

Historians' Social Literacies: How Historians Collaborate and Write

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STUDENTS WHO THINK CRITICALLY about sources, cross-check facts, and perceive alternative perspectives are better prepared for civic engagement—all skills among the specialized literacies that historians employ.¹ Over the past twenty-five years, researchers have identified these and other cognitive processes historians use as they read.² During this same time, however, literacy researchers outside of the field of history have suggested that reading and writing involve more than cognition, and that reading and writing represent social practices. Summarizing this research, James Gee argues that texts are socially situated.³ People read texts using not only cognitive strategies, “but also talk about such texts in certain ways, hold certain attitudes and values about them, and socially interact over them in certain ways.”⁴

Further, although some researchers have identified characteristics of strong historical writing, little has been done to research historians' writing *processes*, either alone or in collaboration.⁵ For instance, what do historians think about in the early or later stages of writing? The objectives of this study are to identify the social literacies of historians as they interact with colleagues

when reading, analyzing, and writing about historical evidence. Awareness of social strategies associated with historical reading and writing may help teachers provide instruction in skills that help young people to think historically and that prepare them for civic engagement.

Theoretical Framework

In recent years, the objectives of history education have expanded to include preparing students for civic engagement by teaching them to read, think, and write in the specialized manner that is valued within the discipline of history.⁶ The National Council for the Social Studies' C3 Framework is so named because it adds the third "c" of civic preparation to the college and career readiness included in the Common Core State Standards. Researchers echo the NCSS's call for change, contrasting the futility of conventional, content-only history instruction with the usefulness of instruction on historical thinking and historical literacy.⁷ Could it be that the social practices used by historians when engaged in historical inquiry might inform the way teachers nurture their students' skills and prepare them for civic engagement?

A handful of researchers have studied historians' cognitive processes during historical inquiry. For example, Sam Wineburg's pioneering work and Timothy Shanahan and Cynthia Shanahan's ongoing research have revealed that historians use information about a document's source to filter its content, corroborate information across sources, immerse themselves into the physical and social context as they read, and acknowledge diverse perspectives.⁸ These researchers provide teachers with a list of cognitive strategies that they can teach explicitly or through cognitive apprenticeships in order to improve students' ability to read and think in a manner valued within the discipline of history—literacies that are also vital for contributing citizens in democratic societies.

Shanahan and Shanahan have produced a three-tiered Model of Literacy Progression.⁹ At the bottom level are basic literacies developed in early elementary years; at the second level are intermediate literacies and general comprehension strategies typically developed in the upper elementary and middle school grades; at the top are disciplinary literacies and specialized strategies

that they contend can be developed with the proper instruction by many high school students. Innovative teachers apply research on historians' disciplinary literacies to develop and execute lessons that aim to build these top-tier disciplinary literacies. Ongoing research shows that diverse students from a range of ages read and think in more sophisticated ways when they receive historical literacy instruction.¹⁰

Teachers' lessons on historical literacy often involve a document-based activity during which students sift through conflicting historical accounts to develop an interpretation of a historical controversy.¹¹ Teachers often allow students to work with peers who support each other throughout this demanding cognitive work. Historical reading, thinking, and writing within this setting becomes a social process, with students constructing interpretations using their peers' input and assistance.¹² During such lessons, teachers often provide students with other forms of scaffolding, such as asking questions that draw their attention to key issues, suggesting possible interpretations from which to choose, or providing worksheets that allow students to keep a record of their ongoing document analysis. In providing this scaffolding, teachers add to the social context in which students engage in historical reading, thinking, and writing by favoring some content and by privileging certain ways of thinking about texts. Reading within professional or classroom contexts is not merely a cognitive process, but also involves social interactions.¹³

One element of social literacy is the ability to read the present classroom context as well as the text.¹⁴ Researchers on new literacies point out that reading is situated within certain times and places and that literacy practices within these contexts are shaped by valued social practices.¹⁵ Secondary history classrooms represent a context that students must learn to read, just as they learn to read historical texts. Does the history teacher focus on factual recall or critical analysis? Perhaps more importantly, what are the expectations of peer interaction—both teacher expectations and the expectations of classmates? Is it appropriate to challenge interpretations of a text that are expressed by a peer, or would such an act draw condemnation from teacher or friends? How should the teacher and classmates support the literate acts of one another as they engage in historical analysis?

Historians, too, read and write within a social context made up of a discourse community of colleagues with distinct ways of associating, reading, thinking, and writing.¹⁶ Emerging historians learn the rules, values, and roles associated with reading and writing history as they are initiated by professors and peers into the discipline. Expert communities of historians are typically geographically dispersed, with long-distance interactions that are very different from classroom activities. Exchanges between historians with similar expertise are typically conducted through the peer-review and publishing process, with occasional specialized conferences that allow them to dialogue face-to-face. Exchanges between historians with different expertise occur within history departments, but rarely involve academic discussions of historical events. Because most historians do not have daily intellectual exchanges with fellow experts, little has been done to study their ways of interacting as they complete historical work.

This study seeks to identify social literacies historians use as they interact with colleagues during an analysis of historical evidence, and to observe historians' collaborative pre-writing processes. When placed in a school-like context, analyzing a handful of documents related to a controversial historical event with colleagues who have similar levels of training yet diverse areas of expertise, how do historians interact with each other and with texts? How do they exhibit skills in their interactions, even in the absence of specific content knowledge, related to the task at hand? Just as the identification of historians' cognitive processes has begun to transform history classrooms, identification of historians' social literacies might improve history teaching. We focused on the following research questions in particular:

- What social strategies do historians employ when working with peers to develop historical interpretations on topics that lie outside of their specialty areas?
- What cognitive processes does social interaction draw out or demonstrate when historians engage in teams on a document-based lesson?
- How do historians write when engaged with colleagues in a school-like writing task?

Research Methods

Participants

We solicited volunteers for this study through an e-mail invitation sent to all members of the History Department at our institution, Brigham Young University. Potential volunteers completed a background survey and a quiz to identify their areas of expertise and to assess their factual knowledge of the incident they would study. Experts on the Bear River Massacre (i.e., those who claimed expertise or who scored above 70% on the quiz) were excluded from the study prior to forming teams so that observed interactions could be traced to historical methodologies rather than rich content knowledge. Eight volunteers were organized into three teams of two or three, based on their availability for participation.

All eight historians each had advanced degrees, though they varied in gender, years of experience, and areas of expertise. Three of the participants were women and five were men. Five participants were associate professors, with between ten and sixteen years of experience in academia, and three were assistant professors with five or six years. All participants had graduated with a Ph.D. in History from respected institutions that included The University of Chicago, Harvard University, Michigan State University, Georgetown University, Columbia University, University of Maryland, and the University of California, Berkeley. Their areas of expertise included French religious history, South Africa, Britain, women and gender, twentieth-century U.S. diplomacy, the Ancient Near East, modern Japan, modern Korea, and slavery. Participants were colleagues and demonstrated professional and personal camaraderie throughout the activity. It should be noted that all historians involved in this study were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (also referred to as "Mormons") and brought with them a basic understanding of the history of the Mormon settlement of the Great Basin, a topic relevant to the historical event they analyzed in this study. All had heard of the event before, though most knew few details about it. Additionally, one participant had grown up in the area where the event had taken place and had done some research on the topic as an undergraduate student. She had strong opinions about the event, though she remembered few details about it.

