES, 2018a), while EBLs comprised 9.4 % of the total school population in the United States (NCES, 2018b). From 2001 to 2015-16, the number of SWDs who receive special education services have comprised no less than 13% of the total public-school enrollment. Additionally, EBLs are "among the fastest-growing" student groups in the United States (Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017, p. 318).

Salinas, Rodriquez, and Blevins (2017) importantly note "…the sheer presence of emergent bilingual learners waiting to become informed citizens prompts social studies educators to acknowledge a demographic imperative" (p. 440). Similarly, Misco and Castañeda (2009) recognize the need of social studies educators to "be prepared to respond to changing

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[2] It is important to acknowledge that these two populations are not mutually exclusive as recently released data reveals that "713,000 ELL students were identified as students with disabilities, representing 14.7 percent of the total ELL population enrolled in U.S. public elementary and secondary schools" (NCES, 2018b, par. 8).

student demographics while they maintain their focus on preparing active democratic citizens"
(p. 188). This imperative becomes magnified when one considers these two important and
vulnerable populations together within the inclusive classroom environment.

Scholars and researchers have designed general strategies to support *all* learners within
the classroom (see Bulgren, Deshler, & Lenz, 2007; Deshler, Schumaker, Lenz, Bulgren, Hock,
Knight, Ehren, 2001; Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006). Within the social studies, we have begun to
see a small cottage industry of researchers focusing on either SWDs or EBLs, as evidenced by a
recent special issue of the *Journal of Social Studies Research* entitled *Social Studies and Special
Education: The Continuation of a Beautiful Friendship* (Burkholdt, 2017; Courtade, Gurney &
Carden, 2017; Furgione, 2017; Gates, 2017; Hintz, 2017; Jordan, Jordan, & Hawley, 2017;
Lintner, 2017; Lintner & Kumpiene, 2017; Morris, McGuire, & Walker, 2017; Southall, 2017),
as well as other research, bulletins, and strategy books (Cruz, Nutta, O'Brien, Feyten, & Govani,
2003; Cruz & Thornton, 2008; Cruz & Thornton, 2009a; Cruz & Thornton, 2009b; Cruz &
Thornton, 2012; De La Paz, 2005; De La Paz & MacArthur, 2003; Lintner & Schweder, 2008;
Lintner & Schweder, 2011; Minarik & Lintner, 2016; Salinas & Alarcon, 2016; Salinas, et al.,
2017; Salinas, Vickery, & Franquiz, 2016). While the research strategies and insights offered are
beneficial and important, most work looking at either SWDs or EBLs have been small scale and
do not offer a macro-level view of the state of the field of social studies in terms of the numbers
of SWDs and EBLs within and across social studies content courses. Additionally, little is known
about the extent to which social studies teachers are provided with and value professional
development (PD) focusing on teaching SWDs and EBLs.

Recently, Fitchett and Heafner (2017) recognize the need for more statistical analyses in
social studies as it offers "a macro-level lens from which to examine the generalizability of

theoretical positions and conclusions drawn from qualitative research" (p. 68). In heeding this

call, I provide a secondary analysis of the IES' 2011-2012 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)

data, a self-reported, nationally representative database to paint a national portrait of: (a) the

average caseload of SWDs and EBLs within and across social studies content areas, as well how

social studies teachers' caseloads compare with other content area disciplines and (b) the extent

and perceived utility of PD opportunities social studies teachers receive to support teaching both

SWDs and EBLs. I first provide a review of the literature focused on SWDs, EBLs, and PD

within the social studies. I then use the SASS dataset to examine the state of the field by first

revealing the number of SWDs and EBLs that are within and across the social studies, compared

with eleven other content areas within the SASS dataset. I then examine the extent and perceived

utility of the PD social studies teachers receive to support the learning of SWDs and EBLs. I

conclude by providing a discussion and insight about what this means for the field of social

studies going forward.

Review of Literature

SWDs and EBLs Within the Social Studies

"Research on students with LD [learning disabilities] learning social studies is akin to a marriage

between 'who cares?' and 'so what'?" (O'Brien, 2000, p. 196).

Even though the above quote was referring to research focused on students with learning

disabilities, it does not seem that the field of social studies as a whole has progressed much since

2000, in terms of research looking at SWDs in general. For example, in 2016 the National

Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) published a bulletin focused on exceptional learners

(Minarik & Lintner, 2016) and the authors noted at this time that the research looking at the

relationship between special education and social studies was scant and there was only one book

(Lintner & Schweder, 2011) before their bulletin looking at how to support social studies teachers in inclusive classrooms. Therefore, Minarik and Lintner (2016) sought to provide the field of social studies with a primer when looking at special education and social studies together. The authors provided a broad and sweeping view of special education and social studies, focusing on basic elements, such as the steps of how a student qualifies for special education services, so that social studies educators would have a basic knowledge of special education. In this bulletin, the authors offered strategies for social studies educators to use, such as graphic organizers and visual strategies, that would be of benefit for SWDs. Even though some of the recommendations are basic, this book is one of the first of its kind and, therefore, cannot be criticized too harshly.

A recent special issue of the *Journal of Social Studies Research* provided a space for scholars to examine different issues within the field of social studies as it relates to special education. The insight and studies within this edition examined such elements as: the partnership of special education and social studies (Lintner, 2017); the integration of social skills within the social studies (Morris, et al., 2017); the rationales of public school alternative educators (Jordan et al., 2017); inclusive beliefs, practices, and textbook use (Hintz, 2017); how to support students with severe disabilities with read-alouds of grade-level social studies texts and systematic prompting (Courtade et al., 2017); an updated progress report about the relationship between social studies and special education (Lintner & Kumpiene, 2017); along with a variety of media reviews (Burkholdt, 2017; Furgione, 2017; Southall, 2017). This special edition was key in reminding social studies educators that there is a small but growing body of literature within the social studies that considers the needs of SWDs. However, none of the articles offer a macro-level view for the field of social studies, as some of the studies focused on extremely small

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sample sizes, in some cases four students (Morris et al., 2017). Even though the authors

acknowledge this limitation, it still does not offset the limited viewpoint. Furthermore, Lintner

and Kumpiene (2017) note that after reviewing early literature looking at the relationship ". . .

between social studies and individuals with mild disabilities" the research ". . . offered only a

handful of strategies to consider when designing responsive and engaging instruction for all

students" (p. 304). The dearth of research focusing on *all* students is especially problematic for

the social studies because through teaching the content, social studies teachers prepare *all*

students for the responsibilities of citizenship (NCSS, 2013).

Additionally, work examining EBLs in the social studies have focused on such elements

as: how to teach social studies to English language learners (ELLs) (Cruz, Nutta, O'Brien,

Feyten, & Govani, 2003; Cruz & Thornton, 2008; Cruz & Thornton, 2009a; Cruz & Thornton,

2009b; Cruz & Thornton, 2012); the effects of historical reasoning instruction and writing

strategy mastery in culturally and academically diverse middle school classrooms (De La Paz,

2005); citizenship through comparisons of home to school contexts (Salinas, Vickery, &

Fránquiz, 2016); and civic identities of Latinx youth (Salinas & Alcaron, 2016). There was also a

recent chapter in the *Handbook of Social Studies Research* that reviewed literature looking at

EBLs (Salinas et al., 2017). After reviewing the literature Salinas et al., (2017) was able to

identify many key take-aways in regard to supporting the learning of EBLs, such as, but not

limited to, making complex content comprehensible; addressing academic vocabulary; accessing

cultural knowledge; and instructional strategies explicit to the social studies. While research

looking at EBLs within the social studies is more comprehensive than what is seen in terms of

social studies research examining SWDs, there is scant research looking at EBLs from a macro-

level.

I contend that there is value in considering SWDs and EBLs together because scholarship focused on how to support the learning of these two groups can stand to benefit all students in the classroom. For example, when looking at strategies to support EBLs in social studies, O'Brien (2011) noted, "While none of these suggestions is new to the field…Undoubtedly a focus on some of these techniques could improve the overall quality of instruction in these (social studies) classrooms, but ELLs would particularly stand to benefit (p. 45)" (as cited in Salinas et al., 2017 p. 451). Therefore, by joining the research and scholarship focused on SWDs and EBLs, I can start conversations about how best to support the learning of *all* students in the social studies classroom. The SASS dataset provides such avenues of exploration.

Professional Development in Social Studies

"Research has increasingly identified the continuing development and learning of teachers as one of the keys to improving the quality of U.S. schools" (Desimone, 2009, p. 181).

Although most teachers, administrators, scholars, and researchers would agree with the above quote, there are issues with the type of PD that teachers typically receive (Desimone & Garet, 2015), and social studies is no different (van Hover, 2008). Even though Passe and Fitchett (2016) indicate, "By a large majority (81.4 %), social studies teachers report that professional development has impacted their daily instruction" (p. 14), recent literature reviews on the significance of PD within social studies suggests that the impact of PD is uneven (van Hover & Hicks, in press; Meuwissen, 2017) and is a scattershot (van Hover, 2008). As van Hover (2008) notes, "There still exists no big picture of social studies professional development, nor any sense of how work in this area is connected" (p. 366). For that reason, it is unclear how and to what extent PD impacts social studies teachers' instruction.

Arguably, the most concerted and sustained effort of focused PD in social studies came by the way of the federally funded Teaching American History (TAH) grants program. The purpose of this program was to "raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge, understanding, and teaching of traditional American history" (van Hover & Hicks, in press). A series of studies have sought to measure the impact of these grants on the teaching of American History (De La Paz, Malkus, Monte-Sano, & Montanaro, 2011; Kallemeyn, Schiazza, Ryan, & Peters, 2013; Lee & Coughlin, 2011; Olwell, 2007; Sheets, 2010), which is arguably within the field of social studies. Nevertheless, it is still unclear to what extent the TAH grants impacted student achievement because such a research focus is minimal (van Hover & Hicks, in press). Van Hover and Hicks (in press) indicated that one of the few examples of empirical research involving the TAH grants was conducted by De La Paz, Malkus, Monte-Sano, and Montanora (2011). These researchers found that with the TAH grants, "Only teachers who invested substantial amounts of time (in this case at least 30 hours), had students with significantly higher outcomes" (De La Paz et al., 2011, p. 522). This conclusion suggests that one of the key elements of effective and impactful PD is teachers spending a significant amount of time engaging in the PD. This corresponds with other research about the elements of high quality PD which include:

(a) *content focus:* activities that are focused on subject matter content and how students learn that content; (b) *active learning:* opportunities for teachers to observe, receive feedback, analyze student work, or make presentations, as opposed to passively listening to lectures; (c) *coherence:* content, goals, and activities that are consistent with the school curriculum and goals, teacher

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knowledge and beliefs, the needs of students, and school, district, and state

reforms and policies; (d) *sustained duration:* PD activities that are ongoing

throughout the school year and include 20 hours or more of contact

time; and (e) *collective participation:* groups of teachers from the same grade,

subject, or school participate in PD activities together to build an interactive

learning community. (Desimone & Garet, 2015, p. 253)

To improve content knowledge alone is not sufficient to produce or support high quality

teaching and support the learning of all students. As Desimone and Garet (2015)

indicated, much more must be considered when designing effective PD programs.

Teachers also need pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Gudmundsdottir & Shulman,

1987; Harris & Bain, 2010; Schulman, 1986; Schulman, 1987) to "bridge content

knowledge and the practice of teaching" (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008, p. 389).

Likewise, Ball and Forzani note (2009), "Similarly, reading or writing well is necessary

but insufficient to supply the knowledge and skill needed to help others learn to read or

write" (p. 500). Therefore, knowledge of content does not necessarily translate into an

ability to teach that content.

