# CREATING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT TEACHER GROWTH: MAPPING THE PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

by

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Abstract

CREATING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT TEACHER GROWTH: MAPPING THE PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

by

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The urban setting has tremendous resources for the support of teaching and learning social studies and history but many teachers do not know how to make use of them. Collaborations centered on teacher professional development between cultural institutions such as museums, historical societies, historic houses, libraries, etc., universities and k-12 schools can create wider communities of practice that can support the professional growth of history and social studies teachers from their pre-service education throughout their careers.

This qualitative case study – grounded in the social/historical context of teacher education and a century of history/social studies pedagogy both in school and cultural settings – examines the process of learning to collaborate as it was undertaken by a group of five institutions, each with its own distinct organizational culture. Organizational

theory is used to develop a working definition of what it means to collaborate and highlight the elements that allowed the collaboration to be successful.

This study provides a road map for collaboration that can be used by all organizations dedicated to teaching and learning who would like to reach out across the boundaries of their institutions to work together toward the common goal of developing quality teachers and teaching in the urban setting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this work would not have been possible without the support and feedback of Dr. Philip Anderson, who was supportive from day one, the rest of the Committee and the faculty of the Urban Education Department of the Graduate Center, CUNY.

The participants of the collaboration examined as the case study for this research are also to be congratulated on their good work and thanked for their generosity in sharing their experiences so others can learn from them.

I am also grateful to Christine Saieh for her organization and ability to boost confidence; to my fellow Extraordinary Educators, Jennifer Adams and Joelle Tutela; to the eagle-eyed Sandra Whiteknact; and to my supportive husband, Tom Staggs.

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction: Viewing the Urban Setting as Rich in Resources

The challenges of educating in an urban setting are undeniable. The system in New York City is the largest in the United Sates with 1.1 million students attending nearly 1,500 schools (New York City Department of Education, 2009), and with a student population so diverse in needs that there can be no easy "one stop shop" solution to meet them all. It is certain that the challenges faced by those working in urban education are real. However, there are many assets within the urban setting that are overlooked. Publications dedicated to education research so habitually outline only the challenges facing teachers and students in our schools, that it can seem at times "a search for pathology" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1986). The terminology that reflects a lack of understanding regarding the vast potential of schools in an urban setting is "under-resourced." Perceiving schools in urban settings as under-resourced when the students bring experience, culture and knowledge from countries around the globe requires a deficit lens that sees their experience, culture and knowledge as a hindrance to school goals. In the same vein, seeing schools in urban settings as under-resourced when they are surrounded by museums, theaters, music venues, art galleries and zoos – cultural organizations of all kinds – as well as other community based organizations, requires a deficit lens arising from the ignorance of these institutions or a lack of understanding of how they can – and are willing to – support teachers and students.

Without denying the problems identified by my colleagues in the field, I am an advocate of viewing the urban setting as ripe with potential resources for teaching and learning. This research has been inspired by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot's practice of looking for "goodness" instead of lack, or dysfunction, or failure. *Goodness* in Lawrence-Lightfoot's work is defined as a notion that reflects the *way* things are done, not just what is done. It refers to the whole, to the past and future of the subject being studied; it permits imperfection and looks instead to the ways participants address imperfections (1986). As she writes, "The researcher who asks first 'what is good here?' is likely to absorb a very different reality than one who is on a mission to discover the sources of failure" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis, 1997, p.9). Perhaps it is because I am a 'city kid' raised in a working class neighborhood in the 1970's and 80's when the loss of local industry and jobs caused a lack of funding for public schools (Blanc & Simon, 2007), and a product of a large urban public school system regularly deemed as failing by outsiders that I prefer to look for assets, possibilities and potential as well as challenges. Though far from perfect, my lived school experience was filled with many positive elements, such as caring teachers and inventive use of available resources that were not necessarily readily obvious to an outside eye predisposed to looking for deficits. Informed by my past experience as a student in an urban setting, my professional life as an adult within the field of museum-education and with Lawrence-Lightfoot's idea of goodness in mind, this research was focused with the goal of promoting a better understanding of the potential of educating in an urban setting.