Historians' Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses of the Sources			
Source Document	Brief Description	Perceived Strengths	Perceived Weaknesses
Transcript of an interview of Henry Woonsook, grandson of two Shoshone survivors.	Woonsook tells of the Shoshone fighting valiantly before succumbing to the soldiers' superior arms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the perspective of a Shoshone descendant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created a century after the event by a non-witness.
Official military report filed by Colonel Patrick Conner, commander of the troops at the event.	Conner describes the incident in military terms, highlighting his decisions that led to victory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an eyewitness account produced shortly after the battle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conner may have overplayed and underplayed aspects of the event in order to highlight his role.
Memoir of William Drannan, army scout.	Drannan describes a massacre in spite of Indian defenses and Mormon support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an eyewitness account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produced years after the event, with details that differ significantly from all other accounts.
Casualty report prepared by the U.S. military a few weeks after the event.	The report lists soldiers killed or wounded with a brief description of their wounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represents a trace rather than an account. Allows for the corroboration of facts in accounts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-sided, ignoring Shoshone casualties. Provides little information on the actual event.
2008 newspaper article describing the discovery of a Mormon settler's memoir, with information on the aftermath of the event.	The article describes a memoir that has information about the number of Shoshone casualties that conflicts with all earlier accounts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a non-Shoshone, non-soldier perspective from an eyewitness of the aftermath. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The document is not the memoir itself (which has not been published), nor does it describe the actual event.

Figure 1: Historians' Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses of the Sources

Activity Materials

The topic that the historians studied was the tragic attack made by the U.S. military on a Shoshone Indian village in southern Idaho in January 1863. This event was chosen because its details remain controversial and because evidence about the event gives room for diverse interpretations. Historians were asked to construct a historical interpretation based upon five documents representing the perspectives of a Shoshone descendent, a U.S. Army officer, an army scout, and a local Mormon settler. Written instructions explained to them that, currently, two monuments exist at the site of the violent encounter, with one referring to the event as a “battle” and the other calling it a “massacre.” The historians were asked to design a new monument to replace the existing two. They were told that their design should include a title of the event, a description of the event, and images. Historians were given written background information, a worksheet for notes, five framing questions, five historical documents, and a form to complete as they planned their monument. All of these materials are similar to the types of resources used to support students during document-based activities in secondary classrooms.¹⁷ Each team of historians worked for about an hour and fifteen minutes, reading each of the documents out loud, discussing them, and beginning the task of designing a new monument.

The historians were not given any direction on the order that the documents were to be read or on how to use the other resources, beyond being told that all of the materials were available for them to use as they saw fit. The documents that were provided included the following: (a) a transcript of an interview with Henry Woonsook, grandson of two of the Shoshone Indians who survived the massacre, conducted as part of an oral history project by the University of Utah in 1968; (b) the official military report filed by Colonel Patrick Conner, commander of the militia that attacked the Shoshone, written about one week after the event; (c) an excerpt from the memoir of William Drannan, a scout who guided the army to the Shoshone village, written about thirty-six years after the event; (d) a casualty report prepared by the United States military a few weeks after the event; and (e) a 2008 newspaper account documenting a newly discovered memoir, written by a Mormon

settler, that described the aftermath of the massacre. These five documents presented the event in widely different ways. For example, according to these accounts, Shoshone deaths ranged from 224 to over 3,000. Some called the incident a “massacre,” while others called it a “battle.” Some explicitly stated that the Shoshone had no guns and others claimed they were well armed with plenty of ammunition. Additionally, each account was perceived to have certain strengths, such as a unique perspective, and some weaknesses, such as being written many years after the event (see **Figure 1**). It should be noted that although we use the term “massacre” in this paper, in setting up the problem with the historians, we referred to the massacre as an “event” or “incident” in order to avoid influencing their interpretations.

The worksheet that was provided prompted historians to jot down information about the source, audience, purpose, strengths, and weaknesses of each account, and gave a place for them to summarize its content, contrast the information it included with other texts, record noteworthy word choice, and record other information considered relevant to the task. Additionally, the historians were given five questions that were intended to focus their attention on some of the controversies, such as whether the Shoshone had constructed fortifications. As with the other materials, historians were told to use each of these resources in whatever way they preferred.

Data Sources

Five data sources were used in this study. The *transcripts of audio recordings* created during the document-based activity provided the most important data. A *background survey* gave information on historians’ training, research interests, and areas of expertise. Data from this survey along with an *assessment of content knowledge* were used to explain some of the cognitive and social processes that were observed. The *written artifacts* created by historians during the activity were integrated into the coding system. Finally, *field notes* created by the researchers were used to clarify the transcripts, capturing features that were difficult to identify in the audio recordings, such as looks of sarcasm that accompanied certain utterances.

Data Analysis

We analyzed the transcripts using open coding, with each utterance considered as the unit of analysis. We first analyzed one transcript independently, developing codes for observed patterns. Subsequently, in collaboration, we created common labels for similar codes we had identified independently, and we created a list of sample indicators. We discussed the differences between the results of our coding and collaboratively refined our coding system. We then returned to the second transcript and independently engaged in a second round of coding, further refining, clarifying, and adding to the codes identified in the analysis of the first transcript. Again, in collaboration, the coding system was honed, with indicators and examples of each code collected. Once we were confident with the coding system, we independently coded the third transcript. With each utterance used as the unit of analysis, and using SPSS software, our coding was statistically compared. Cohen's kappa proved to be significant, indicating a strong agreement between reviewers ($\kappa = .867, p < .001$). Once this high agreement was reached, we recoded all transcripts using the final coding system. **Figure 2** through **Figure 7** show the codes and indicators, with examples from the transcripts. In addition to open coding, patterns were noted regarding when historians engaged in certain types of interactions. For example, sourcing was observed most frequently as the historians began discussing a new document.

Findings

Through transcript coding, we gained insights into the cognitive and social literacies used consistently by historians during collaborative historical reading and writing. Although our intent was to focus on social strategies, we found that there was such an interplay between cognitive and social strategies that it was difficult to analyze social interactions without also considering the cognitive heuristics employed in collaborative work. Our findings are broken down into the following categories: (a) the social literacies of affirming, challenging, and chatting; (b) cognitive strategies in social interaction; (c) meta-reading and meta-writing strategies; (d) the interactive use of general reading strategies; (e) co-composing; and (f) exploring and arriving.

Social Interactions of Historians		
Codes	Indicators	Examples
Affirming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggesting an emerging hypothesis and inviting critique. • Elaborating on or providing evidence to support another's (or one's own) suggested hypothesis. • One paraphrases and another agrees with the summary. 	<p>"So it looks like he compiled a list out of all of these records. Is that what it looks like to you?"</p>
Challenging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning, correcting, or resisting a colleague's (or one's own) interpretation or proposed writing. 	<p>"Ah, no. I actually think this is a very ironic thing that somehow the word 'slaughter' is less offensive than 'massacre.'"</p> <p>"Though again, if that was the norm, then why would Conner lie about it?"</p>
Chatting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly banter or small talk not directly related to the historical task. • Making a joke about the content or task, often followed by laughter. • Allusions to their shared culture. • Poking fun at themselves or their colleagues. 	<p>"They were warned by a white man from Preston [Idaho]—it was probably Napoleon Dynamite."</p> <p>"I've been [pretending to be a historian] for the past fifteen years."</p>

Figure 2: Codes, Indicators, and Examples of Social Interactions of Historians

The Social Literacies of Affirming, Challenging, and Chatting

The most common social exchanges that were observed among the historians were affirming, challenging, and chatting. **Figure 2** shows the codes, indicators, and examples of historians' social interactions.