Recent work by Meuwissen, (2017) highlights the importance and value of how

teachers perceive the quality of the PD being delivered. His work illuminates the

importance of relating PD to what teachers are expected to do in high-stakes testing

environments. Typically, teachers view PD as helping them to develop as teachers or

supporting them in meeting content standards (Meuwissen, 2017). Therefore, the extent

to which PD helps teachers meet content standards impacts their perception about the

usefulness of the PD (Meuwissen, 2017). Arguably, teacher perceptions about the

usefulness of PD are accurate because if the PD is not realistically supporting them in their vocation, then it is rather futile. Within the SASS dataset I cannot assess why teachers feel that PD is useful or not useful, but I can see if teachers engaged in PD and if they perceived it as useful. I can then use work, such as that offered by Meuwissen (2017), to interrogate possibilities about why the PD was perceived as useful or not.

Furthermore, while there have been some work looking at teacher perceptions and PD related to supporting the learning of SWDs and EBLs (Cho & Reich, 2008; Murphey & Haller, 2015; O'Brien, 2011), it is still unclear to what extent social studies teachers receive PD focused on SWDs and EBLs. Teaching social studies can pose challenges to teachers and students due to the complex vocabulary and content distinct to the field (Cho & Reich, 2008) and this is a challenge we have to meet because we are educating *all* students for the responsibilities of citizenship (NCSS, 2013a). Therefore, in this study, I will use the SASS dataset to provide insight to the extent to which social studies teachers receive PD focused on SWDs and EBLs.

Research Questions

After parsing the literature and finding specific gaps within the research that need to be filled, I developed questions to ask of the SASS dataset. My questions focused on the number of SWDs and EBLs within and across the social studies and the PD of social studies teachers to support the learning of these two groups. As such, my research questions were:

1. What is the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs for teachers in social studies?
    a. How does the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs for social studies teachers compare with the other disciplines?

b. Is there a difference in the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs for different

   disciplines, as well as specific content areas within and across the social studies

   (i.e. Civics/Government, Economics, Geography, and History)?

2. To what extent do social studies teachers receive PD focused on SWDs or EBLs?

   a. To what extent do they find the PD useful?

   b. How many hours of PD do teachers receive?

Answering these questions allow us to begin to understand who we are teaching in terms of

specific numbers of important vulnerable populations. We can then take specific actions to

ensure that social studies teachers have the support they need to support *all* learners within their

classrooms.

Methods

Participants

In this study, full-time teachers were identified and placed into their respective

disciplines based on subject-matter codes relating to Social Sciences[3] for the SASS question,

"This school year, what is your MAIN teaching assignment field at THIS school?".[4] This

resulted in 203,170 teachers within the weighted results for Social Sciences. In order to gain a

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[3] The category of Social Science within the SASS dataset includes the subgroups of Social Studies (general), Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Civics/Government, History, Native American Studies, Psychology, and Sociology.[3] These subjects closely align with the NCSS (2013a) definition of the social studies which includes, "…. anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences" (par. 3). I recognize that while the SASS categories within Social Science are not in direct alignment with the subjects identified by NCSS (2013a), there are commonalities between the two.

[4] In order to understand teacher load of specific student groups I pull from other disciplines as well (e.g., Mathematics, Natural Science, English). I also want to note that teachers who answered this question may teach multiple subjects, but the participant saw this as their main teaching responsibility; this is a potential limitation of the study.

clearer and more detailed picture of the field, I also examined the category of Social Studies (general) within the larger category of Social Science because respondents who chose this field saw themselves as being solely teachers of social studies. Furthermore, I analyzed the *Big Four* of the social studies as outlined in the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) framework, which are Civics/Government, Economics, Geography, and History (NCSS, 2013b) because these are four major areas of importance within the social studies as evidenced by the development of this framework (see Figure 1 for a visual representation).

My participants included K-12 social studies teachers; I acknowledge that my results could be conflated because of this, but the teachers that were elementary teachers included such a small percentage of my sample that the conflation is minimal (see Table 1 for participant demographics). Additionally, I was able to provide a holistic view of the field of social studies by doing the analysis of the previously identified groups and to my knowledge such a portrait does not exist. Within Social Sciences, five teacher groups were examined: Government, History, Geography, Economics, and Social Studies (general). The weighted sample sizes for these groups were 17,860 for Government, 89,140 for History, 13,650 for Geography, 8,820 for Economics, and 67,500 for Social Studies (general). Data were weighted with the Teacher Final Sampling Weight (TFNLWGT) variable and the SASS supplied 88 replicate weight variables where appropriate. The methodology included protocols required by IES where the results intended for dissemination were sent to the IES for approval and authorization for release. The NCES and IES also required that all weighted N's are rounded to the nearest 10 to assure participant anonymity. As such, the data included in tables may not add to the total N reported due to rounding adjustments.
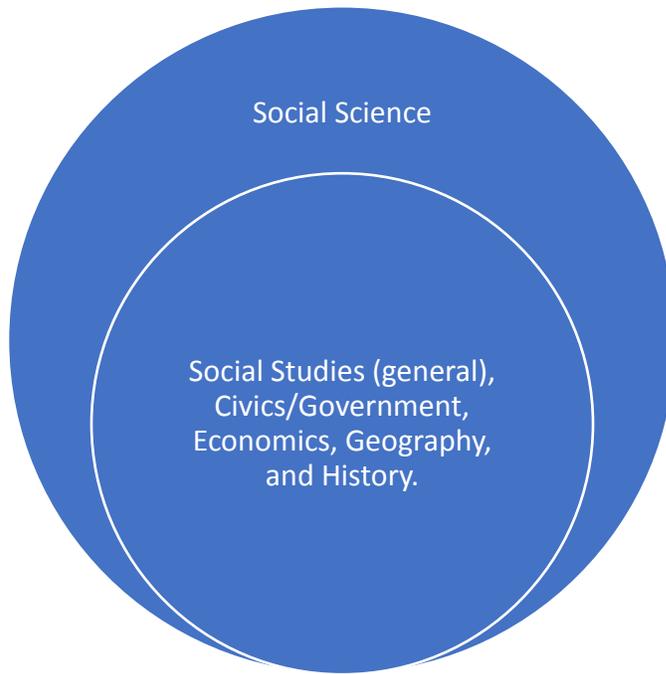
Figure 1. Groups for Analysis.

Table 1
Demographics of teachers

Main Teaching Assignment	Race		Gender		Level of Students Taught		Age	Years of Experience
	White	Nonwhite	Male	Female	Elem.	Secondary	Mean	Mean
Social Science	91.8%	8.2%	54.9%	45.1%	5.8%	94.2%	41.63	13.20
Social Studies (general)	88.7%	11.3%	47.7%	52.3%	15.2%	84.8%	42.88	13.64
Civics/ Government	91.2%	8.8%	66.4%	33.6%	0.0%	100.0%	42.29	14.14
Economics	93.1%	6.9%	65.4%	34.6%	0.0%	100.0%	45.52	13.77
Geography	95.5%	4.5%	52.6%	47.4%	0.7%	99.3%	37.25	10.65
History	93.4%	6.6%	57.5%	42.5%	1.7%	98.3%	40.79	12.86

Instrumentation

This study employed data from the most recent SASS data conducted by the NCES and administered by the IES. The SASS is administered by the NCES for the U.S. Department of Education to collect data on American K-12 public and private schools. Data is collected that can be used to describe various aspects of K-12 education ranging from the demographics of teachers to hiring practices. The goal of the survey is to provide a nationally representative snapshot of U.S. education (for more information see Tourkin et al., 2010, p. 1).

SASS collects data by using a combination of internet, telephone, and in person surveys and interviews (NCES, n.d.). Previous scholars within social studies have utilized the SASS dataset (Fitchett, 2010 Fitchett; Heafner, & Lambert, 2014; Lambert, McCarthy, Fitchett, Lineback, & Reiser 2015). Fitchett and Heafner (2017) also identify that large-scale datasets allow for the "democratization" (p. 83) of data, since this information is relatively easy to access.

Variables Analyzed

Number of SWDs and EBLs. Throughout this paper I have remained consistent with using person first language when describing individuals with disabilities (i.e., SWDs) and students who may require language support (i.e., EBLs). However, the language, as it appears in the SASS dataset, differs as it refers to students with individualized education plans (i.e., IEPs), limited-English proficiency (i.e., LEP), or English-language learners (i.e., ELLs). Therefore, in the methods section I will use language consistent with the SASS dataset (i.e., IEPs, LEP, or ELLs). In the findings and discussion section, I will use person first language (i.e. SWDs and EBLs) and will refer back to responses on the SASS questions relating to ELLs and students with IEPs or LEP.

The number of students served with disabilities was determined by responses from teachers who reported teaching students with recognized disabilities requiring an IEP. This was determined from SASS question 14, "Of all the students you teach at this school, how many have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) because they have disabilities or are special education students?" Teachers either checked none or entered an integer.

The number of students identified as having limited-English proficiency (LEP) was determined by responses from teachers who reported teaching students who were individuals who did not speak English as their primary language and who had a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. This was derived from SASS question 15, "Of all the students you teach at this school, how many are of limited-English proficiency? (Students of limited-English proficiency [LEP] are those whose native or dominant language is other than English and who have sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language as to deny them the opportunity to learn successfully in an English-speaking-only classroom)." Teachers either checked none or entered an integer.

Professional development. Participation in special education PD opportunities was determined by responses to question 48a, "In the past 12 months, have you participated in any professional development on how to teach students with disabilities?" The number of hours spent on PD relating to SWDs was determined by responses to question 48b, "In the past 12 months, how many hours did you spend on these activities?" Responses regarding the number of hours spent was measured by a four-level ordinal scale from "8 hours or less", "9-16 hours", "17-23 hours", to "33 hours or more." The usefulness was determined by question 48c, "Overall, how useful were these activities to you?" Responses were on a four-level scale from, "not useful", "somewhat useful", "useful" and "very useful."

Participation in LEP PD opportunities was determined by responses to question 49a, "In the past 12 months, have you participated in any professional development on how to teach limited-English proficient students or English-language learners (ELLs)?" The number of hours spent on PD relating to ELLs was determined by responses to question 49b, "In the past 12 months, how many hours did you spend on these activities?" Responses regarding the number of hours spent was measured by a four-level ordinal scale from "8 hours or less", "9-16 hours", "17-23 hours", to "33 hours or more." The usefulness was determined by question 49c, "Overall, how useful were these activities to you?" Responses were on a four-level scale from, "not useful", "somewhat useful", "useful" and "very useful."

Procedures

This study was a secondary data analysis of the recent 2011-2012 SASS restricted-use license dataset. Data were analyzed with SPSS 23.0 and AM Statistical Software using descriptive statistics and independent samples *t*-tests. Data is weighted in SASS to produce a nationally representative sample of U.S. education (NCES, n.d.). SASS files include 88 replicate data weights; weights in the SASS data are created using the Balance Repeated Replication (BRR), specifically the bootstrap procedure. BRR "is the only accurate method for calculating standard errors in SASS" (see NCES, SASS Sample Design, Weights, Variance, and Missing Data Module, Slide 8, https://nces.ed.gov/training/datauser/SASS_04.html).