Another influence on this research is the notion of building a community of pedagogy and practice that grew out of Goodlad's "centers of pedagogy" idea (1994)

where schools of education and other departments of the university collaborate with K-12 schools. Also inspiring is Wenger's concept of a "community of practice" (1998) where participants reach across institutional boundaries to reach common goals. In Wenger's conceptual frame, the communities of practice were "our first knowledge-based social structures" (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.5) and are still the structure by which those of common interest come together in informal ways. In modern life, however, professionals tend to be isolated into knowledge niches that, although moving toward the same goal, are kept apart. This is very true in education, whether it be the way we divide into content area specialties in the school setting with little time to co-plan, the way departments of history or science in a university keep their scholarship and resources separate from schools of education that train history and science teachers, or the way places of public education such as schools, universities and cultural organizations are largely kept separate. I think of this as a silo approach to knowledge management around teaching and learning, illustrated by the figure below:

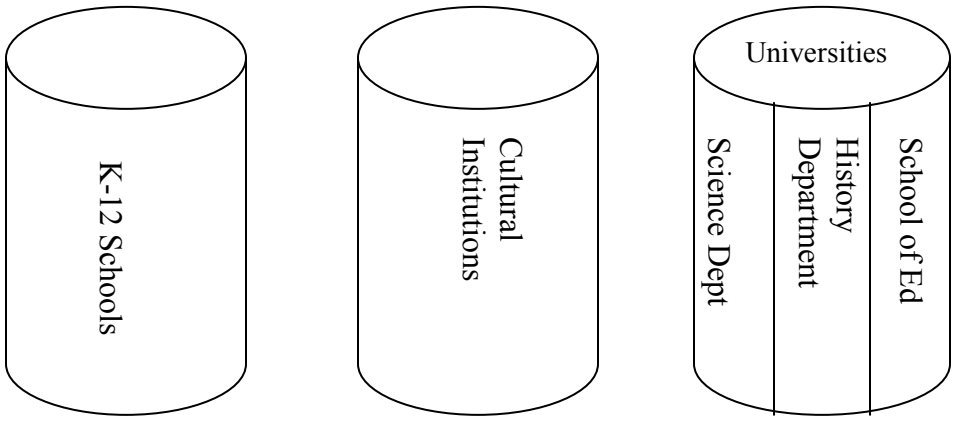


**Figure 1: Educational Silos**

How wonderful if classroom teachers, instead of feeling isolated, felt themselves to be part of a larger community of professionals both in content and pedagogy. How extraordinary it would be if the barriers between these silos of knowledge could be broken through collaboration and the creation of a community of pedagogy and practice?