Affirming. Historians frequently sought affirmation from their colleagues by making a statement and ending it with the question, “right?” Seeking affirmation was a way to invite a critique from their peers. For example, after raising a question about the accuracy of Colonel Conner’s account, Isaac (all names are pseudonyms) sought affirmation: “It’s entirely conceivable that this Conner is making stuff up, right?” In another instance, Arthur hypothesized, “So it looks like he compiled a list out of all of these records. Is that what it looks like to you?” Particularly as historians explored possible hypotheses or made a speculative inference, they sought the affirmation of their colleagues. Their teammates were eager to oblige. Providing affirmation often occurred with a single word, such as “yeah” or “right,” but was sometimes followed by a colleague building upon the prior statement. At times, affirmation was provided even when it had not been asked for. For instance, as she looked over the list of casualties, Donna made an inference, “Index finger shot off sounds more like a bullet to me.” Arthur quickly affirmed her inference by simply stating, “Right.” It is important to note that affirmation was generally based upon the plausibility of an interpretation rather than its factual accuracy, an important point discussed below.

Challenging. From time to time, a historian’s hypothesis or inference was challenged by colleagues, or by himself/herself. For example, immediately after one team arrived at the conclusion that they would label the event a massacre, with Doug leading the discussion, he challenged his own thinking: “Now, [in] other massacres—are people armed? ’Cause one thing we’ve established is that these people were armed and in a weirdly fortified position.” His challenging reopened the discussion and eventually led the team to a slightly different conclusion. Often, the challenging took the form of a question, such as in the following exchange between Arthur and Isaac:

Arthur: I would say for me the least reliable [source] is the first one, the Drannan [account].

Isaac: Even less reliable than the century-later oral history?

Without exception, challenging was done in a respectful manner, as were the responses to challenging. In fact, historians seemed

to appreciate having their ideas considered carefully and critically by colleagues. Overall, challenging occurred less frequently than affirming, but it was still an important part of historians' exchanges over hypotheses and interpretations.

Chatting. In addition to seeking or providing affirmation and challenging, historians engaged in chatting. In ongoing friendly banter, the historians gently teased their teammates, themselves, their shared Mormon culture, and even the researchers conducting this study. For example, as the task was first being explained to them and they were shown that they were being asked to engage in a school-like activity, Isaac joked, "Wait. So I'm a historian pretending to be a student asked to be a historian?" Donna followed up, "so are we pretending to be a student or a historian?" When it was explained to her that she was pretending to be a historian, she confessed, "I've been doing that for the past fifteen years." Historians likewise inserted humor throughout the activity, alluding to popular culture at unexpected times, making exaggerated interpretations, offering ridiculous suggestions, or using their expertise in unanticipated ways, often for the sake of a laugh. For example, Roger concluded, "everybody's afraid of each other. So somewhere in [the monument], we need to have a statement about Trump and fearmongering." At first blush, the chatting might be considered irrelevant to the social processes historians engaged in, but in retrospect, chatting appeared to be a vital part of the team-building process and may have contributed to the collaborative spirit that encompassed the activity.

Cognitive Strategies in Social Interactions

The interaction between historians made observable, and perhaps enhanced, their use of the cognitive strategies of sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, inferring, and perspective taking—strategies often considered to be foundational in historical reading and thinking. This study demonstrates that these strategies are employed in group interactions similarly to when historians read on their own. The coding system used to identify the well-documented strategies of sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, inferring, and perspective taking is shown in **Figure 3**.

Sourcing. Historians' conversations about documents revolved around the source. Historians used sourcing most frequently when they first approached an unfamiliar document, although their conversations about documents were peppered with comments about the author, audience, purpose, timing, and genre of texts. "It's got that oral history thing going on where you kind of roam, right? And it's not structured," Isaac pointed out when reading Woonsook's interview. Although all historians engaged in sourcing, idiosyncratic differences were observed between them. For instance, Roger, who primarily works with ancient texts that never list an author, used the content of the documents in this activity to try to infer who may have written the text and the characteristics of the author, even when source information was given. His teammate was a bit confused by his practice of inferring rather than reading about the source. Sandra, who often works with oral histories, was particularly adept at analyzing the source of the interview that was included in the document set.

Corroboration. With slightly less frequency than sourcing, historians engaged in corroboration, comparing documents and cross-checking information. For instance, as his team read the third document, Doug pointed out, "This is the first we see of any evidence of them [the Shoshone] not being killed in battle. They are just being slaughtered there." Arthur agreed, "So the level of barbarism is higher than in previous accounts." As in Wineburg's study, the historians regularly shifted their attention from source to source, putting down one and picking up another.¹⁸ The collaborative nature of this activity facilitated corroboration and on several occasions, two historians worked with different texts simultaneously, making direct comparisons. Historians noted both similarities and differences between texts. They paid attention to unique inclusions—evidence found in one text that had not been present in any other. And they noticed omissions—evidence that was common across the documents, but missing in one. They made comparative judgments across texts, such as when Mandy commented, "This guy's account seems less reliable," after reading Drannan's memoir. Corroboration occurred most frequently when historians were exposed to information in one text that contradicted or repeated information previously encountered in other texts.

Familiar Cognitive Strategies of Historians		
Codes	Indicators	Examples
Sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking or considering information about the source of the document. 	<p>“The primary source we are talking about [was made in] 1911, but we’re also talking the attitudes that are swirling around in 2008, which are a whiff of the historiography.”</p> <p>“Well, I wish I knew more about this Drannan person. Why was he writing?”</p>
Corroboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicitly noting similarities and/or differences between accounts. • Judging one account against others. • Seeking to reconcile differences between accounts. 	<p>“The first two didn’t mention the Shoshone having guns. This one does.”</p>
Contextualization - Physical - Social - Personal - Historiographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing the document within the historical context of when it was created. • Considering the social, geographic, political, and religious context of the event being studied. • Considering historiography and changing attitudes about historical events. 	<p>“To come from an Indian in 1968. Maybe this is the Indian Rights Movement. We’re going back to the land.”</p> <p>“‘Cause it’s the end of January and months of confrontations, in the increasingly cold months, which probably was because the Indians were feeling pinched more and more.”</p> <p>“I wonder too, what was the military culture, and white American culture more generally. Did they care about massacres at this point?”</p>

Familiar Cognitive Strategies of Historians (continued)		
Codes	Indicators	Examples
Inferring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making inferences that extend understanding beyond the text base. • Creating mental imagery of the physical context of the event. • Creating imaginative explanations to reconcile differences between accounts. • Checking an image of an event against text evidence. 	<p>“I could totally see a just out of control militia doing it.”</p> <p>[Dialogue sequence] “When you’ve got an [cash] advance, or if it sold well, and anti-Mormonism is the currency of the realm late 1890s.” “And add some heaps of dead Indians.” “Uh huh.” “It’s got [best seller] written all over it.”</p>
Perspective Taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming the perspective of the creator of a text or an individual involved in the incident. • Independently interjecting a first-person statement in the voice of the text producer. • Assuming the perspective of the audience of their writing and anticipating audience reaction. 	<p>“We’re defending white women.”</p> <p>“That’s grandpa being grandpa.”</p> <p>“Just by the nature of public monuments, you have to choose something that’s going to speak to multiple constituencies.”</p>

Figure 3: Codes, Indicators, and Examples of Familiar Cognitive Strategies of Historians

Contextualization. As with sourcing and corroboration, a great deal of historians’ communication about documents involved contextualization. Historians considered the physical context, such as when Roger noted, “it’s the end of January and [there had been] months of confrontations in the increasingly cold [weather], which probably was because the Indians were feeling pinched more and more.” They explored the social context, with Arthur wondering, “What was the military culture and the white American culture more generally? Did they care about massacres at this point? Would

Conner have felt compelled to lie about not massacring or would it have been something nobody would've even cared about?" And they considered the historiographic context. For instance, Doug suggested that content in one account indicated "slaughtering Indians and hating Mormons [was] pretty standard fare, I would think, in 1899" (notably, not when the massacre occurred, but when the memoir was produced). Most significantly, the historians' interactions suggested an element of contextualization unidentified in prior research. Sandra felt compelled to admit the personal context from which her own interpretation sprang. She established at the start of the activity.