For research question 1, I examined descriptive statistics to investigate the average number of SWDs and EBLs teachers in social studies support, as well as descriptive statistics for other content areas in the K-12 setting, including: Health or Physical Education, ESL or Bilingual Education, Arts or Music, Special Education, Social Science, Natural Science, Vocational Career or Technical Education, Foreign Language, English and Language Arts,

Mathematics, Early Childhood or General Elementary, and All Others. Based on means for SWDs and EBLs, I calculated the caseload for each content area by summing the two means.[5] I then isolated the four core content teaching assignments (i.e., Social Science, English and Language Arts, Mathematics, and Natural Science) for direct comparison. Next, I conducted independent samples *t*-tests to compare means of SWDs and EBLs in Social Science to the other K-12 core content areas. Finally, I conducted independent samples *t*-tests to compare means of SWDs and EBLs for the five social studies groups: Geography, Social Studies (general), History, Civics/Government, and Economics.

For research question 2, I used descriptive statistics to examine the number of social studies teachers who received PD focused on SWDs and who received PD focused on EBLs. I also examined the extent they found the PD useful through descriptive statistics. Finally, I used descriptive statistics to examine the number of hours teachers had PD focused on SWDs and PD focused on EBLs.

<div align="center">**Findings**</div>

Research Question 1

What is the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs for teachers in social studies? To answer this first research question, two sub-questions were considered: (a) How does the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs for social studies teachers compare with the other disciplines? (b) Is there a difference in the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs for different disciplines, as well as specific content areas within the social studies (i.e., Civics/Government, Economics, Geography, and History)?

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[5] The term "caseload" is a term I use and is not used by the SASS data.

I began by investigating the average number of SWDs and EBLs teachers in social studies support, as well the combined caseload by summing the two means. I then compared those numbers to other content areas in the K-12 setting. These results are displayed in Table 2. Concerning Social Science, the average caseload of SWDs is 12.99 students, which is the seventh highest average caseload. Social Science also has an average EBLs caseload of 8.05 students, which is the fifth highest caseload among all groups.

When looking at the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs in multiple disciplines, Early Childhood or General Elementary has the lowest caseload of SWDs (2.99 students) and a similar caseload of EBLs (3.35 students) providing the lowest combined caseload of 6.34 students. Health or Physical Education has the highest caseload of SWDs (28.33) and the second highest caseload of EBLs (26.94), resulting in the largest combined caseload of 55.27 students. Of these 12 groups, Social Science falls in the middle, with the sixth highest combined caseload of 21.04 students.

Table 2
Social science compared with 11 other teaching assignment areas from the Schools and Staffing Survey for students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners

Main Teaching Assignment	SWDs	EBLs	Sum of Means
	Mean	Mean	
Health or Physical Education	28.33	26.94	55.27
ESL or Bilingual Education	4.04	40.10	44.14
Arts or Music	23.31	13.70	37.01
All Others	14.69	9.23	23.92
Special Education	19.69	2.53	22.22
Social Science	12.99	8.05	21.04
Natural Science	13.58	7.21	20.79

Vocational Career or Technical Education	15.21	5.35	20.59
Foreign Language	10.35	6.88	17.23
English and Language Arts	10.02	5.76	15.78
Mathematics	9.80	5.91	15.71
Early Childhood or General Elementary	2.99	3.35	6.34

Note: SWDs correspond to SASS language of IEPs. EBLs correspond to SASS language of LEP or ELLs.

Next, I compared the average number of SWDs and EBLs teachers support in Social Science with the other three content areas in the K-12 setting: English and Language Arts, Mathematics, and Natural Science. These results are presented in Table 3. Social Science has a higher average caseload of SWDs than English and Language Arts as well as Mathematics. Social Science also has a higher average caseload of EBLs than the other three content areas. Although Natural Science has a higher average caseload of SWDs than Social Science, Social Science has a higher combined caseload of SWDs and EBLs (21.04 students), which is higher than any other core content area.

Table 3
Social science compared with the three other core content teaching assignment areas from the Schools and Staffing Survey for students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners

Core Content Teaching Assignment	SWDs	EBLs	Sum of Means
	Mean	Mean	
Social Science	12.99	8.05	21.04
Natural Science	13.58	7.21	20.79
English and Language Arts	10.02	5.76	15.78
Mathematics	9.80	5.91	15.71

Upon examination of the average caseload of SWDs and EBLs teachers support in the five social studies groups, results reflect similar numbers as the larger group of Social Science and are presented in Table 4. Within these groups, Civics/Government has the highest average caseload of SWDs of 14.15 students, while Economics has the lowest average caseload of SWDs of 11.95 students. In terms of EBLs, Geography has the highest average caseload with 9.82 students, while Civics/Government has the lowest average caseload of 4.45 students. The range between the highest and lowest caseload for SWDs is only 2.2 students, while the range between the highest and lowest caseload of EBLs represents a difference of 5.37 students. This variance demonstrates an unequal distribution of EBLs between the five social studies groups. When looking at the combined caseload of both SWDs and EBLs, Geography has the highest caseload of 23.25 students. Social Studies (general) falls in second place with a combined caseload of 21.89 students, and History in third with a combined caseload of 21.32 students. It is important to note that these combined caseloads are all higher than the combined caseload for the Social Science group (21.04 students).

Table 4

Five social studies groups compared to each other from the Schools and Staffing Survey for students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners

Main Teaching Assignment	SWDs	EBLs	Sum of Means
	Mean	Mean	
Geography	13.43	9.82	23.25
Social Studies (general)	12.90	8.99	21.89
History	12.96	8.36	21.32
Civics/Government	14.15	4.45	18.60
Economics	11.95	5.04	16.99

Finally, I compared the number of SWDs and EBLs for the Social Science group to the other three core content areas using a *t*-test. Only the statistically significant results for the content areas comparison are displayed in Table 5. Social Science has a statistically significant higher caseload for SWDs and EBLs than Mathematics and English, but no statistically significant difference was found when comparing to Natural Science. This confirms my earlier findings of Social Science having a higher caseload of both SWDs and EBLs than these two groups.

Table 5
Statistical significance when looking at students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners with the groups English and Language Arts, Mathematics, and Natural Science.

Students	Comparison Group 1	Comparison Group 2	Group 1 Mean	Group 2 Mean	SE	*d*	t	Sig
	Social Science	English	12.99	10.02	0.52	.28	5.72	<.001
IEP	Social Science	Mathematics	12.99	9.80	0.41	.30	7.87	<.001
	Social Science	Natural Science	12.99	13.58	0.66	.05	0.91	0.37
	Social Science	English	8.05	5.76	0.99	.13	2.31	0.023
LEP	Social Science	Mathematics	8.05	5.91	1.06	.12	2.02	0.047
	Social Science	Natural Science	8.05	7.21	1.11	.04	0.75	0.46

*Significant at the .05 level or less.

When comparing the five social studies groups, no statistically significant difference was found for the number of SWDs in the five groups and only the statistically significant results for the number of EBLs are displayed in Table 6. History has statistically significant more EBLs than Civics/Government and Economics. This implies that not only does History have a higher caseload of EBLs than Civics/Government and Economics, the average caseload of students is statistically significantly higher. These findings together also confirm the earlier comparisons of

the average caseload of the five social studies groups representing unequal distribution of EBLs, but similar distribution of SWDs.

Table 6

Statistical significance when looking at emergent bilingual learners with the groups Social Studies (general), Civics/Government, Economics, and History

Comparison Group 1	Comparison Group 2	Group 1 Mean	Group 2 Mean	SE	*d*	t	Sig
History	Civics/ Government	8.36	4.45	1.09	.29	3.59	.001*
Economics	History	5.04	8.36	1.70	.24	-1.96	.05*
Geography	Civics/ Government	9.82	4.45	2.82	.45	1.90	.06
Geography	History	9.82	8.36	2.70	.09	0.54	.59
Economics	Civics/ Government	5.04	4.45	1.62	.06	0.37	.72
Economics	Geography	5.04	9.82	2.84	.39	-1.68	.10
Social Studies (general)	Civics/ Government	8.99	4.45	3.29	.21	1.38	.17
Social Studies (general)	History	8.99	8.36	3.57	.03	0.18	.86
Social Studies (general)	Geography	8.99	9.82	4.40	.04	-0.19	.85
Social Studies (general)	Economics	8.99	5.04	3.44	.18	1.15	.25

*Significant at the .05 level or less.

Research Question 2

To what extent do social studies teachers receive PD focused on SWDs or EBLs? To answer this first research question, two sub-questions were considered: (a) To what extent do they find the PD useful? (b) How many hours of PD do teachers receive?

I first examined the number of social studies teachers who received PD focused on SWDs. Results are presented in Table 7 and show that less than 40% of teachers in all groups

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had PD focused on SWDs, with Economics having the highest percentage (39.4%) and

Geography having the lowest percentage (33.0%). Economics has the smallest average caseload

of SWDs while Geography has the second largest average caseload. Additionally, the largest

percentage of teachers in every group reported the PD as "somewhat useful." Among all groups,

Economics had the largest percentage of teachers (36.5%) who found the PD "very useful" and

was the only group to have 0% of teachers report PD as "not useful." Looking within Economics,

the majority of teachers (50.8%) found the PD only "somewhat useful." While Geography had

the least percentage of teachers (33.0%) who had PD, they were the largest percentage of

teachers (50.9%) who found the PD "somewhat useful" and the largest percentage of teachers

(40.9%) who found it "useful" among all groups. Civics/Government had the largest percentage

of teachers (8.9%) who found the PD "not useful" and was the second group to have the most

amount of PD. This is surprising given that Civics/Government has the largest average caseload

of SWDs among the five groups.

Table 7
Percentage of teachers who had and found professional development (PD) focused on students
with disabilities useful/not useful

Group	Had PD	Not Useful	Somewhat Useful	Useful	Very Useful
Social Science	34.5	5.8	41.4	36.2	16.2
Social Studies (general)	34.3	4.4	35.6	35.3	24.8
Civics/Government	37.2	8.9	45.2	34.7	11.0
Economics	39.4	0	50.8	12.4	36.5
Geography	33.0	2.4	50.9	40.9	5.8
History	33.8	7.7	42.0	39.3	10.7

Note: Portions within this analysis may not total 100 percent due to IES rounding requirements.

Next, I investigated the number of social studies teachers who received PD focused on

EBLs. Results show that less than 45% of teachers in all groups had PD focused on EBLs and

are displayed in Table 8. Geography had the largest percentage of teachers (44.2%) who had PD

and Civics/Government had the smallest percentage of teachers (22.2%) who had PD. This is in

alignment with my earlier findings demonstrating this group had the lowest average caseload of

EBLs. Additionally, the largest percentage of teachers within every group found the PD "useful"

with the exception of Economics teachers who found it only "somewhat useful." When looking

within each usefulness category, Economics had the highest percentage of teachers (55.7%) who

found the PD only "somewhat useful," Geography had the highest percentage of teachers

(61.3%) who found the PD "useful," and Social Studies (general) had the highest percentage of

teachers (22.1%) who found the PD "very useful." Civics/Government had the highest

percentage of teachers (19.8%) who found the PD "not useful." This is not surprising since they

have the smallest average caseload of EBLs among the five groups.

Table 8

Percentage of teachers who had and found professional development (PD) focused on emergent bilingual learners useful/not useful

Group	Had PD	Not Useful	Somewhat Useful	Useful	Very Useful
Social Science	26.6	9.0	32.3	43.6	15.0
Social Studies (general)	25.8	7.0	25.6	45.3	22.1
Civics/Government	22.2	19.8	29.7	42.3	8.6
Economics	30.5	0	55.7	24.9	19.0
Geography	44.2	8.0	27.8	61.3	2.9
History	25.0	10.4	36.0	40.0	13.6

Note: Portions within this analysis may not total 100 percent due to IES rounding requirements.