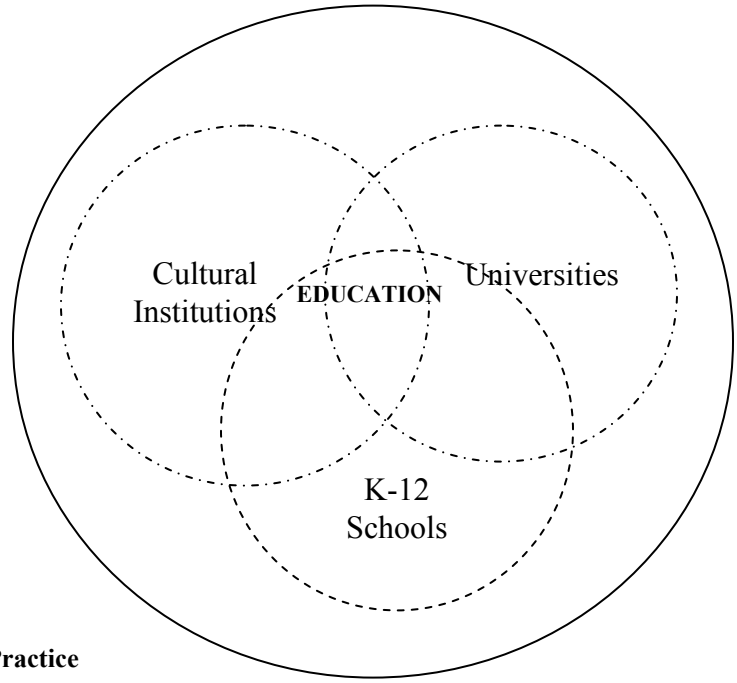


**Figure 2: A Community of Practice**

In such a community, teachers of social studies and history, for example, would feel able to and – more importantly – welcome to, contact historians at their local university to float an idea or ask questions, or they would know they could have access a local historical society's archives in order to find engaging primary sources.

This research asked, "Is this happening in New York City education?" and "If it is, how can it be documented so as to be replicated?" The goal became to find a group working together to support teaching and learning in a way that fulfilled the criteria of a

community of practice. Once found, the collaborative community's development patterns could be explored leading to a map of the process that others could follow. Though in Wenger's original concept, communities of practice would grow out of informal groups of individuals interested in the same goals, the concept has since been picked up and implemented in the corporate world in a more formal way. In such applications of the concept, formal structures are put in place – such as project teams made up of members from different parts of the company – that encourage a community of practice to develop. For this research then, a partnership was identified that was composed of different institutions focused on teaching and learning that were initially formally brought together which then grew into a community of pedagogy and practice through their collaboration. A full description of these partners and of the collaboration can be found in chapters III and IV.

*Potential Partners*

Arising at the same time that public school education came to the fore during the 19th century, other places of public education – museums, libraries and other cultural institutions – have long been aware of their potential to support schools and have endeavored to do so. Unfortunately, whether or not the schools and teachers take advantage of the offerings has largely been up to individual awareness of the potential benefits of this support. Because of our silo approach to knowledge dissemination around teaching and learning, schools of education that could expose teachers to available resources have rarely highlighted the potential of cultural institutions. It is time that schools of education more fully make use of these resources and create communities of

pedagogy that will not only be a resource for pre-service teachers but will also serve to sustain in-service teachers throughout their careers as participants in a wider community of practice. This issue will be addressed in more depth in the final chapter where the implications of this research are discussed.

The isolation of K-12 schools from potential external resources is a long-standing issue. While taking part in the collaboration that led to his *The Process of Education* (1960), Bruner noted that much of what went on in universities, whether it be from applied science, scholarship or psychology, was divorced from schools. Picking up that theme and expanding it to include the artistic community, the linguistic community, etc., Orlofsky (2001) lamented that these "excellent resources" remain "virtually untapped" (p.121). In the last several years, however, following the lead of private schools, such as the Dalton school in New York City, which maintains staff to facilitate relationships with museums, more public schools and districts are making use of relationships with non-school entities in their communities to expand access to facilities, resources and expertise (Wohlstetter, Malloy, Smith, & Hentschke, 2004). This practice needs to be encouraged. Partnerships that develop between the New York City Department of Education and other institutions of education can foster the development of communities of practice that provide support for teaching and learning in the K-12 classroom. Over the past several years, grant-funded programs supporting the use of the assets of the city – specifically universities and myriad cultural institutions – in partnership with schools to support the professional development of teachers have illustrated the potential of the urban setting. Science teachers have had access to *Urban Advantage*, a program involving several science-rich sites, including the New York Hall of Science, the Brooklyn Botanical

Garden, the American Museum of Natural History, the New York Aquarium and the Bronx and Staten Island Zoos (Adams, 2007). In the realm of history education there have been several Teaching American History grant-funded projects designed to give teachers access to the materials and faculty of history-rich cultural institutions as well as universities. In some cases, the relationships built through these partnerships extend far beyond the period of the grant and continue. Out of these partnerships communities of pedagogy and practice have evolved.