I should probably, in the interest of full disclosure, [explain that] when I was a student at Utah State University, I worked with a Shoshone man to help create living history guides for people who were going to [visit] a Shoshone village...The massacre is a massacre. That is where I am coming from.

Inferring. Contextualization sometimes involved imaginative inferences based upon subtle clues found in texts, clues that could be interpreted numerous ways. For example, two of the groups suggested that Henry Woonsook, the grandson of the Shoshone survivors, had converted to Mormonism prior to his interview, something about which the source made no mention, but that the presence of Mormon jargon in his interview implied. While considering the purpose of Drannan's account, Isaac spoke about a cash advance that might have been given for a published memoir, something about which the source contained no evidence.

In addition to these inferences, historians constructed visual imagery to try to understand the event. Sandra explained, "this goes back to the image that I still have in my head that I came up with somewhere about this happening in the willows near the bank of a river, which isn't necessarily [true]." The historians typically admitted the tentative nature of their imaginative hypotheses and attempted to constrain their inferences by the content of the texts. As mentioned, historians most commonly made such inferences during conversations about the context of the massacre or the context of the document's production. Throughout the activity, the historians' imaginations were active as they made inferences, constrained by the evidence and shaped by the cognitive strategies of sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization that became very apparent in their social interaction.

Perspective Taking. Historians engaged from time to time in perspective acknowledgement and perspective taking during both reading and writing. During reading, historians occasionally interjected a comment in first person, as if they were the historical character whose account they read. For example, Mandy interrupted her own reading of Colonel Conner's account in the middle of a word to impersonate Conner's voice. "Had I not succeeded in flanking them the mortality in my command would have been terrible. In cons... 'so thank goodness for me'... In consequence of the deep snow..." The historians assumed not only the perspective of the individuals whose texts they read, but they unexpectedly assumed the perspective of the audience who would view the monument they were to create. Jim assumed the voice of a scoutmaster who had stopped at their roadside monument with a group of boy scouts. "You're going to stay there and you're going to read it," he commanded his imaginary patrol.

Meta-Reading and Meta-Writing Strategies

Each team of historians approached the problem with a slightly different tact, some relying more on the teaching aids than others. However, all three teams engaged in a period of planning before reading and a period of planning before writing. The coding system used to identify historians' meta-reading and meta-writing strategies is shown in **Figure 4**.

Meta-Reading. In planning for reading, all groups took inventory of the number of documents, and one group went so far as to think strategically about the best order to read them—a strategy we labeled "pre-sourcing." Donna quickly screened all of the documents as she flipped through them. "I just want to see what the sources are. Casualties. A 'trib' article. Ha! I don't know what this one is. Oh, it's on the back. Descendent. Memoirs. So the closest in time is the...from...the colonel?"

At that point Arthur jumped in, "And no voices from the Indians?"

Donna responded, "Well there's the grandson."

"Is that an Indian?"

"I don't know. Oh yes, it looks like it might be. Yeah that would be the grandson of an eyewitness, so this would be an oral history."

"Great."

Meta-Reading and Meta-Writing Strategies of Historians		
Codes	Indicators	Examples
Planning for Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the historical problem at hand. Determining in advance how to use resources (“pre-sourcing”) and/or time. Asking broad questions that they intend to consider as they read the documents. Identifying other documents that would be helpful. 	<p>“How are we going to deal with this document?”</p> <p>“Well, that’s where we would need to look. We would need to find other sources about reports. We need secondary stuff about this.”</p> <p>“I just wanted to see what the sources are. Casualties. A ‘trib’ article. Ha! I don’t know what this one is. Oh, it’s on the back. Descendant. Memoirs. So the closest in time is the... from...the colonel?”</p>
Planning for Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying the historical problem at hand that must be addressed. Establishing the overall objectives for writing. Debating the general tone of the texts. Intentional postponing of some writing aspects for future drafts. 	<p>“You can iron out the language [later].”</p> <p>“If you’re going to memorialize something, you gotta decide what. Do we memorialize just those who died on the Shoshone side? Do we—you know what I mean? We have to decide, like you’re saying—is this a massacre?”</p> <p>“You could play up the angst of ‘most people didn’t intend for it to turn out this way,’ so to speak.”</p>

Figure 4: Codes, Indicators, and Examples of Meta-Reading and Meta-Writing Strategies of Historians

During the reading process, the historians discussed strategies for working with documents. For instance, one group paused when they encountered the casualty list—evidence that was unique, being a trace rather than an account.¹⁹ Doug voiced what the others seemed to be thinking: “How are we going to deal with this document?” The historians’ planning showed that they did not view the reading process as linear, but that they would instead move with fluidity between texts. At one point, Donna proposed that they temporarily leave Drannan’s account, suggesting that they could come back to it later. At other times, they expressed hope to see texts or content in the future. For instance, Mandy anticipated, “the other sources will tell us more about the numbers.” Throughout their work, the historians frequently made strategic decisions about their reading processes, such as the order to consider documents or the amount of time to spend reading one.

One vital element of planning for reading was clarifying the problem they were addressing, which became clearer to them as they read the background information. A member of each group expressed surprise by the complexity of the conflict, which involved not only the Shoshone and the U.S. Army, but local Mormon settlers as well. Mandy reacted as the convoluted nature of the controversy became clearer to her, “Aha! There we see the problem.” In a different team, Isaac reacted similarly when reading the same introductory statement. “So it’s more of a triangular problem than a dual problem,” he concluded. Roger called the interaction between the various historical groups a “historical ecosystem,” summarizing, “the army was afraid of the Indians. The Indians were afraid of losing their livelihood. The Mormons were afraid of the soldiers. The soldiers were kind of afraid of the Mormons. Everybody’s afraid of each other.” After reading the background information and before settling into the documents, each of the teams took some time to identify precisely the nature of the historical problem that they intended to solve. Historians returned to discussions surrounding the nature of the problem after reading all of the documents and before beginning to write.

Meta-Writing. Just as historians demonstrated great control of their reading processes based upon their purpose and time constraints, each team engaged in a period of planning before writing. In fact,

before deciding what title, label, or images would be included in the monument, the historians considered broader questions about the monument's purpose, audience, and scope. Arthur started the discussion in his team with a question: "If we are going to make a memorial, we have to decide, are we going to recognize both [the Shoshone and the soldiers who perished]?" One group debated whether to place their memorial beside the two existing monuments, with Arthur concluding, "We'll have the most contested post-modern monument. People will love it. Seek your own meaning." Isaac interjected, "Yeah! Semiotics! Let's not reify anything." In the end, their conversation led to the design of a more conventional marker. In the process of planning for writing, Roger and Sandra had a lengthy conversation about their monument's purpose, its medium, and even its potential replacement. "This is the account that the roadside people will set up and they'll get their one and only [chance to learn about it] so it's gotta be punching."

"And it ought to be complex, but simple at the same time."

"Yeah, and factually correct."

"Well, I don't know about factually correct."

"Okay, sure, *what?* [*pause*] I'm going to advocate that the memorial's description be on a computer screen so it can be edited."

"By anyone who comes?"

"As new information comes out."

"That's interesting."

"Cause if you do one of these bronze things, man, it'll be another fifty years before somebody wants to pay for a new one."

Further, as historians began to write, they understood writing as a process with multiple drafts. Historians' discussions of writing often included the notion that their current work represented only a first draft of something that would go through many versions before being chiseled in stone. Implicit in their work was an understanding of the writing process and expertise in working efficiently within that process.