To gain better insight to the amount of the PD provided, I investigated the number of

hours teachers had PD focused on SWDs. Results are displayed in Table 9 and demonstrate that

the majority of teachers in all groups had only eight hours or less of PD focusing on SWDs, with

Geography having the highest percentage (86.1%) of teachers in this category. This is surprising

since Geography had the highest average caseload of SWDs but was the largest percentage of

teachers who had PD. Among all groups, Social Science and Economics had the highest

percentage of teachers who had 33 hours or more, even though it is a small percentage of

teachers (2.6%). Economics also had the highest percentage (7.7%) of teachers who had 17-23

hours of PD. This is interesting in that Economics had the smallest average caseload of SWDs

among the five groups. Also, Economics had the highest percentage of teachers who had PD

focused on SWDs and had the highest percentage of teachers who found the PD "very useful."

Additionally, History had the highest percentage (16.7%) of teachers who had 9-16 hours of PD.

Surprisingly, Civics/Government had 0% of teachers and Geography had 0.7% of teachers who

had 33 hours or more of PD, even though they were the two groups with the highest average

caseload of SWDs. This may also explain why Civic/Government had the highest percentage of

teacher who found the PD "not useful."

Table 9
Percentage of teachers who had professional development (PD) focused on students with disabilities by hours

Group	8 or Less	9-16	17-23	33 or More
Social Science	78.9	13.7	4.9	2.6
Social Studies (general)	83.5	11.6	2.6	2.3
Civics/Government	84.4	9.4	6.2	0
Economics	73.2	16.4	7.7	2.6
Geography	86.1	8.4	4.7	0.7

History	74.8	16.7	5.1	3.4

I also examined the number of hours teachers had PD focused on EBLs. Results are displayed in Table 10 and demonstrate that the majority of teachers in all groups had only eight hours or less of PD focusing on EBLs, with Economics having the highest percentage (87.3%) of teachers in this category. This is interesting since Economics had the second smallest caseload of EBLs among the five groups but also had the second highest percentage of teachers who had PD. Among all groups, Civics/Government had the highest percentage of teachers who had 33 hours or more, even though it is a small percentage of teachers (5.7%). This is also interesting because Civics/Government had the smallest average caseload of EBLs among the five groups, the least amount of PD, but also had the highest percentage of teacher who found the PD "not useful." Further examining the hours, Economics had the highest percentage (11.7%) of teachers who had 17-23 hours of PD, and Social Studies (general) has the highest percentage (19.0%) of teachers who had 9-16 hours of PD. Social Science also had the largest percentage of teachers who found the PD "very useful."

Table 10
Percentage of teachers who had professional development (PD) focused on emergent bilingual learners by hours

Group	8 or Less	9-16	17-23	33 or More
Social Science	71.3	16.2	8.3	4.2
Social Studies (general)	66.8	19.0	11.5	2.7
Civics/Government	77.8	9.7	6.8	5.7
Economics	87.3	1.0	11.7	0
Geography	78.1	12.8	6.1	2.9
History	71.0	16.7	6.9	5.3

Discussion

My results indicate that the larger group of Social Science teachers encounter a higher combined caseload of SWDs and EBLs than any other core content area. Although Social Science was only the sixth highest combined caseload of SWDs and EBLs among all eleven content teaching areas, the only areas to have a higher combined caseload were elective areas or specialized areas where it would be reasonable to have higher combined caseloads (e.g., Health or Physical Education). While there are social studies scholars that examine SWDs and EBLs (Burkholdt, 2017; Courtade, Gurney & Carden, 2017; Cruz & Thornton, 2008; De La Paz, 2005; Furgione, 2017; Gates, 2017; Hintz, 2017; Jordan, Jordan, & Hawley, 2017; Lintner, 2017; Lintner & Kumpiene, 2017; Minarik & Lintner, 2016; Morris, McGuire, & Walker, 2017; Salinas, et al., 2017), the vision should be that in years to come scholars within social studies are giving these groups of students more attention to address this "demographic imperative" (Salinas et al., p. 440). My findings indicate that social studies teachers have a large number of those students in their classrooms and receive very little PD to support these groups, which I will explicate more later in this study.

Geography, Social Studies (general), and History teachers all have higher cumulative averages of SWDs and EBLs than the overall group of Social Science. Based on this data, History and Geography teachers arguably need explicit attention within the scholarship about how to help them in supporting the learning of SWDs and EBLs, especially given the unique challenges that the field of social studies poses in terms of vocabulary and content (Cho & Reich, 2008). There has been much research examining what it means for students, in general, to think historically, such as Barton and Levstik's (2004) *Teaching History for the Common Good,* Donovan and Bransford's (2005) *How Students Learn,* VanSledright's (2014) *Assessing*

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Historical Thinking and Understanding, Ercikan and Seixas' (2015) *New Directions in Assessing Historical Thinking*, as well as Chapman and Wilschut's *Joined-Up History*. However, there has been little research in this area focusing on what this would like for SWDs and EBLs and even less work of this kind in the field of Geography. For example, Bednarz, Heffron, and Huynh (2013) note, "the amount of geography instruction that the overwhelming majority of students receive, the preparation of their teachers to teach geography, and the quality of their instructional materials are inadequate to prepare students for the demands of the modern world" (p. 16).

When looking at the difference between number of SWDs and EBLs in the five social studies groups, only a statistically significant difference was found when looking at EBLs. Furthermore, this difference was only significant when comparing History to Civics/Government and Economics to History, with History having higher means in both cases. Referring back to the average number of SWDs and EBLs for each group, the range between groups for SWDs was 2.2 and for EBLs was 5.37. This could mean that SWDs are somewhat evenly distributed, whereas EBLs tend to be placed in History courses in higher numbers than what is seen in Economics and Civics/Government. History most likely has more SWDs and EBLs because history is typically a required subject. However, pinpointing the exact reason this difference exists is beyond the scope of this paper and capabilities of the SASS dataset, but is an area of concern for future research.

When I compared the number of SWDs and EBLs in Social Science to the other core content areas, I found that Social Science has not only more of both groups of students than Mathematics or English, but statistically significantly more. Therefore, there is a need for more focus on preparing social studies teachers to support *all* learners because, in many cases, there is no guarantee that social studies teachers will have the support of a special educator or a

paraprofessional. There is, therefore, a need to focus on more strategies for general education teachers to support *all* learners in an era of inclusion (Deshler, et al., 2001).

When looking at PD, Economics teachers had the lowest average number of SWDs, but had the most amount of PD focused on that group of students. Economics teachers also perceived the PD to be the most useful, with 0% reporting PD as "not useful." There could be three possible explanations for this discrepancy: (a) Teachers who teach tested subjects tend to perceive PD as useful if it aligns with content standards (Meuwissen, 2017); (b) Economics in many states may not be a tested subject; (c) since Economics teachers had the lowest average of SWDs. These teachers could have felt less pressure because fewer SWDs in a course reduces the likelihood for a teacher to need to adapt knowledge acquired from PD to a broader range of instructional needs. Additionally, a large portion of Geography teachers also found the PD useful, although they had the lowest amount of PD. However, Geography teachers also had the second highest number of SWDs between the five comparison groups. Their perception of the PD could have been the reverse of Economics teachers because they had so many SWDs, they felt any additional support was useful. This warrants further investigation about the quantity and quality of PD received by Economics and Geography teachers focused on SWDs.

The data looking at the PD focused on EBLs is more easily understood in light of the numbers of EBLs the groups had. For example, Geography teachers had the most EBLs of any of the groups and also had the most PD in this area. Similarly, Civics/Government had the least EBLs and also had the least PD in this area. Interestingly, Civics/Government had the highest number of teachers who found the PD to be not useful, and they also had the least number of EBLs. The reason they found it not useful could be because they did not find the content of the

PD relevant in relation to the context of their teaching, or since they do not have a pressing need, perhaps the PD was not seen as the best use of their time.

However, there is research that may help explain why the teachers in this study who indicated why the PD they received was not useful. Meuwissen (2017) notes,

> high-stakes assessment climates complicate PD efforts to shift teachers' practices toward an in-depth inquiry and analysis, as participations in those situations often regard test performance as the primary criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of practice and, in turn, the credibility of PD. (p. 251)

This could indicate that although the PD received may have focused on supporting SWDs and EBLs in the classroom, if the PD was not specifically focused on how to help the students pass a standardized test, then the PD could have been perceived as not being very useful.

There may be a need for more space to focus on working with different ranges of students, including SWDs and EBLs, since the data suggests somewhat of an uneven distribution of PD within and across social studies when comparing who gets PD and to what extent. This may suggest a need to focus more on how to leverage PD focusing on all students, so that it is perceived as being more useful and gains traction with teachers. Currently, "We do not have sufficient evidence to indicate which features of professional development are effective for eliciting improvements in student learning" (Desimone, 2009, p. 183). However, one answer to improving student learning could be focusing more on core practices (Fogo, 2014), as well as high leverage practices (Ball, Sleep, Boerst, & Bass, 2009) within and across the social studies, as they could "likely lead to comparatively large advances in student learning" (Ball et al. 2009, p. 460).

There is no clear-cut answer to this dilemma. However, Meuwissen (2017) offers some advice:

> First, PD initiatives should be framed as opportunities to build sustainable
> professional communities amidst political turbulence with community members
> collective and persistently focused on strengthening learning and instruction.
> Second, school leaders need to be savvy policy gatekeepers so teachers can focus
> on implementing and studying the outcomes of instructional change than
> mediating stressors associated with accountability demands. (p 252)

Therefore, social studies teacher educators and policy makers need to identify specific criteria for effective PD focused on SWDs and EBLs, so those descriptors and criteria can then be communicated with school districts. Teacher educators can then work with school systems to ensure that PD is framed as, and is, an opportunity to build support networks for educators. The challenge then will be to identify the type of ongoing support needed so teachers are able to effectively implement strategies and skills once they go back to their respective classrooms.

Also, the low hours of PD that the teachers had is concerning. Although Geography teachers had the most SWDs in the five subject areas, they had the most teachers who had received eight hours or less of PD, which suggests that Geography teachers are continuing to be neglected in terms of PD and support. Also, the larger group of Social Science, along with the subgroup of Economics, had the most PD focused on SWDs. Economics had the lowest number of SWDs of the five groups, but had the most PD, which warrants further investigation about how PD is distributed among social studies teachers. Answering this is beyond the scope of this

study, but is seems to suggest that PD within and across social studies continues to be inconsistent (van Hover, 2008).

In terms of PD focused on EBLs, the majority of teachers had less than eight hours focused on this group of students, with Economics teachers having the most PD, but also the least amount of these students. This is similar to what was seen with SWDs, but it is concerning considering that it is estimated that "by 2030 approximately 40% of students will be from homes in which English is not their first language" (Solari, Petscher, & Folsom, 2014, p. 329). Therefore, if minimal PD focused on EBLs continues to persist in social studies, the field could fall behind.

Conclusion

While close to 25% of students in classrooms across America are comprised of SWDs and EBLs (NCES, 2018a, 2018b), within and across the social studies there are collectively more SWDs and EBLs than what is seen in the other core content areas. What should cause even more concern for social studies scholars is that the findings from this study do not consider students that have a 504 plan. This study examined specifically SWDs and EBLs, so the challenge for social studies teachers is beyond what is revealed in this study. Therefore, this provides even more support that social studies teachers need explicit strategies about how to support *all* learners, especially SWDs and EBLs. Teachers can gain these supports and strategies through high-quality PD. Nevertheless, this PD has to pay attention to both SWDs and EBLs and not prioritize one over the other, which seems to be what is occurring according to the results of this study. Then, in terms of being useful, the key may well be to focus specifically on how to support the learning of *all* students (Bulgren, et al., 2007; Deshler, et al., 2001), as well as work

on the decomposition of practice by examining high leverage and core practices (Ball et al., 2009; Fogo, 2014) within and across the social studies.