### *Supporting History Teaching and Learning by Creating Communities of Practice: Teaching American History Grant Partnerships*

Along with the expertise available in the history departments of the city's many universities, the more than 100 history-rich cultural institutions in New York City, including history museums, historic houses and historical societies, can provide resources to alleviate the perceived lack of content knowledge and pedagogical know-how of new teachers. Teachers of all levels of experience can also make use of these resources to create an inclusive, engaging history curriculum that promotes critical understanding and historical thinking. Of course, teachers must know how to take advantage of these resources. To promote awareness of the available resources, federally funded Teaching American History grants have encouraged relationships between universities, schools and cultural institutions.

*Teaching American History Grant Background*

In 2000, a group called the American Council of Trustees and Alumni issued a report called *Losing America's Memory* in which they outlined the results of a survey from the top 55 liberal arts colleges and research universities. Questions were drawn from a basic high school history curriculum. Based on the survey results, they declared in the report's introduction, "As we move forward into the 21st century, our future leaders are graduating with an alarming ignorance of their heritage – a kind of collective amnesia – and a profound historical illiteracy which bodes ill for the future of the republic" (American Council of Trustees and Alumni, 2000 p. 4). In response to this report, as well as concerns about history teachers without either history degrees or university level minors in history and the dismal public view of American's knowledge of history, Teaching American History grants were introduced under Title II-C Subpart 4 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001.

The Teaching American History Grant Program "is designed to raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of and appreciation for traditional U.S. history" (US Dept of Education, 2001). The program descriptions goes on to tell us, "Grant awards will assist LEAs, (local education agencies) in partnership with *entities that have content expertise* (italics mine), to develop, document, evaluate, and disseminate innovative and cohesive models of professional development" (p.148). These entities with content expertise include non-profit organizations and institutions of higher learning. Indeed included in the section of the United States Department of Education web site dedicated to these grants, it is stated, "In order to receive a grant, a local educational agency must agree to carry out the proposed activities

in partnership with one or more of the following: institutions of higher education, nonprofit history or humanities organizations, libraries, or museums" (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2001).

Congress initially appropriated 50 million dollars for this program. With the first funds awarded in 2001 and yearly since, this grant program was intended to improve student success by providing quality professional development to history teachers that exposed them to new and exciting ways to teach historical content. With these grants, the potential of partnerships between schools, cultural institutions such as museums and the academy began to be recognized and pursued seriously nationwide. The positive results of these partnerships have led to renewed funding for new partnerships each year. In 2007 alone 116 million dollars was awarded to 122 projects across the nation (U.S. Dept. of Education Press release, 2007). This number of grants is an increase from just 60 initial grants given in the program's first year. Appropriately, considering the size of the student population and the wealth of academic and cultural resources within its limits, the New York City Department of Education has been particularly successful in the pursuit and implementation of these grants. In 2007, New York City received six grants, five of which garnered just under 1 million each and one for just over 1 million (U.S. Dept. of Education Press release, 2007).

*The Case Study*

In any Teaching American History Project the stakeholders are many and varied. Grants were applied for and received at the district, Region and citywide Department of Education level. Partners included institutions of higher learning, museums and historical

societies as well as other types of cultural institutions, whole schools, individual teachers and independent historians. The research informing this dissertation focuses on a grant that involved 1) the administration of a Region of the NYC Department of Education (a now defunct designation) which was composed of several school districts in two different boroughs of the city; 2) a university-based history research center whose mission is largely focused on social history; 3) a large museum housing art and artifacts from around the world and across many eras; 4) an institution dedicated to the preservation and presentation of broadcast media; and 5) a borough-focused historical society founded in the 19th century with an eclectic collection of artifacts, oral histories, maps, art, images and a large research library. This grant-funded partnership was chosen to be the case study for this research for several reasons. First, it was not a partnership that I was involved with professionally, allowing me some distance, yet I was acquainted with many of the individuals involved, allowing me some "insider" status, which could ease my access to data. The second reason for this choice was that the yearly performance evaluation reports required for Teaching American History grant-funded partnerships by the Federal Department of Education showed this partnership to regularly be meeting the goals they had set out for themselves. Finally, the partner organizations (and of course the staff within them) went on to work together on several different projects, indicating that a community of practice had evolved.

