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Introduction to Special Issue

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Introduction to Special Issue

Samantha Cutrara¹

The Councilor, Special Guest Editor²

How do we come to our relationship with national history(ies) as history and social studies teachers? What are the factors at play in discovering who we, and our students, are in these narratives? How does this discovery (hopefully this continuous discovery) shape the methods we use and the stories we tell in our classrooms?

This special issue addresses these questions through teacher reflections and academic articles that demonstrate the itinerant process of coming to know self, society, and history as a history or social studies teacher. Whether it is through teasing out the “who” in our conception and articulation of the nation or developing partnerships to elicit new and potentially more equitable understandings of self and the past or interrogating our assumptions about who we are in the teaching profession, these articles, both individually and as a collection, demonstrate the need for teaching history and social studies to be a continuous process of self and historical interrogation and discovery.

This issue was conceptualized from a call for teaching reflections that could respond to the precarious nature of teaching history in this decade. While that collection aligned more closely with teaching history in academic settings, the teacher reflections submitted for that collection demonstrated some important, and less heard, voices in the discussions about teaching and learning history and social studies. These reflections brought out key themes about national identity and belonging and the disconnect these can have with certain pedagogical and narrative models and about organizational and ideological partnerships to intervene and tell new stories in the classrooms. From the voices of high school history teachers, these perspectives were a valuable contribution to how we think about teaching national history.

Articles were then sought to draw out some of the themes that came from the teachers’ reflections, and here is where the overall emphasis on the constant *becoming* of history and

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social studies teaching really took shape. Articles that focused on representation coming to know self through media representations or our own internal biases, or articles that focused on partnerships for more liberating or decolonizing narratives, all point toward the internal and external journeys of coming to know self in order to teach others. Taken together, these reflections and articles point the multiple conversations in play each time we step in front of a history or social studies classroom. How can we invite ourselves and others to have these conversations? How can we create space to better hear these conversations? And how can we demonstrate to our students that these conversations are intertwined in our understanding of the past?

Many thanks to *The Councilor* for hosting this bi-national special issue, as well as the teachers, educators, academics, community partners, and students who continued to the experiences found in these reflections and articles.

Reflections and Articles Part of This Special Issue:

- Brunet, M.-H., & Currie, M. (2021). A Collaborative Autoethnography on Challenging Sociohistorical Constructions of Gender in Teacher Education [Article]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 86-112.
- Burkholder, C. (2021). Cellphilmimg and Building Solidarity with 2SLGBTQ+ Youth to Speak Back to Historical Erasures in New Brunswick's Social Studies Classrooms and Schools [Article]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 113-132.
- Cameron, M. E., & Habkirk, E. J. (2021). Engaging Students Using Local History and Perspectives [Reflection]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 13-18.
- Curry, K. H., Suzanne (2021). America: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly Comparisons: A Case Study of the Representation of "America" in Preservice Teacher Lectures [Article]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 37-63.
- Habkirk, E. J. (2021). Teacher/Indigenous Partnerships: Building Engagement and Trust for History and Social Science Education [Article]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 64-86.
- Lindsay, M. (2021). From the Margins of Learning and Teaching [Reflection]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 7-12.
- Marchel, A. (2021). The Holodomor National Awareness Tour: A Reflection on Teaching about Genocide [Reflection]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 19-26.
- Mungur, A., & Wylie, S. (2021). Teacher Films: Examining Hollywood Representations of our Practice [Article]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 27-36.
- Williams, M. (2021). Am I Canadian [Reflection]. *The Councilor: A Journal of the Social Studies*, 0(1), 3-6.