The analysis of historians' writing showed that during this exercise they spent more time in conceptual planning (thinking about the purpose, audience, and scope of their writing) than they did in content planning (thinking about the information they would include and words they would use). Their focus may have been a result of the nature and timing of the activity, with more time for planning than

for actual composition of text. Still, historians spent a great deal of time thinking conceptually about their writing and the writing process before and during composing.

Interactive Use of General Reading Strategies

Research on historians' reading has often focused on the specialized skills that they use, such as sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization; however, historians in this study used numerous general reading strategies that were instrumental in developing historical interpretations. Most notable among these were paraphrasing, clarifying, questioning, drawing attention to particular information, and predicting. The social nature of the activity highlighted these strategies and made them a vital component of the historians' interactions with their colleagues. **Figure 5** shows the codes, indicators, and examples of the general reading strategies that proved vital within historians' social interactions.

Paraphrasing. After reading a document, historians would often paraphrase its content. Paraphrasing was also useful when historians compared information from two or more documents. Paraphrasing was frequently done without critique, merely to lay out the evidence contained in the text. For example, after completing the reading of the newspaper account of the recently discovered memoir, Sandra paraphrased the evidence, "Okay, so we get a couple of things from this, well, I would say three main things..." Sometimes, paraphrasing included a critical evaluation of the content, such as Doug's summary of Colonel Conner's account:

It's very interesting, this difference between the language—most of this is the dispassionate, mechanical military report. And the time he abandons that language is "fiendish malignity", "the ferocity of demons", and there is a little hint of the Indians not fighting fair. And the Mormons are also nefarious creatures in this, so the persuasive purpose clearly shapes the whole document.

In another team, Donna paraphrased the same document in a different manner: "That was interesting. It starts with the mission that he was on the offensive. They [the soldiers] were surrounding them [the Shoshone]. But then it shifts very quickly into a narrative of 'we were on the defensive.'" A similar process was used by Isaac

General Reading Strategies of Historians		
Codes	Indicators	Examples
Paraphrasing Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reading, pausing to summarize, without critique, the evidence as presented by the author of a text. • Summarizing for the purpose of inviting critical analysis. • Attempting to capture in simple terms the macro-structure or overriding message of an account. 	<p>“Okay, so we get a couple of things from this, well, I would say three main things...”</p> <p>“That was interesting. It starts with the mission that he was on the offensive. They were surrounding them. But then it shifts very quickly into a narrative of ‘we were on the defensive.’”</p>
Clarifying the Problem, Task, or Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together to identify the historical problem they seek to solve. • Asking clarifying questions about the activity. • Questioning and explaining unclear phrases or terms. 	<p>“Are we supposed to read this out loud?”</p> <p>[Dialogue sequence]: “They had howitzers.” “What are those?” “It’s a cannon.”</p> <p>“So it’s more of a triangular problem than a dual problem.”</p>
Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking a factual, conceptual, or critical question about the content of a texts or the purpose of an author. • Asking a question that connects an account with other accounts or the overarching purpose of reading. 	<p>“I don’t know what’s going on here.”</p> <p>“Is he trying to argue that the army wouldn’t slaughter Indians along the Western trail?”</p>
Drawing Attention to Particular Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeating a word or phrase when reading. • Using another means to attract attention to particular information. 	<p>“K, let me stop you there because that is interesting.”</p> <p>“There’s a loaded statement.”</p>
Predicting Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing expectations about the content of documents based upon the source. • Expressing expectations about their interpretations based upon their background knowledge. • Expressing surprise when content or interpretations do not meet their expectations. 	<p>“I’m hoping some of our sources will reveal whether any Mormons are saying a similar thing.”</p> <p>“Porter Rockwell led the soldiers to the camp? [Plot] Twist!”</p>

Figure 5: Codes, Indicators, and Examples of General Reading Strategies of Historians

and Mandy to paraphrase Woonsook's oral history. Isaac began, "So some interesting moves there. It starts with, I mean, it's mostly a tale of your white barbarism."

"But we'll give a scapegoat for this," Donna interjected.

"Yeah, but a very targeted and limited sense of guilt," Isaac concluded.

Clarifying. In addition to paraphrasing, historians in this study often clarified unclear items for their colleagues. Words were defined, pronunciation was corrected, or clarification was provided when a passage was not comprehended. Mandy's request for clarification, "Wait, what?" was not unique. The social nature of the activity provided numerous opportunities for the historians to call on their colleagues for help, whether they were trying to correctly pronounce "Shoshone," wondering what a howitzer was, or considering how many soldiers were in a company.

Questioning. Further, historians' interactions were peppered with factual, conceptual, and critical questions. As mentioned, historians asked some questions to seek clarification, such as when Donna asked what a howitzer was, or when one group discussed the pronunciation of "Shoshone." Other questions were more conceptual in nature, such as when Arthur asked, "Is he trying to argue that the army wouldn't slaughter Indians along the Western trail?" Some questions were more critical in nature, such as Arthur's inquiry into the attitudes of 1863 Americans and the military toward massacres. With rare exceptions, questions were valued by teammates and they collaboratively sought an answer. The teams would not continue the activity until the individual who had asked the question appeared satisfied with the responses. A few questions were raised for critical purposes rather than to seek an immediate answer, such as Donna's query, "How did he know it was *women's* scalps?" Questioning and the subsequent search for answers by the team were vital elements of the social nature of the activity.

Drawing Attention. In a social setting, it was also possible to observe historians drawing their colleagues' attention to items that they thought were particularly important or interesting. The reader would sometimes accomplish this by repeating a word or phrase as he/she read. For instance, in Conner's account, he used the phrase

“fiendish malignity” to describe the actions of the Shoshone as his troops approached them. The readers in two of the teams paused to draw attention to that phrase. Mandy reacted, “Oh look at that. ‘And fiendish malignity.’” Doug repeated, “Fiendish malignity.” In the third group, when Roger did not give particular attention to the phrase during his reading, Sandra interrupted, “Can you read that description from Conner again?” Attention was directed to important phrases in other ways as well. Doug exclaimed, “There it is! There you go!” when evidence related to a previous question was encountered. Often a simple “Hmmm” interrupted the reader to make certain that relevant evidence was not overlooked. In all three teams, it was common for a reader or a listener to give some oral cue that something they encountered was worth a second look.

Predicting. Historians used information from the texts and their context to anticipate the flow of the activity. After looking at a document’s source, the historians appeared to develop expectations of the content of the document. They would typically not express these expectations unless the document strayed from them. So, throughout much of the reading, historians would read rapidly with few interruptions. However, when content strayed from what historians anticipated, they would pause, backtrack, reread, clarify, express surprise, and/or attempt to explain the content using the familiar heuristics. Interestingly, all three teams demonstrated this anticipation of content as they encountered an unexpected statement in Woonsook’s oral history. Woonsook lay the blame for the soldiers attack on his own grandfather, who had recently raided an emigrant train. The comment was so surprising, a dialogue interrupted their reading:

“Hmmm.”

“Wow.”

“That is a very...”

“So throwing Grandpa under the bus is remarkable.”

“Right, right.” [*pause*]

“But it’s a way to confine the guilt of the Indians’ side to two dudes.”

The other team took longer to come to grips with the statement:

“Why would he say that? Why would he do that?”

“Right?”

"Why would he..." [*pause*]

"It seems like he would rationalize the other way."

"Right." [*pause*]

"He's making his own people look bad."

The reaction of the historians in both instances demonstrated that they anticipated the content of the documents before reading and that when content strayed from their expectations, such as Woonsook's betrayal of his grandfather, it became a topic of extended discussion.