Nevertheless, what is clear from this analysis is that social studies teachers receive very little PD focused on supporting the learning of *all* students, specifically SWDs and EBLs. Therefore, the field still needs to push forward to address the dearth of research and knowledge in this area. Furthermore, the findings from this study should start a conversation about what PD is needed to support social studies teachers in fulfilling their duty of educating *all* students for the responsibility of citizenship (NCSS, 2013a).

Research supports the notion that if SWDs and EBLs do not receive the support they need, they could fall behind (Center for Parent Information and Resources, 2017; Murphey, 2014; Murphey & Haller, 2015). However, this stands true for any student. No matter how intelligent or capable, students need effective teachers in guiding them and helping them grow as learners. This necessitates two things: (a) more focus on how to support SWDs and EBLs in social studies teacher preparation programs and (b) not only more, but effective PD focused on SWDs and EBLs. O'Brien (2011) reminded us the strategies and insight gained from looking at EBLs could stand to benefit all students (as cited in Salinas et al., 2017 p. 451). I argue that an increased focus on both SWDs and EBLs in socials studies scholarship and research will do the same.

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"So I Feel Like We Were Theoretical, Whereas They Actually Do It": Navigating Twitter Chats For Teacher Education

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Abstract

In this qualitative study, I analyze the participation of pre-service teachers in a discipline specific Twitter chat known as #sschat. My findings indicate that pre-service teachers found value in the chat when they were able to share resources with practicing teachers, have resources shared with them, and build professional networks. However, there were instances when the pre-service teachers felt like they contributed little to the chat because they did not have extensive teaching experience. Additionally, the pre-service teachers expressed dissatisfaction with using Twitter as a platform for educational related chats. I still contend and conclude that the utility of such chats outweighs the negatives. I therefore provide guidelines that teacher educators should consider before asking their pre-service teachers to participate in such spaces.

Keywords: Twitter, teacher education, digital technologies, communities of practice, legitimate peripheral participation

In the last decade digital technologies have allowed for the development of online spaces which have provided educators with opportunities to engage in virtual chats focused on educational related topics on social media platforms such as Twitter (Benko, Guise, Earl, & Gill, 2016; Reilly, 2017; Xing & Gao, 2018). As Krutka and Carpenter (2016) note, "Social media services like Twitter have been credited with providing a means by which people can coalesce around issues, interests, and events in ways that can impact the social studies and even democratic activities" (p. 39). For example, the Twitter chat known as #sschat, has been developed specifically for social studies educators to better their craft (see https://sschat.org/about-us/).

Additionally, scholars such as Swan and Hofer (2008) have examined the nature and utility of technology use within teacher education programs and K-12 classrooms. As scholars and educators, we tend emphasize the importance of social media in education, without really interrogating or deconstructing these spaces (Kerr & Schmiechel, 2018), before we encourage our pre-service teachers (PSTs) to take part in these environments. Therefore, this study joins ongoing efforts to research the use and impact of digital technologies to support educators in the development of their craft by examining the discipline specific Twitter chat known as #sschat. I build on Krutka and Carpenter's (2016) contention, as well as Hicks, Lee, Berson, Bolick, and Diem's (2014) Guidelines for Using Technology to Prepare Social Studies Teachers, in which they acknowledge the benefit of digital technologies to support social studies teachers in the development of their craft. Subsequently, I seek to answer the following questions:

1. What does it look like for PSTs to participate in an online, discipline specific Twitter chat?

a. How do they describe their experiences?

b. How do they participate in the chat?

I begin this paper by describing and discussing the Twitter chat known as #sschat. I then examine Communities of Practice (COPs) as they relate to participating and engaging in #sschat; that is not to say that everyone who tweets is a member of a COP. I then provide findings from my study to show the benefits and limitations of Twitter chats as they relate to the development of social studies PSTs. Lastly, I provide some suggestions for teacher educators interested in having their PSTs engage in Twitter chats.

Review of Related Literature

Twitter Chats and the Development of #Sschat

Twitter began in 2006 "as a medium for users to respond to the simple prompt, *what are you doing*?" (Krutka, 2017, p. 2191) and was not intended for educational purposes. However, Krutka (2017) identifies that, "By 2009 educators were using the hashtag #edchat as a means to affiliate around educational issues both asynchronously and synchronously" (p. 2191). Krutka (2017) further notes, "Synchronous tweeting events called Twitter chats have become regular professional development activities for many educators using a wide variety of hashtags" (p. 2191). There are now Twitter chats available for almost any educational topic or content area (see International Society for Technology in Education, 2018)

The twitter chat/network known as #sschat was started by two people, Ron Peck and Greg Kuloweic, who had already been participating in #edchats. They believed that a discipline specific chat would help them to improve their craft, and subsequently, the first #sschat discussion took place in July 2010 (Krutka, 2017). The chat has since taken place every Monday night from 7pm to 8pm Eastern Standard Time (EST).

The Anatomy of #Sschat

Each Monday night, different co-leaders, such as teachers, teacher educators, and guest speakers, moderate #sschat. The chats usually focus on a specific topic, such as Bringing Elections to the Classroom, Women's History and Gender Studies, and the Election of 2016 to name a few. The moderator will pose questions to the group; these questions are sometimes provided in advance, but are usually not shared until the chat begins. The first question is typically focused on asking who is present for the chat, so the speaker can understand who all is participating on that particular night. When the moderator asks the first question, he or she will use the abbreviation Q1 to signify that this is the first question of the chat; whoever provides an answer identifies that he or she is answering that specific question by placing A1 before the response. Additionally, all participants must place the hashtag #sschat after each Tweet, or their Tweets will not show up in the chat. For example, this is what the first question and answer of the night may look like:

Ql: Ready to start this chat, who all is participating tonight? #sschat

A1: This is Jim from Tallahassee, I am an eighth-grade social studies teacher. #sschat

The participants will follow this format until everyone has introduced themselves. After everyone introduces themselves, the moderator will start asking content specific questions about resources, ideas, strategies, and methods (see Image 1 for an actual example of chat). The second round of questions may look like:

Q2: What are some strategies you all use to teach your students how to discuss controversial issues? #sschat

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A2: I like to start low-risk by developing a class discussion around the Lorax.

#sschat

Q1: How have your social studies classes incorporated teaching about gender? #sschat #history #gender #intersectionality #wmnhist

♡ 1 👤

A1: Essential Questions allow S's to consider how to answer from different points of view, develop empathy #sschat
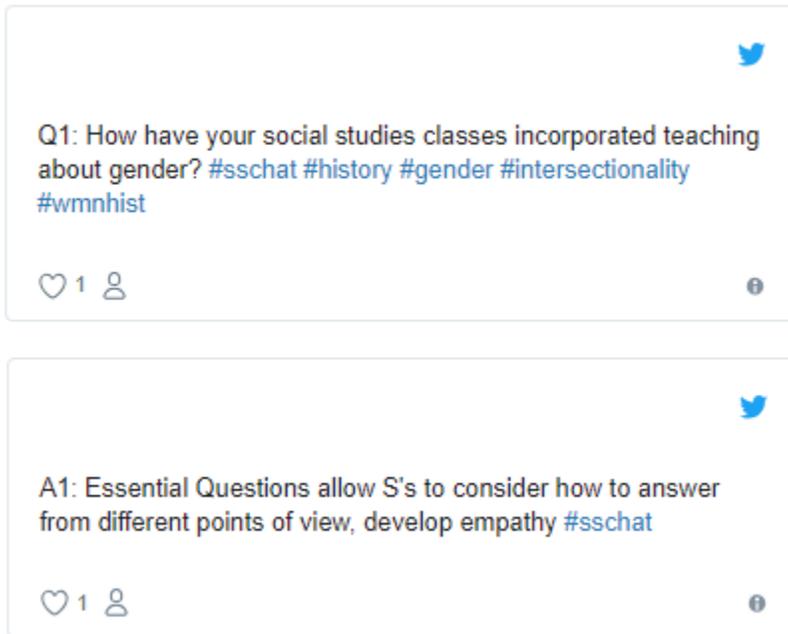
♡ 1 👤

Image 1. Screenshot from a #Sschat Session

The chat will continue with this format until the hour is over, but sometimes discussions continue privately after the chat concludes. All discussions from these chats are archived and publicly accessible online at the website created specifically for #sschat (see https://sschat.org/archives/).

Additionally, the hashtag #sschat is sometimes used to ask questions about social studies topics outside the chat. For example, if someone needs a resource or an idea about how to teach a certain topic, he or she may tweet out a question during the day and people will usually respond to the question. In many ways, #sschat has developed into a brand as it now has a Facebook page, a website, as well as an in-person meeting that takes place each year at the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) conference (Krutka, 2017).

Communities of Practice

#Sschat has allowed for the development of, and arguably is, a COP (Burns, Howard, & Kimmel, 2016; Hoadley, 2012; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Wenger et al. (2002) explicate, "Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge or expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (p. 4). The goal of #sschat is for social studies educators to deepen their knowledge and expertise through this weekly chat. For example, on #sschats' website a person will find this description of #sschat:

> #[s]chat is more than just a hashtag. It's an open group of dedicated network of educators and enthusiasts who aim to improve their personal, and our collective, teaching of social studies subject matter. We aim to help social studies teachers by helping to facilitate democratic collaboration where educators can challenge & support each other to grow in their craft and, consequently, offer richer learning experiences for students. Activities within our network includes the use of #sschat and affiliated hashtags on Twitter, discussions on our Facebook page, and participation in the annual NCSS unconference, but we are always looking to grow our network into new spaces. (#sschat, n.d., par. 1)

While the definition of a COP and #sschat are not identical, there are arguably striking similarities between the two and as #sschat has demonstrated, technology has allowed for the development of very specific COPs (Woo, 2015).

Joining a COP is a complex process for all involved. When a newcomer attempts to join or become a member of a COP, this process is characterized by the term legitimate peripheral participation (Fuller, Hodkinson, Hodkinson, & Unwin, 2005; Kim & Cavas,

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2013; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Woodgate-Jones, 2012; Woo, 2015). According to Lave and Wenger (1991):

> Legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artefacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice. (p. 29)

Arguably, the word community most always has a positive connotation. However, COPs are not always welcoming to new or outside members (Johnston, 2016; also see Kerr & Schmiechel, 2018). Therefore, it cannot be assumed that joining a COP is always a positive experience, especially for the newcomer.

Woodgate-Jones (2012) notes, "The pressure to conform (and therefore emulate the more experienced teachers) discourages the legitimate peripheral participants in these instances to share their own ideas" (p. 156). Therefore, in many instances the newcomers may try to emulate or replicate what the other members are saying or doing, instead of providing an authentic contribution to the community. Essentially, in the minds of many newcomers, to become a member means to act and behave like the other legitimate members (Woodgate-Jones, 2012). This process then problematizes the benefit of Twitter chats for PSTs, especially if that participation is brief, because PSTs may not have had the opportunity to become a full member of this community and may instead focus their efforts on becoming like the other members of the COP.

Because of the complexity of joining a COP, Lave and Wenger (1991) have been criticized with oversimplifying this process by which a newcomer enters into a COP (Johnston, 2016). For example, Johnston (2016) argues:

The deleterious effects of failing to belong to the community cannot be

overestimated, but tend to be underplayed in Lave and Wenger's theoretical

analyses, where belonging seems to be associated with an almost inevitable

process of becoming a core member of the community of practice. (p. 545)

Therefore, examining PSTs participation in #sschat provides a two-fold benefit. First of all,

looking at this community provides insight to what the process of joining an online, virtual COP

looks like and this study also provides insight to the affordances of such spaces for the field of

social studies and beyond in relation to the development of PSTs. Therefore, I ask the following

questions:

1. What does it look like for PSTs to participate in an online, discipline specific Twitter

   chat?

      a. How do they describe their experiences?

      b. How do they participate in the chat?