While initially casting around for literature surrounding partnerships, I came across the following quote:

> At times partnerships between school districts and universities are like a long road trip, complete with kids, dog, and even the mother-in-law. The

> destination itself can be exciting, even breathtaking. But the challenges lie in the journey, and it can prove tedious – most tedious in fact, when much of the trip is mapped by people who have never before traveled the road.
>
> Isbell et al., 2004, p. 99

I was so struck by the evocative image of the unmapped road trip that I decided to adopt it for a way of describing what I hoped my research would provide to the field of history education and professional development and to the wider educational field beyond. The metaphor of the tedious, unmapped road-trip is just as applicable to partnerships between cultural institutions and school districts as it is to university/school partnerships. Indeed, the trip can become even more fraught with tedium and wrong turns, etc. when the partnership includes representatives from all three types of institutions! Learning to work together across institutional cultures and boundaries is not for the faint of heart. Organizations have their own cultures, discourse and practices. Of course, organizations are made up of individuals and they too have their way of doing things as individuals, their ideas of their own status and their own ideals surrounding pedagogy, content and the reasons history education is important. Negotiating an effective partnership with all of the potentially contrasting elements involved can require compromises that are uncomfortable to make.

*The Need for a Map*

As someone who has worked in the education departments of a variety of cultural institutions, I have often worked on projects that were referred to as "partnership" enterprises. Often, these were situations where my employing institution was contracted

to simply provide certain services for a school or a district. Sometimes the cultural institution spearheaded the projects and the school or district took part in a limited way. Though they were useful and successful, in none of the former cases did true collaborative partnerships take place and no community of practice that sustained itself after the grant monies were used was developed. It is my hope that by examining the process of learning to work together we can create a "map" to cultivate communities of practice in which schools and the teachers in them are full, knowledgeable and participating members.

Most of the research surrounding school/cultural organization partnership or school/university partnership is focused on evaluation of outcomes, often mandated by the agency funding the program, as are the evaluations of partnerships funded by the Teaching American History grant program (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2005). Literature surrounding inter- and intra-organizational partnerships in general across many fields tends to focus on either the circumstance that generated the partnership or, again, the outcomes (Kezar, 2005). In order to achieve successful outcomes in teacher education, research indicates that aligned goals and a shared vision among the partners providing the training is necessary (Desimone, Garet, Birman, Porter & Yoon, 2003; Goodlad, 1994) yet there is little research into how this is achieved. Developing aligned goals and a shared vision is particularly challenging when the professional development is aimed at supporting history teachers, as the *what*, *why* and *how* of history teaching has myriad interpretations and a history of contention (Zimmerman, 2002; Moreau, 2003; Nash, Crabtree & Dunn, 2000). Add to this the differences in the institutional cultures of the different partners, particularly between the Department of Education – a large and highly

bureaucratic structure – and the cultural partners – who tend to be much smaller with more relaxed roles and hierarchies – and it becomes an even bigger task. Campoy (2002) points out that much more research is needed into how collaborative partnerships aimed at school reform work and endure. This research was undertaken to examine and document the process of creating a partnership that can grow into a community of practice to support social studies and history teaching and learning. It is hoped the gained insights into inter-organizational partnerships between schools and cultural organizations will contribute to the literature on collaborative partnerships, increase the creation and success of partnerships designed to provide professional development to classroom teachers in any content area and increase their potential to evolve past the initial goals covered in the grant period to become communities of practice that sustain relationships into the future.