In addition to predicting the content of documents, the historians also anticipated the flow of the entire activity. For instance, on several occasions, groups left questions unanswered, hoping that more information would be forthcoming in subsequent texts. Donna expressed this anticipation, "I'm hoping some of our sources will reveal whether any Mormons are saying a similar thing." Historians used the anticipation of content to move the activity along. For example, when one of the sources left questions about the number of Shoshone who perished, Donna predicted, "the other sources will tell us more about the numbers." Both the fluidity of the reading and the flow of the activity depended to some degree upon the historians' ability to predict what would come next.

Co-Composing

Historians engaged in collaborative writing processes that were made visible to us by their social interactions. Co-composing involved negotiating the specific content and words to be used in their written interpretation. Throughout the writing process, historians often cited evidence to justify their choice of particular words or content. Interestingly, some elements of composing began at the start of the activity, even before any of the documents had been read. For instance, when the controversy was first explained to her team, Mandy began to consider possible ways to frame the event. "Can you use the word 'incident'? Is that halfway between 'massacre' and 'battle'?" Arthur agreed, "It's a more neutral term." **Figure 6** shows the code, indicators, and examples of historians' co-composing processes.

Co-composing occurred much more frequently toward the end of the activity as the historians planned the monument. For example, a team decided to erect an obelisk discussed the content to be included.

Co-Composing of Historians		
Code	Indicators	Examples
Co-Composing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seeking input on words or phrases to include in their text.• Citing evidence from the documents to support their choice of words.• Sharing decisions about what gets included.• Negotiating how/when certain words/phrases are used.	<p>[Dialogue sequence]: “So what do we think of that?” “The one-sided battle that became a massacre.” “As a first iteration, yes.”</p> <p>[Dialogue sequence]: “What word do you use when you put an army some place? Is it—it’s not stationed. It’s not quartered. Assigned? What did the summary say?” “Posted.” “Posted! There we are.”</p>

Figure 6: Codes, Indicators, and Examples of Co-Composing of Historians

Arthur asked, “On the side of the obelisk, what do we say about why the soldiers were there in the first place? Or do we not?”

“I think we [should be] as vague as possible,” Donna responded.

Arthur: Should we say “soldiers from the California militia were stationed in Utah to keep an eye on the Mormons and guard the trails?”

Donna: Yeah, let’s just say guard the trails. Let’s not even say anything about the Mormons.

Arthur: Keep the Mormons out? Okay.

At this point, Isaac jumped in the conversation to challenge their idea, “Really? How come? I think that’s my favorite part of the story.”

As mentioned, part of the co-composing process involved historians citing evidence to support their content and word choices. In contemplating whether to call the incident a “battle” or a “massacre,” Arthur pointed out, “Well, interestingly, the only Native American voice we have in this would call it a battle. And they would have reason. It was like we were courageous and we fought hard.” Co-composing occurred, for the most part, during the later stages of the activity, after the purposes, audience, and scope of the monument had been established.

Exploring and Arriving

As we completed the coding, we realized that historians displayed certain attitudes toward the evidence, the historical question, and their peers' ideas in the early stages of the activity, and a different attitude in the later stages. We labeled these approaches "exploring" and "arriving." **Figure 7** shows the codes, indicators, and examples associated with exploring possibilities and arriving at an interpretation.

Exploring. In the early stages of the activity, particularly as they analyzed the pieces of evidence, the historians generally went through a phase of exploration. During exploratory periods, historians generated multiple hypotheses to account for evidence. When proposing imaginative and speculative interpretations, historians generally used qualifying language, such as *maybe*, *it's conceivable*, *it's likely*, or *possibly*, in their conversations. For example, after reading Conner's account, Mandy commented, "I think it's likely that Colonel Conner is exaggerating." When pondering why Woonsook's oral history was so favorable toward the Mormon settlers, Doug admitted the speculative nature of his interpretations, "If we had to make some guesses, the person giving this interview, as part of the American Indian oral history project, maybe has joined the Mormon Church, so the church now has a good name."

Historians' explorations demonstrated an interesting mix of skepticism and open-mindedness. They were willing to consider all interpretations, but did so through a critical lens while relying on evidence. The exploration of new explanations often emerged as historians dealt with conflicting information. For instance, as Jim considered Woonsook's account, which claimed that the Shoshone did not have guns, and the casualty report, which showed that many of the wounded soldiers had been shot by guns, he raised the possibility of widespread friendly fire, a hypothesis that was eventually dismissed by the group. By the time every team approached the writing task, a great number of hypothetical interpretations had been expressed to account for the evidence that they had analyzed. Throughout this process, a feeling of exploration permeated the historians' work as they were not afraid to suggest potential explanations that might later be ruled out.

Exploring and Arriving of Historians		
Codes	Indicators	Examples
Exploring Possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposing a plausible explanation for the content of an account without arguing for its acceptance.• Using language to qualify or to express the tentative nature of a claim.	<p>“It’s entirely conceivable that this General Conner is making stuff up, right?”</p> <p>[Dialogue sequence]: “I wonder if there’s later stuff in his life.” “Right.” “That this family has this sort of, this bad apple.” “Right.” “And so it just becomes natural to blame him.”</p>
Arriving at an Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ruling out certain interpretations.• Identifying the most defensible interpretation.• Citing evidence to support a single interpretation.• Using reasoning and other strategies to arrive at a conclusion.	<p>[Dialogue sequence]: “Did the Shoshone use guns?” “So I think—I feel comfortable saying ‘yes’ mostly based on the casualty report that said ‘shot’ and the fact that it distinguished between arrows and guns.” “Yeah.”</p>

Figure 7: Codes, Indicators, and Examples of Exploring and Arriving of Historians

Arriving. Toward the end of the activity, each of the teams discarded some previously proposed hypotheses, narrowed their interpretations, and eventually arrived at a defensible conclusion. Two teams used the focus questions that had been provided by the researchers, negotiating consensus in their answers. For example, after Donna read the question, “Did the Shoshone use guns?” a narrowing of the various possible interpretations took place. Isaac answered first, “So I feel comfortable saying ‘yes’ mostly based on the [soldier] casualty report that said ‘shot’ and the fact that it distinguished between arrows and guns.” His team agreed with him. This same team had a lengthy conversation on the question of whether the soldiers intentionally killed women and children.

Isaac: Do we think the soldiers intentionally killed women and children? It depends on who you ask.

Donna: I think they did.

Arthur: For me, part of that would be did they really use artillery? Because artillery is not going to discriminate. Or are they going up close and having the option of killing a woman and child and doing it or not doing it.

Isaac: So we have two primary documents that say women and children killed, and we have one that says 170 were spared, and then the last one is not really relevant.

Donna: One that says 170 were spared. See, this is hard because what we don't have is proof that women and children were actually killed. It just seems likely, right? We have the two—we have a thirty-year-later account that says women and children [were killed], but I think our own intuition about life in the West tells us women and children were probably killed, right?

Isaac: Right, right.

Donna: And probably intentionally?

Arthur: And probably intentionally.

In this manner, after exploring possible alternative interpretations, the team arrived at their conclusion: the soldiers were likely to have intentionally killed Shoshone women and children. This process of exploring possible interpretations early in the activity and eventually ruling out possibilities and arriving at a conclusion was common across all three of the teams of historians.

Of all the observed social strategies of the historians in this study, this process of exploring and arriving held, in our opinion, the most promise for preparing young people for civic engagement, a concept we discuss below.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the social literacies historians use as they interact with colleagues in an analysis of historical evidence, with an added focus on the early stages of their writing. Three questions shaped our research design and analysis: What social strategies do historians employ when working with peers to develop historical interpretations on topics that lie outside of their specialty areas? What cognitive processes does social

interaction draw out or demonstrate when historians engaged in teams on a document-based lesson? How do historians write when engaged with colleagues in a school-like writing task? Our research was largely exploratory, as little research has been conducted on historians' social processes during academic reading, thinking, and writing tasks. Throughout this discussion, we will propose possible classroom implications of these findings, acknowledging the need for future research to test our ideas.