By answering these questions, I hope to provide insight to what this type of COP offers PSTs, as

well as provide guidelines for immersing PSTs in Twitter chats to further support PSTs as they

develop into practicing professional educators.

Methodology

Participants

The forum #sschat is a Twitter chat and a professional space focused on improving the

craft of social studies educators; responses are archived and publicly accessible. Social studies

PSTs enrolled in a graduate program in a research-intensive university in the mid-Atlantic region

of the United States were asked to participate in this study. The students in this program were

enrolled in the same methods class, field experience, and educational technology class. In the

educational technology class, entitled Inquiry Based Learning with Digital Technologies, the PSTs were required to participate in the Twitter chat known as #sschat to provide the PSTs with insight about the types of online professional opportunities that are available to educators. Specifically, this class is designed to provide the students with an entrepreneurial eye towards digital technology use in the classroom. For example, the course was described as follows:

> This research course seeks to blend theory and practice to investigate what it means to teach and learn in both formal and informal learning environments with the range of modes, media, literacies, and content available. Using the very tools available to students both in and outside of the classroom (as well as emerging technologies), we will research and evaluate various technologies and digital humanities projects by critically exploring the potential instructional value-added technology implementation. Class meetings will typically involve collaborative work in small teams, class discussions, hands-on work with participatory media, and brief lectures. You will also join, participate, and report back your experiences in a series online professional learning communities (#Sschat and TPS [Teaching with Primary Sources] network). An experimental aspect to this course will be your participation in an ongoing transdisciplinary project focusing on teaching with 3D objects and visualizing the past to teach about cultural heritage and local history. Finally, students will apply research on learning to investigate their pedagogy, integrate technology into their practice and closely study the potential impact on student learning. (Course Syllabus, 2016)

The social studies PSTs were required to participate in three to five #sschat Twitter chats and document their experiences in online blog reflections. In the Spring 2017, an email was sent to PSTs who participated in #sschat in Fall 2016 requesting a 30-45-minute semi-structured interview focused on their experiences after participating in #sschat (see appendices for a list of interview questions). Although seven PSTs in this class participated in #sschat and documented their experience in blogs, only five agreed to participate in interviews (see Table 1). Any identifying information was blinded, and pseudonyms were given to ensure participant anonymity.

Table 1. PSTs Who Participated in #Sschat vs. Those Who Agreed to an Interview

Name	Participated in #sschat	Agreed to an Interview
Katy	Yes	Yes
Amy	Yes	Yes
Martha	Yes	Yes
Sarah	Yes	No
Jim	Yes	No
Melissa	Yes	Yes
Jenna	Yes	Yes

Data Sources

This qualitative study examined several sources of data, including:

1) Blog reflections of seven pre-service social studies teachers;

2) Interview data from five PSTs;

3) #Sschat archive transcripts of the chat sessions from Fall 2016.

What follows is a description of each data source and what it offered to this study.

Interviews with PSTs were conducted face-to-face. The interview questions served as a guide, and the interviews were approached as more of a conversation between the researcher and the participant, rather than a formal question and answer format. The goal of the interviews was to examine the "lived experience" of the PSTs and to see if the chat was perceived as having utility for them in their current or future practice (Seidman, 2013, p. 9). All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcript data was compared to the blog reflections and #sschat archives, which I will address in greater detail later in the data analysis section of this paper.

The blogs the students completed were part of a class assignment in which the PSTs had to participate in #sschat and then reflect and document their experience in a blog. The blogs were used as a point of comparison with the transcript data to see if what they said in the blogs resembled or reflected what they said in the interviews. I will discuss the outcome of this later on in this study.

#Sschat archives all chats and they are publicly available and accessible. However, in order to pull this data for analysis, the transcripts were cut and pasted from the #sschat website and placed in a word document for further examination, as this provided greater ease of use. These archives served a key purpose in being able to identify the extent to which and how the PSTs participated in the chat.

Data Analysis

All data was analyzed using an inductive approach (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Using this approach:

> [R]esearchers can draw upon the participants' words to develop themes and
>
> organize the data into categories to be further explored. This can be accomplished

by engaging in a systematic process of reading the interview transcripts;

identifying themes in the participants' responses constructed during the interview

process; questioning how those responses are structured; and exploring the themes

identified to develop an understanding of the participants' lived experiences.

(Stewart, 2011, p. 287)

I first sifted the data looking for large thematic codes across the transcripts, known as thematic

analysis (Maxwell, 2005). I approached the data in multiple ways, but eventually assigned two

parent themes of positive and negative to the language that I perceived as having a positive or

negative tone. I felt that this approach best captured and illuminated the experiences of the PSTs

in terms of them becoming a new member of a COP, because this process can be both a positive

and negative experience according to the research. I then used a pink highlighter to distinguish

the positive comments and yellow to distinguish the negative comments. I then cut the quotes up

and placed them in three separate folders marked positive, negative, and neutral. I then spread all

of the positive quotes out on a table and identified the nature of the positive data. Specifically, I

looked for what the PSTs were talking about when they were speaking in a positive way. I found

that the nature of the positive quotes coalesced around codes that I identified as ***Sharing***

Language and ***Networking Language***. My next step was looking at the negative data. I followed

the same format as with the positive data, parsing out the comments and looking at what the

PSTs were talking about when their tone was negative. Two codes were generated in relation to

the negative data, which I called a ***Lack of Teaching Experience*** and ***Unfamiliarity with Twitter***

(see Figure 1; this figure was adapted from Boggs & Stewart, 2016 coding dictionary).

Coding Dictionary			
Positive Comments		**Negative Comments**	
Sharing Language	**Networking Language**	**Lack of Teaching Experience**	**Unfamiliarity with Twitter**
Identified #sschat as a place of sharing resources, strategies, or ideas.	Saw #sschat as a key source of networking and community building.	Felt unable to fully participate and provide resources due to a lack of classroom experience	Did not have a background with Twitter which caused stress and anxiety in the context of a live chat.

Figure 1. Code Categories and Criteria

These codes informed how I approached looking at the blog data. Therefore, I searched for similar parent themes of positive and negative in the blog reflections and distinguished them with a pink (positive) and a yellow (negative) highlighter. I then evaluated whether the nature of the positive and negative comments was similar to what I saw in the transcripts; I found a strong similarity between the two sources of data.

Finally, I analyzed specific chats that the PSTs identified they had participated in to see how the PSTs participated in the chat. To analyze these properly, I copy and pasted full chats into a word document and looked for specific instances of when the PSTs participated in the chat. For example, I was looking at how the PSTs participated by seeing if they offered strategies to the teachers or simply offered un-substantive comments because they had to participate because they were required to due to their class assignment. The findings from the archives come

last in the narrative, because I wanted to tell the story of how the PSTs participated in #sschat

from their perspective and then compare that data with that I saw in the chat archives. The three

data sources (interviews, blogs, and archive transcripts) were triangulated to "build the picture"

and tell the story reflective of the lived experiences of the PSTs (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 65).

Findings

I asked the following questions of the qualitative data: What does it look like for PSTs to

participate in an online, discipline specific Twitter chat? I also considered two sub-questions: (a)

How do they describe their experiences? (b) How do they participate in the chat? Below I will

discuss the findings as they relate to answering these research questions.

Sharing Language

The PSTs tended to have very positive comments regarding #sschat when it came to the

concept of sharing. This sharing included the sharing of resources, ideas, strategies, and even

relevant experience. For example, Katy said:

> I think we did one [#sschat] of geography, and I think I really liked that. And
>
> then we did one near the election, and it was on civics and that was interesting,
>
> because we had just had like a political conversation come up in my placement,
>
> and they kind of talked about how they handled those political conversations and
>
> what do you do? How do you react? How do you set that safe environment for
>
> everybody? So that was relevant to what we were doing. (Interview, Lines 122-
>
> 126)

In this instance, Katy drew a direct line between what she was seeing in the classroom

and what was being discussed in the chat. Therefore, #sschat was seen as a supportive

and helpful space because the ideas shared related directly to her current placement and situation.

Katy also enjoyed when resources were shared with her, especially resources she could immediately use in her placement. Katy said:

> I think for me I actually used something that we did one [#sschat] of them on. I think it was iCivics maybe. It was some game. I actually used that for something, for an assignment, I don't remember. I actually liked it, like someone was talking about it, they were prompting about it, I went to it, found it, figured out what it was, and I actually used it. I thought that was cool. (Interview, Lines 96-99)

Katy was excited about the chat because she was able to take something from it and use it immediately in her placement, which reinforced the relevance and utility of the chat.

Another PST also enjoyed the chat when she felt she could share her perspective with other teachers. For example, Melissa said:

> Umm, I think being a pre-service teacher, the thing that we bring most to the table is a new perspective and fresh eyes, and we are not that much older than most of the students we teach. So much of the things they are comfortable and familiar with, are things we grew up being familiar and comfortable with. I mean I, again I am very comfortable with social media. I know how Facebook works. I know how Instagram works. I know Snapchat and things like that. In a classroom you have a familiarity with things that older teachers might be out of date with. So you can kinda make the lessons more applicable to them and more attached to their interest I guess. Fresh eyes. (Interview, Lines 181-188)

So Melissa felt like her presence offered something different to the veteran teachers, because she knew how to make content more applicable or relevant to the students, because she was not significantly older than her K-12 students.

Additionally, most of the PSTs saw the archives of the chats as a resource they would use in their future practice, even if they did not participate in the live chat. For example, Amy said, "I will probably continue to use the archives, on the website, but I probably won't like tweet" (Interview, Line 216). Jenna also said:

> Even if the #sschat becomes less frequent or dies out because there's not a
> moderator, there are those archives and they'll always, most likely always going
> to be a resource on the internet for teachers to, at least if not get straight ideas
> from, spark ideas for other things. (Interview, Lines 225-228)

It appears that Amy and Jenna both saw the value of the #sschat archives as a way to help them develop new ideas, strategies, and resources. Additionally, Katy wrote in her blog, "Sschat can contribute to student learning by keeping me up to date on the best research-based practices and strategies." However, whether these PSTs actually continued to use the archives is unknown.

Networking Language

The PSTs almost unanimously identified that #sschat stood out to them as great way to network and community build. However, the concept of networking had a two-fold meaning. For example, the PSTs would participate in the chat in a physical group while eating dinner. When they spoke of these networks, they were addressing both the experience of doing it together and building a network in an online community. For

example, one of the PSTs discussed how she liked participating in the chat with her peers. Jenna said:

> And that [doing the chat together] was fun because we could have a conversation outside of Twitter in more than 140 characters and then help each other summarize it, so in that way that was an interesting way of synthesizing the information and having to talk about it first and express it. And then having other people analyze it with you, I think it was a really interesting way to digest the incoming information, because sometimes people would say something, and we'd be like, oh could we apply that? Or does that seem like that wouldn't work well with what they were observing? That wouldn't work well in the classroom I'm observing in, and stuff like that. So, it was kinda cool to have the wider #sschat network going and our own smaller network where we knew each other and were in the same classes and we could share how it related to class. (Interview, Lines 62-70)

Similarly, Katy said:

> So we would just, we actually made like dinner plans, and we would just sit around and #sschat and talk about what we were going to say and re-tweet each other and like what each other said. So it was very collaborative and we had people from other disciplines [English education] come to and like participate as well, so it was an interesting group experience, yeah. Made it a lot more entertaining than if we were doing it by ourselves. (Interview, Lines 76-80)

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Additionally, Martha reflected in her blog, "However, the most rewarding experience [of #sschat] was sitting with many of our cohort members and talking to them about our responses as we submitted them. This personal component made chats fun and personable." The PSTs found value in having outside support while doing the chat, possibly because they lacked experience, but I will address that more in-depth later on in the study.

The PSTs also found value in building an online community through participating in the chat. Amy said:

> The positive outcomes, even though it was online and you couldn't see people, it was very community oriented. I was like oh, there's a bunch of teachers who want to help each other, and are doing a super cool job in their classrooms, and aren't terrible, like everyone tells us we are (laughs), like these are actually cool people and they want to do fun, like, they are constantly updating themselves, like there's so many teachers who like never change anything, like the same thing every year, re-using, and these people weren't, they were constantly trying to get new ideas, trying things in their classroom, and were really open to change. That was cool and that was positive, it made me want to keep in mind these professional things. (Interview, Lines 230-237)

Melissa echoed a similar sentiment:

> Umm, so it definitely, like I said, brings us back to that developing a group of people to rely on, talk to, bounce ideas off of. Like I said, it is a critical place, but it's not critical, from what I've noticed in a hurtful way. So you have kinda this

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forum where you can say, I think I might do this in my classroom, what do you

people think? They might be like that's a terrible idea, or they might be like that's

a great idea, or I've done that and this worked a little better. So you do have the

experience of other people. Like I said, it does give you insight into people that

think differently than you. A lot of time in schools I feel like most of the faculty

kinda fall on the same spectrum of thought, and that's just because the people

hiring you are looking for a certain person to fit a certain mold. So generally the

people they hire are pretty similar. But I think school district to school district and

county to county varies widely, so to have that insight from other places, you get

a different perspective than what you have or have access to around

you. (Interview, Lines 270-280)

Sarah also wrote in her blog that on one occasion, "This week was especially fun for me

because I saw my 11th grade civics teacher was participating [in #sschat] and gave me her

email and said she could be my reference [if] I ever needed one when looking for a job."

Therefore, the PSTs found value in #sschat in terms of developing a network of support

with other educators, which then allowed them to become better social studies teachers.

However, this becomes more complex when considering the negative comments the PSTs

made after participating in #sschat.

Lack of Teaching Experience

The PSTs were in the early field placement of their program and had not started

student teaching. Therefore, they did not think they had much to offer to the #sschat

community in terms of related experience. For example, Katy said, "So I feel like we

were just theoretical, whereas they actually do it. They are just saying oh, this is what I

do. This is what I've done" (Interview, Lines 61-62). Additionally, Jenna reported, "Sometimes I didn't feel like I had super meaningful things to say because I didn't have the experience yet" (Interview, Lines 192-193). Similarly, Amy said:

> Well, the experiences we had, I think the question was posted at 7, so it was kinda hard to be able to, and we don't have a ton of resources, whereas a lot of people who were currently teaching had more resources than us, but it was kinda hard to be able to find resources within the time to send to people. So maybe a notice saying like, do this on your computer with all your resources, versus trying to do it on your phone, because then you don't have time to get resources to people, or links, or stuff like that. (Interview, Lines 75-80)

Amy went on to write in her blog, "I found myself able to answer these questions [evaluating claims] but wishing that I had more experience in the classroom to better reply to questions." Amy's interview response and then her related blog reflection seemed to suggest that her lack of resources and inability to produce those resources quickly was tied to her lack of experience.

Martha felt even more strongly about her lack of contribution to the chat. She said, "No, I don't think I offered anything really different [to the #sschat community]. I mean, I had slightly different ideas, but no I think they would have done just as well without me there" (Interview, Lines 174-175). So, there was a range in what the PSTs felt they offered in relation to the chat. For example, earlier Melissa felt like she offered a new perspective and Martha believed she offered little to nothing. However, the majority of the qualitative evidence suggests that most PSTs felt they offered very little to the veteran teachers even though they saw value in the chat.

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Unfamiliarity with Twitter

Many of the PSTs did not like using Twitter to participate in live chats. Therefore, a majority of their negative comments coalesced around their dissatisfaction with Twitter as platform for a chat versus #sschat itself. For example, Amy said:

Well, it [#sschat] was stressful to me because I have no idea how to use Twitter and I didn't know how to Tweet or anything about it. I didn't know you couldn't type a paragraph, you could only use a certain number of characters. I didn't know what re-tweet means, so I had a lot of assistance from friends to do that. I think I actually ended up like writing my response on a piece of paper and someone would tweet it for me. But, it was stressful because it was only an hour, so, you had to start and then they would do like, rapid fire questions, you had to introduce yourself, and then there were five questions and it seemed like by the time you could come up with an answer, like a good answer, and post it, you were already like, two questions behind and trying to catch up. I didn't find, I couldn't read what other people were saying during the hour that I was doing it. Like, when I was reading people's responses, it was like after the hour was over. I would go back and see what people actually said. During the hour, I was like oh my gosh! How do I answer this! Do I have any resources! Can I put a link in there! I was like, oh my gosh, the next question! So I was stressed out. I sweated a lot, but afterwards it was cool and less stressful and then I could see the links. But every Monday we were required to do it, I was like freaking out on Monday, because I knew it was coming. (Interview, Lines 33-47)

Also, Martha expressed frustration with trying to communicate within the character limit. She said:

> I think it [dissatisfaction with Twitter as a chat platform] is because it is so hard to come across with a positive tone, or really with any tone other than very blunt, it is 140 characters and you're trying to cut it down so you can't say, I was thinking about what you said [referencing a chat participant], and, uh, I wouldn't do that in my classroom, or I would change this in my classroom. (Interview, Lines 34-37)

So between Amy and Martha, there were two PSTs who were dissatisfied with Twitter for different reasons. Twitter chats stressed Amy out and Martha did not like the tone of comments within the chat.

Additionally, one of the PSTs was lost in the chat and struggled to keep up. For example, Melissa said:

> Umm (laughs), for me I spent a lot of time like trying to find what was going on. Because Twitter is not the most easily accessible throughout a conversation, even though there is a hashtag, you do have to be refreshing your recent, um, like if you type in a hashtag and then look for the most recent, like at the top and things like that, I usually try to find the most recent threads to see what's going on in real time, but it is like constant refreshing. So for the most part (laughs), that was me refreshing to see what people were saying. People were responding to me, I was responding back to them, and then trying to, the questions sometimes get a little lost with all the answers, so you go digging for them too. (Interview, Lines 117-124)

Melissa also wrote on her blog, "It's not only frustrating [the Twitter platform], but it limits the depth and complexity of answers from anyone participating in the chat." Therefore, Melissa was both dissatisfied with the format of the chat and also the lack depth in relation to the chat comments. However, this frustration could change in light of Twitter changing the amount of characters allowed in each post.

Considering the Archives

The previous findings can be further contextualized by comparing those data sources to what I observed within the #sschat archives. The PSTs saw value in the chat when they could receive strategies and mostly saw value in themselves when they could provide strategies back to the teachers. Since the PSTs lacked experience, they believed they did not have much to offer. However, after evaluating several chats, they arguably offered more than they thought they did (see Figure. 2 for examples of what some of the PSTs said within the chats).

PST	Chat Comment	Comment Type
Katy	In our unit projects, 7th graders must support any of their claims with at least 1 piece of evidence. Could definitely do more. #sschat	Lesson Example
Amy	It is important to use cross disciplinary strategies and	Affirmation

	collaboration. Perhaps work with an English teacher? #sschat	
Martha	When you practice SCIMC [historical document analysis scaffold] with students (modeling), it becomes second nature. But it may take some time.	Resource
Melissa	Love giving them [students] supporting/contrasting material to back up their claims... kind of like a treasure hunt for the truth! #sschat	Lesson Idea
Jenna	@BigHistoryPro provides students with a structure for claim-testing. #sschat	Resource

Figure 2. Examples of Comments Made in #Sschat.

When examining what the PSTs offered in the archives, it appears they sold themselves short in terms of what they were able to add to the conversation. If they had not introduced themselves as PSTs at the beginning of the chat, it is not apparent if anyone would have even known the difference between the PSTs and an experienced teacher

when looking at their comments. For example, Katy offered a specific example of what she was doing with her students, Amy provided an idea for collaboration, Martha provided a specific scaffold for analyzing historical sources, Melissa also provided a lesson idea, and Jenna offered a resource; they were contributing significantly to the chat.

However, it is also of interest that some of the more active teacher participants in #sschat participated well over 10 times over the course of a chat. In contrast, many of the PSTs would only participate around 5-7 times during a chat. Although, I did have one PST, Melissa, who participated 12 times in one chat. Aside from Melissa, the PSTs may have been doing the bare minimum to meet the requirements for the assignment, rather than trying to become fully enculturated in this community, which could influence the way they reflect on their experiences with #sschat.

Discussion

The way in which #sschat is described on their website indicates that it is a place where educators share their knowledge so that they can better the craft of themselves and other fellow social studies educators (#sschat, n.d.). Therefore, when the PSTs added to the chat and took away strategies and ideas, they felt like they were utilizing this space in the way it was intended. However, when they could not participate by adding, they had a perceived lack of value.

This perceived lack of value also makes sense in relation to the literature on COPs (Burns, et al., 2016; Hoadley, 2012; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). For example, perhaps the PSTs felt as if they needed to add specific strategies because that is what the other full members of the community were doing. Therefore, in instances when the PSTs were unable do this, they felt illegitimate because they felt like they lacked credibility (Kim & Cavas, 2013).

With the exception of one of the participants, the PSTs did not consider that they offered a new perspective to the practicing teachers.

The tension the PSTs felt in terms of not being able to contribute speaks directly the concept of legitimate peripheral participation (Fuller et al., 2005; Kim & Cavas, 2013; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Woodgate-Jones, 2012; Woo, 2015). Becoming a new member of a COP is not always a smooth process and the PSTs exemplified firsthand what this process felt like for them. Their discomfort had nothing to do with how they were treated, but how valuable they felt intrinsically in this community. Therefore, when they could not emulate the other members, they felt like they did not belong (Woodgate-Jones, 2012).

The PSTs felt like what they had to contribute to the chat was theoretical because it was divorced from practice. However, they did not consider that they may be learning newly developed, research-based strategies that would be of benefit for the other teachers who are not currently enrolled in a methods class. For example, in the once instance Martha offered a historical analysis scaffold (SCIM-C) she had learned about in class that none of the other practicing teachers indicated that they had used or even heard about. Therefore, in this instance, Martha was able to provide something new to the practicing teachers. When looking in the archives at the types of information the PSTs provided, such as the case with Martha, the PSTs were offering insight, strategies, tools, and ideas in their comments. The PSTs were close to the research and the literature, but did not realize the potential utility of their knowledge to the in-service teachers.

The PSTs still felt that no matter how much they knew about a topic, the application was missing and so then was their confidence. How the PSTs described their experience reflects what Abbot (2010) terms amateur ignorance. Abbott (2010) notes:

Amateur ignorance, that is, is not sheer ignorance of facts or literature; it is

principally ignorance of the possible modes for evaluating those facts and then

setting them and the literature into an order that will stand against the onslaughts

of new facts and literature. This may seem obvious; amateurs lack the specialists'

knowledge of quality, rigor, and theory. But it is essential to realize that they are

not necessarily ignorant of facts and literature. Amateurs may know a great deal

about those things. They just don't have any sense how to put that great deal in

order; they lack the skills of social thought. (p. 184)

Although the PSTs had a great deal of knowledge, when asked to reproduce their knowledge on

Twitter, they did not feel they had any routines or habits (Ahmed & Jones, 2008; Bourdieu,

1977), and essentially, did not know how to play the game or perform their role in front of the

other practicing teachers (see Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; Morrison, 2005).