Historians' Social Strategies

As mentioned, Gee contends that individuals engage with texts using social processes and according to norms established within discourse communities.²⁰ We were curious about specialized social strategies that might shape historians' collaborative work. We found that three social strategies were used frequently as the historians explored possible interpretations, then worked toward consensus. First, historians sought and gave affirmation to emerging ideas. Historians leaned heavily upon one another to test hypotheses that they developed. And they were eager to provide feedback related to their peers' thinking. As mentioned, during periods of exploration, seeking and providing affirmation typically involved affirming the plausibility of an idea rather than its factual accuracy. And historians sought and gave affirmation on numerous ideas—even conflicting ideas—during periods of exploration. These findings provide support to the Argument Model of Historical Reading proposed by M. Anne Britt, Jean-François Rouet, Mara Georgi, and Charles Perfetti, who suggested that historians maintain multiple event models in mind simultaneously, even notions that they expect to discard at a later time.²¹ Historians in this study exhibited an open-mindedness throughout an exploratory process, which involved seeking and providing affirmation on hypothetical interpretations of evidence. To summarize, historians' social processes promoted exploratory work, with affirmation sought and given for multiple, plausible (though sometimes conflicting) interpretations.

Second, historians engaged in challenging. Challenging, unlike affirming, occurred infrequently and was more commonly used in the later phases of the activity as the historians worked toward a shared interpretation. Whereas challenging is often viewed as

barrier to progress, the historians in our study saw challenging as a positive part of the process—on some occasions, individuals even challenged their own ideas as soon as the ideas had been voiced. In light of Wineburg's research comparing historians' reading with that of high school students, these findings were not entirely surprising.²² Historians thrive in a culture where ideas and processes are valued over factual answers. Such shared values of historians became apparent in our study when Sandra suggested that there were more important characteristics for their monument than factual accuracy. An appreciation for, and acceptance of, those who challenged their ideas was exhibited by Roger when he matter-of-factly pondered the future replacements of their monument. His suggestion to use a computer monitor to allow future editing showed that he anticipated that any work historians currently engage in will be replaced by the work of future historians. Gee contends that discourse communities share common values, and historians in this study, understanding the tentative nature of their ideas, valued the push-back that came from thoughtful, critical peers.²³

Third, historians engaged in chatting. Chatting was a way to make unexpected connections to current events and modern pop culture, with references to Hollywood-produced movies, such as *Napoleon Dynamite* and the *Harry Potter* series, and to modern historical events, such as the “fear-mongering” of the then-U.S. presidential candidate, Donald Trump. Such allusions might at first seem irrelevant, but they may be interpreted as historians' attempts to leverage historical consciousness, the act of making sense of current events in light of historical events. Further, such joking around, as well as the gentle teasing of self and others, appeared to build rapport within the group and move the activity forward. Not only were the historians reading a context, as Terry Underwood, Monica Yoo, and P. David Pearson suggested that experts can do, these historians were writing a context where competing ideas could be grappled with in relative safety.²⁴ Our findings suggest that appropriate chatting may play an important role in team-building and moving document-based activities forward.

As we explored the data, it occurred to us that the social strategies that the historians used are some of the same strategies that researchers propose are vital for students to develop to prepare for civic engagement. For instance, in the document, *Youth Civic Development and Education*, researchers contend:

Constructive participation requires the ability to work with people one disagrees with in a respectful way and in a spirit of progress toward mutually beneficial outcomes. This involves skills of civil discussion and compromise, and also the ability to advocate and deliberate effectively and tenaciously about important issues.²⁵

Historians in this study demonstrated behaviors that promoted (a) civil discussion, including *chatting* and *affirming*; (b) tenacity, including *challenging* and using evidence to defend an interpretation; and (c) deliberation, particularly throughout the process of *exploring*, when many possible alternative interpretations were maintained simultaneously. When a colleague proposed an interpretation that conflicted with another that had already been suggested, there was no knee-jerk reaction dismissing the new idea. Instead, there was a deliberative willingness to affirm the new interpretation as a plausible alternative and to consider the evidence in light of the new idea. Both affirmations and challenges were viewed with a “spirit of progress” toward a more nuanced understanding of the event. Just as organizations such as the Stanford History Education Group, the UMBC Center for History Education, the UC Berkeley History-Social Science Project, the Historical Thinking Project, and others have designed lessons to teach historical thinking skills such as sourcing, perspective taking, and contextualization,²⁶ lessons could be designed to teach the social processes of exploring, arriving, challenging, and affirming. Armed with these strategies, students would be better prepared to engage with their peers during document-based lessons, and more importantly, may be better prepared to engage with fellow citizens to collaboratively and deliberatively explore current problems and arrive at appropriate solutions.

This observation leads us to believe that the interaction between historians in this study serves as a useful model for collaborative problem solving associated with civic engagement. Though the direct transfer of strategies across fields is a risky venture, the patterns followed by historians of an open-minded exploration—considering primarily the plausibility of ideas with only mild skepticism, followed by a respectful, critical analysis of ideas as consensus is sought—may be a useful process to teach social studies students. Indeed, some researchers suggest that instruction on strategies for interacting during a discussion of controversy is one of the basic purposes for public school in general and history

classrooms in particular.²⁷ The social interaction of historians in this study may hold a key to such instruction. Classroom research is needed to see whether this is indeed the case.

Other elements of historians' social interaction may have implications for history classrooms. Like professional discourse communities, history classrooms favor certain ways of interacting with texts, peers, and the teacher.²⁸ And there is evidence that the social interaction within history classrooms contrasts starkly with the interaction of these historians, though no direct comparisons have been studied. For instance, Bruce VanSledright suggests that an emphasis on the literal comprehension of texts leads students to search for the one correct answer.²⁹ Further, students' counterproductive epistemic beliefs may lead them to place too much emphasis on the accumulation of facts rather than an exploration of ideas, as the historians in this study did.³⁰ Our research suggests that providing explicit instruction on historians' social interactions, highlighting their willingness to explore multiple plausible hypotheses in the process of developing an interpretation, might be of value to students. They could be taught strategies for affirming and challenging their peers' or their own ideas, including the timing of when each response is most appropriate. Students could be taught explicitly that challenging is not a personal attack, but an invitation to elaborate, justify, or improve their thinking. Additionally, teachers might consider the vital role of chatting as part of group work. Instead of considering all silly comments "off-task," there is evidence that humor is vital both in team building and in making connections between past and current events—an element of historical consciousness. The results of this study and future research might help teachers know which forms of chatting represent historians' social processes, furthering their work, and which forms might distract from historical thinking.

With an awareness of historians' social strategies, teachers can better structure and provide scaffolding during document-based group work, an instructional strategy that is frequently employed during document-based lessons.³¹ Just as instruction on historians' cognitive heuristics can prepare young people for the critical thinking necessary for twenty-first-century reading and, by extension, civic engagement during this Internet Age, instruction in social literacies might nurture skills needed to explore collaboratively and

deliberatively and arrive at a consensus on solutions to problems that exist in communities, nations, and the world.³² It remains for future researchers to investigate these possibilities in classrooms.

Cognitive Strategies Used in Social Settings

Since Wineburg's pioneering work on historians' reading processes, a great deal of research and instructional time has been dedicated to teaching sourcing, corroboration, perspective taking, and contextualization.³³ This study echoes Wineburg's by demonstrating the importance of these heuristics. Additionally, this study shows how these strategies become apparent within social interactions, with classroom implications. For example, at a time when history educators are trying to design reliable and valid assessments of historical thinking, this study leads to the conclusion that performance assessments during collaborative document-based activities can provide teachers with important data about students' progress.³⁴ By observing team interaction during document-based activities, and keeping records of students' observed strategy use, teachers can conduct useful formative assessments. The phenomena that we observed—of historians engaging in certain types of historical thinking based on triggers within the texts—might help teachers complete diagnostic performance assessments. Teachers could strategically include in group activities documents intended to draw out sourcing, corroboration, or other heuristics, as has been done in individual assessments.³⁵ Because student teams move at different paces, a teacher might anticipate when he/she would expect to see sourcing and position himself/herself to observe social processes at strategic times in the activity. Alternatively, students might be required to audio record their group interactions so that teachers could observe the thinking of multiple groups that are occurring simultaneously. The social interaction within the teams we studied made historians' heuristics apparent in ways that are difficult to observe during individual work.

Just as we documented the important role of historians' strategies, we discovered the vital place of general reading strategies within the process of historical thinking. Most notably, we observed historians paraphrasing main ideas, clarifying points of confusion, anticipating content, asking a variety of types of questions, and focusing

attention strategically. This discovery makes us wonder whether the current emphasis on specialized strategies has led to a neglect of necessary general strategies in history classrooms. As described above, Shanahan and Shanahan's Model of Literacy Progression suggests three tiers of literacy development: basic literacy; intermediate literacy; and disciplinary literacy.³⁶ Our research substantiates Shanahan and Shanahan's model by suggesting that the generalizable strategies associated with intermediate literacies, such as summarizing, predicting, and clarifying, play a vital role in the literate work of disciplinary experts—historians in this case. Basic and intermediate literacies continued to be of great importance for the historians in our study.

The classroom implications of this finding are clear. In order for students to engage effectively during document-based activities, they must be fluent in certain general reading strategies as well as disciplinary reading strategies. As needed, history teachers might improve students' ability to work with documents by providing instruction on paraphrasing, clarifying, predicting, questioning, and focusing attention, using the same methods associated with cognitive apprenticeships or explicit strategy instruction that many currently use to teach sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization.³⁷ Perhaps the current emphasis on specialized heuristics has led to the neglect of instruction on general strategies associated with historians' work.

Historians' Writing

Our research found that historians used many of the same cognitive and social strategies in writing as they used in reading, just as researchers have suggested about proficient readers and writers.³⁸ For instance, perspective taking—long associated with historical reading—was employed by historians in both reading and writing. During reading, historians sometimes appropriated the voice of a document's author in order to model what the person may have been thinking. During writing, historians assumed the perspective of their audience, sometimes vocalizing an expected reaction to their proposed writing. In addition, we found that planning, a strategy often associated with writing, was also important in reading. Before immersing themselves in the documents we gave them, historians took time to identify a "triangular" problem space, with sources

representing one of three broad perspectives. In a planning strategy that we labeled “pre-sourcing,” one group looked at the sources of all of the documents before reading any of them, then strategically determined the sequence they would consider the texts. Historians similarly planned their writing, establishing a purpose and considering their audiences before they composed anything. Our research builds upon prior studies on the relationship between reading and writing by demonstrating the overlap between the cognitive and social processes involved in reading and writing within the discipline of history.³⁹

Our research substantiated to some degree the claims that have been made about experts’ writing, particularly in terms of their planning for writing. Ekaterina Midgette, Priti Haria, and Charles MacArthur found that, unlike novices, experts devote attention to their audience, purpose, and rhetorical goals in advance of writing—a tendency that we observed among the historian teams.⁴⁰ Again, this finding carries instructional implications. As some researchers have found, teachers can help students engage in planning for writing by providing explicit instruction on historians’ reading and writing strategies, including their conceptual planning for writing, their consideration of audience, and their establishment of a purpose for writing.⁴¹ Research on writing has shown that even young students spend more time thinking about their audience when taught and reminded to do so.⁴² Additionally, teachers can design graphic organizers or other scaffolding that supports students’ planning for writing, as has been done to support their argumentative writing in history classrooms and their advanced planning for writing on more general, non-historical topics.⁴³ In some cases, teachers could nurture students’ skills in planning for writing, by having them practice the work of conceptual planning without actually engaging in a time-consuming writing assignment, as occurred somewhat unintentionally in our work with these historians.

Our research is not without limitations. We could not help but think as we analyzed the interplay between cognitive and social literacies that the distinction between them may be artificial. Certainly, the use of heuristics, such as sourcing and corroboration, becomes internalized through a process of socialization into the discipline of history, thus blurring cognitive and social literacies. Further, we wondered whether social interactions like challenging or affirming might also occur within an individual who is reading alone

as they raise doubts or check the plausibility of their own emerging interpretations. Regarding this question, we conclude that it does not really matter in terms of instructional implications—a teacher is likely to improve students' analysis of documents by creating a setting where they can interact like historians using the range of strategies the historians in this study employed—be they cognitive, social, or a hybrid.

An additional limitation of this study rests in concerns about the generalizability of our findings. The interactions of the historians we observed are difficult to consider without a recognition of the role of the specific tasks and texts involved in this study. For instance, Woonsook's criticism of his grandfather elicited a specific reaction that was similar across groups. Had our text set not included Woonsook's account, our findings would have been different. As things were, the historians we studied had an engaging assignment and texts with information that was highly shaped by author, genre, and purpose. Historians who engaged in a different collaborative task with different texts might exhibit a different range of literacies. Future research might help us understand exactly how widespread the strategies identified in this study are used. Further, the task that the historians engaged in during our study was very different from the normal work of historians. Future research might consider their social interactions and writing processes in more authentic settings.

Conclusions

In spite of these limitations, the exploratory nature of this study opens the door for further research on the social literacies, including both reading and writing, associated with historical thinking. Such research is particularly needed within the classroom. For instance, classroom investigations should be conducted to study students' responses to explicit instruction on historians' social reading and writing processes and on scaffolding that supports the social literacies we observed. Further, a number of researchers have theorized that cognitive historical thinking strategies can be applied in the wise consumption of news, becoming an informed citizen, and civic engagement.⁴⁴ We propose that historians' social strategies include skills associated with civic engagement, and propose the following classroom applications:

- Teach students explicitly the strategy of exploring and provide scaffolding to support their exploration of evidence, including worksheets that provide space for multiple, competing, and conflicting interpretations.
- Teach students explicitly the strategies for affirming and respectfully challenging their peers' ideas. Model during class discussions a willingness to invite and welcome challenges in order to revise and improve thinking. Teach and model appropriate ways of responding to peers' challenges.
- Provide frequent opportunities for students to practice the strategies of exploring, affirming, challenging, and arriving during document-based activities.
- Apply strategies of exploring, affirming, challenging, and arriving during discussions of current issues and events.

We suspect that the strategies of seeking and providing affirmation, challenging, exploring, arriving, and even appropriate chatting might be taught in order to move students through document-based lessons and, more importantly, through the collaborative processes involved in seeking solutions to problems and promoting the common good.⁴⁵ More classroom research must be conducted before stronger claims can be made.

Our study begins to shed some light on the particular ways historians interact with each other and with texts. It shows how group dynamics influence cognitive processes. Further, it gives clues about disciplinary norms for peer interaction, a topic that should be of interest to teachers who are increasingly using social reading activities as part of an effort to nurture students' ability to read, think, and write in a manner that both is valued within history and prepares for civic engagement.

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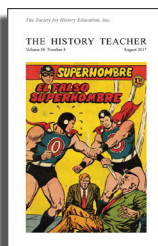
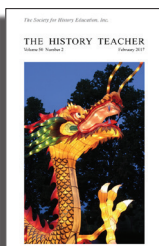
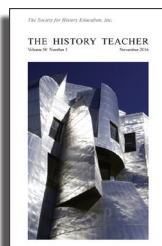
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