They lacked the needed dispositions and it appeared that they did not have what Bourdieu (1977)

calls habitus (see Ahmed & Jones, 2008; Morrison, 2005). Morrison (2005) notes, that "it

[habitus] both enables creativity and constrains actions and practices, combining action/agency

and structure" (p. 314). Within the structure of #sschat, the PSTs did not exhibit creativity, but

exhibited constraint. For the PSTs, Twitter was in a sense, a figured world (Holland et al., 1998;

Urietta, 2007). In a figured world, the participant tries to determine who they are in this new

space, that is different, although connected to the actual world (Holland et al., 1998; Urietta,

2007). In the case of #sschat, the PSTs were navigating their identity as a PST who knew a great

deal about the field of social studies and teaching strategies, but at the same time, they lacked

what some people call pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986), and they therefore did

not know if what they knew was of value in this new space. Although they were in the process of growing and developing the needed dispositions, this growth was uneven among the PSTs.

Furthermore, the PSTs also did not consider that their presence challenged the other full members of the COP to help them to learn. As Fuller et al. (2005) found, "For example, our research has demonstrated that experienced workers are also learning through their engagement with novices, and that part of the process of legitimate peripheral participation for many novices is to help other workers to learn" (p. 64). In the context of #sschat, the PSTs offered the full members the opportunity to help them develop more as teachers, and may have even helped the practicing teachers reflect about the criteria for effective practice so they could then explain it to the PSTs (Woodgate-Jones, 2012).

It is also interesting that although the PSTs did not fully buy into #sschat as a space of utility for them, they liked knowing that the community existed, even if they did not foresee themselves participating in anymore chats. They also liked knowing the chat archives were a resource they could depend on in the future. So the PSTs liked the product of the chat, but not the process of participating in the chat outside of doing the chat together as a cohort. Additionally, one arguable benefit of Twitter chats is teachers can engage in them from any location, but the PSTs took the opposite approach and chose to engage collectively. Their preference to do the chat together could speak to their lack of confidence in themselves; being in a group helped to mitigate this issue and their collective presence helped to build their confidence.

The Twitter platform itself impacted their lack of enthusiasm for the chat. Because of the character limit, they felt constrained. This stands in contrast to other research. For example, Reilly (2017) examined Twitter as a professional development tool and found, "Students

reported that because of Twitter's character limitation, their reflective thinking was refined as they composed their tweets" (p. 59). Benko, et al. (2016) similarly noted:

> Numerous research studies analyzing the use of Twitter in teacher education programs and by in-service teachers have concluded that Twitter use can result in preservice and in-service teachers feeling like they belong to a teaching community—a community in which teaching resources are shared, issues in education are debated, and encouragement is provided. (p. 3)

While research indicates the benefit of Twitter for creating a COP for teachers, in the context of this study, it is a much different story.

Some of my participants also got lost in the chat, finding it hard to keep up with the pace of the exchanges. Similarly, Xing and Gao (2018) also found "When a chat generates three or four tweets every second, it might overwhelm some participants" (p. 396). That is certainly the case with #sschat in this study, especially due to a large amount of people answering the questions.

Lastly, although my participants identified many negatives associated with participating in #sschat, I tend to agree with the argument made by Woo (2015) who said:

> Novices need exposure to mature practice (Sorin, 2004) and the more a member can access mature practice, the closer a member moves from the community's periphery to its center. In terms of supporting changing teaching and learning practices through technology in schools, central practitioners are a source of mature practice and they can serve to initiate or familiarise people to the community. (p. 166)

Therefore, I contend there is still value in PSTs participating in #sschat, as well as other educational chats, even amid the issues the PSTs identified. I also believe that the forced participation of the PSTs in #sschat was not necessarily negative. For example, research by Burns et al. (2016) indicate that forced participation is not necessarily a cause for concern. For example, Burns et al. (2016) forced participants to engage in a discussion on Blackboard for a class assignment and one of the participants noted that without being forced to respond to others, she would not have participated, because someone had already said something similar to what she wanted to say. Therefore, she felt that being forced to participate was a good thing for her, because otherwise she would have not engaged with others. Because the PSTs in this study were forced to participate, they now know about a COP and resources they would not have known about otherwise and may pursue other professional opportunities in the future because of their experiences in #sschat.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is that it focused on participation in #sschat in the Fall 2016 semester, which is when the PSTs were in the early field placement instead of actively teaching a class as they do during their student teaching experience. Future research might follow the experience of PSTs throughout the course of the year to see if how they describe their experience changes from their early field placement to the student teaching internship.

Conclusions

This study exemplifies the need of a space for PSTs to learn from a knowledgeable other (Hoadley, 2012), in a manner that scaffolds their needs as neophytes. Although there were knowledgeable others in this community, it was a struggle for the PSTs to participate because they perceived the chat as being focused on those with classroom experience. However, I believe

that the struggle the PSTs felt can be mostly mitigated with careful planning and preparation by teacher educators. Therefore, I suggest that if a teacher educator wishes to have their PSTs engage in a Twitter chat such as #sschat, there are guidelines that should be followed to address the issues voiced by the PSTs in this study.

1) Although not all PSTs need a Twitter tutorial, it may still be a good idea for instructors to discuss Twitter, how to use it, and the utility of such spaces for teacher preparation and professional development. PSTs could first look at the types of chats that are available and then identify the benefit of such spaces for their own practice.

2) PSTs may need to be introduced to Twitter as an idea generator/democratic space where all ideas are shared and valued, which is in line with the mission of #sschat. More specifically, PSTs in social studies may need to spend some time exploring #sschats' website in order to fully understand the purpose of the network known as #sschat.

3) PSTs may need support in seeing what they offer to practicing teachers in a Twitter chat. This could be accomplished by having the PSTs do graffiti on large chart paper to reflect as a group about what they may offer in this space to other practicing educators.

4) PSTs need to be aware of resources that make participating in a Twitter chat less stressful. For example, there are tools that add the hashtags automatically to comments and allow the experience of a Twitter chat to not to be so overwhelming (see TweetChat, n.d.). Teacher educators could develop an assignment where PSTs explore Twitter tools and then report back to the class what they found to be useful.

5) PSTs may need more conceptual support about what a COP offers to them as beginning educators and more explanation about what the process of becoming a new member of a

COP looks and feels like. This could help them contextualize and understand their own experience when becoming a member of this new space.

Lastly, new informal spaces such as #sschat, "can support the holistic needs of teachers" (Trust, Krutka, & Carpenter, 2016, p. 16). Similarly, in the recently revised social studies guidelines, Hick, et al. (2014) contend:

[W]e see great value in supporting teachers to develop the critically aware dispositions that enable them to be ready, willing, and able to identify and engage with online professional learning sites while also reaching for innovations afforded by digital technologies to meet their immediate instructional needs. (p. 445)

For in-service teachers #sschat provides an opportunity and a space to exchange ideas, methods, and strategies and have vetted resources to try in their classroom the next day, thus meeting "their immediate instructional needs" (Hicks et al., 2014, p. 445). Meeting the needs of PSTs, however, becomes a bit murkier and more complex. However, I argue after considering the guidelines I offer in retrospect as a result of this study, having PSTs participate in #sschat is still a worthwhile experience that can meet their needs when they are provided with the right scaffolds.

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Appendices

Interview Questions

1) What did you all talk about in your #sschat?

    a. What did you learn?

    b. What stands out about using Twitter as way to participate?

2) What experiences did you have prior to using twitter or engaging in discussion online?

    a. Have you ever used social media for discussion prior to #sschat?

3) Do you believe you are a skillful user of social media? Why?

4) What skills does someone need to have to be able to participate in #sschat?

5) How does #sschat work?

6) When did you decide to participate?

    a. What prompted that decision?

    b. How long have you participated in #sschat?

7) Did you participate alone?

8) Did you prepare for #sschat? If so, how?

9) What did you do during the discussion?

10) What was your favorite topics on #sschat?

11) What was the most well remembered event and learning from participating in #sschat?

12) Were there any challenges to actual participation in real-time?

13) What were the struggles to participating? Why?

14) Can you provide examples of when you felt engaged in the chat? What do you think you offered?

15) Do you think there are different ways to chat in this environment?

16) How did people respond to you and how did you feel you responded to them in the chat?

17) What allowed you to feel comfortable in participating?

      a. What led you to feel like you were not ready to participate?

18) Will you continue to use it? If so, how?

19) What are the positive outcomes of participating in this community?

      a. What are the opportunity costs and challenges?

20) What changes in format would you like to see to improve the chat?

Conclusion to the Dissertation

What my manuscripts have revealed is that there is a philosophical misunderstanding about how to approach disability and citizenship in public education. Additionally, quantitative analysis has allowed me and other scholars to look at the intersection between disability and citizenship in a way that provides a holistic and expansive view of education generally and social studies specifically. Now that I have gained a better understanding of what is needed in the field of social studies in relation to disability and citizenship, I can continue to examine informal learning spaces such as Twitter to conceptualize what affordances and limitations such spaces offer social studies and education as a whole, so we can continually expand and grow our respective fields in meaningful and inclusive ways. To conclude, I am now going to briefly re-examine and discuss what I did in each of my manuscripts and what that then implies for my research and teaching moving forward.

Specifically, in this dissertation I looked at ways in which students with disabilities have the capacity to develop into full, contributing citizens within a democracy. In this work, I situated Dewey within the discourse of disability and applied his theoretical underpinnings, placing him in the conversation about disability and its relationship to citizenship. I plan to continue to use Dewey's work to push the conception of citizenship to render it more genuinely inclusive. Additionally, I will continue to use Dewey's scholarship as a working and pliable theoretical/conceptual framework for my future quantitative and qualitative research. In terms of my teaching, Dewey's work has taught me the power of enacting democratic education to build the capacity of the students I teach. Therefore, his work will continually inform how I structure my classes to ensure that I am providing a democratic model of education in every course I teach.

To this end, in my second manuscript I have exhibited a growing interest in using large datasets such as the Schools and Staffing Survey Data (SASS), to provide a holistic analysis of public education. By providing this expansive view, I can continue to interrogate specific areas, such as the preparedness of both in-service and pre-service teachers to support the learning of diverse student groups. More specifically, I can analyze to what extent social studies educators are prepared to support the learning of *all* students so that the field of social studies is reaching its goal of preparing students for the responsibilities of citizenship (NCSS, 2013). My hope is that my work in this area will continue to build in such a way that I can impact and inform future educationally policy. As a teacher educator, this work is especially important because I can see holistically what teachers perceive they need more of and address those gaps in my teaching and service to the profession.

Lastly, I have demonstrated an interest in informal learning spaces and educators' uses of digital technologies. In this area, I want to continue to examine the experiences and perceptions of educators when participating in online Communities of Practice and engaging with digital technologies. Examining these areas will continue to provide insight to the types of professional development opportunities available and needed to support the advancement of teachers in their craft. Also, I plan to have my future students engage in online spaces and explore the utility of various digital technologies, so I can continue to research the utility of such elements for education. My research from this will continually inform my teaching because I will use the data I gather to make decisions about what should or should not be incorporated into my classes. By examining these three areas of Dewey, Disability, and Democratic Education, I can provide more scholarship focused on how public education can produce citizens capable of participating and

contributing in this ever-changing world, which will continue to inform my teaching so I can

model what I expect of those that are in my classes.

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