*The Literature*

In order to better define and articulate for others what constitutes a partnership, as well as to assist in providing a social/historical context and formulating a conceptual frame for this research, I read widely. Along with reading Wenger's work on communities of practice, I looked at literature surrounding inter- and intra-organizational collaborative partnerships. Much of this literature came from the field of organizational theory and focused on the world of business. I also examined the writings of those examining school/university partnerships and school/cultural partnerships. As providing a historical context for the case to be studied is imperative and as I was using as a case study a partnership which is aimed at providing professional development programming

that supports history teachers and teaching, I needed to be familiar with the history of contention and contradictions surrounding ideas of what teachers should know and be able to do in order to teach, along with conflicting ideas about the purpose of history education. These literatures included: teaching/teacher quality; teacher professional development; the history of history education; pedagogical approaches to history in both cultural and classroom settings; and the history of the relationship between schools and cultural institutions. The information gleaned from these literatures is woven throughout this work to support, highlight, and illustrate the writing.

*Summary of Approach*

As this research is a descriptive case study rather than evaluative, and no intervention is being applied, I did not have hypotheses in the sense that one would find them in an experimental design. Rather, I have a hypothesis and questions that emerged from my initial interests and exploration of the literature. More questions then emerged or became refined as the research progressed. The literature suggests that professional development programs are more likely to be successful if the implementers have a truly shared vision and clear goals for the program, and that communities of practice do not evolve unless a shared culture including these elements is developed. As the partners in the proposed case study have worked together over an extended period of time to create professional development programs that have shown positive outcomes, and have continued to wok together since the initial grant ended, the hypothesis was that evidence of negotiations toward the development of a culture of collaboration and a community of

practice which includes a shared understanding of quality teaching, a shared vision for history teaching and learning and shared goals for the working together could be traced.

*The Questions*

The initial overarching questions at the beginning of the study were:

1. What makes a partnership collaborative?
2. How does a collaborative partnership evolve into a community of practice?

Building on the understandings of collaborative partnership and communities of practice put forth in the literature, the conceptual questions framing this study became:

1. How is a multi-organizational community of practice created and enacted?
2. How does a multi-organizational community of practice sustain itself over time?

Themes emerged from the literature that contributed to the organization and analysis of data:

- The negotiation and adoption of a shared vision and agreed upon goals and objectives
- A clear understanding of roles and responsibilities within the group
- The sharing and shifting of power
- The evolution of individual and institutional relationships
- The maintenance of clear communication

- The development of a shared culture as evidenced by practices, artifacts and shared understandings

These themes let to the development of the following questions:

1. How did participants from these differing institutions work to create a shared vision for the partnership with shared goals and objectives?
2. How did participants from these differing institutions share administrative and conceptual responsibilities?
3. How did participants from these differing institutions learn to communicate with each other?
4. What kinds of shared practices and understandings developed over the course of the partnership?
5. How did individuals from these institutions experience the partnership?

*Why Case Study?*

A case study approach was utilized as the questions were designed to facilitate descriptive research rather than designed around testing the causality of an outcome or the outcome of a particular educational approach. In order to get a picture of a developing community of practice, many data sources would be used. "The case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a variety of evidence – documents, artifacts, interviews and observations" (Yin, 2003, p. 8). Merriam (1998) and Stake (1994) also support this methodology when the subject requires an examination of a variety of elements – various

institutional cultures, history, processes, and so on. When choosing a case to study, the literature suggests that one choose a case that is representative of the norm, or, conversely, choose one that is extreme or unique (Yin, 2003). The uniqueness of this case is that the multi-year nature of the grant allowed the same group of institutions to work together for a longer period than usual, allowing more time for the collaboration to take root. This partnership also involves multiple institutional partners of differing institutional types, which has the potential to make the creation of a shared culture of collaboration with a shared vision and goals more challenging.

*Organization of Chapters*

I have broken down the information into chapters as follows:

I. Introduction

The introduction has outlined the need to look for the potential and possibilities available for providing K-12 schools with resources for teaching and learning in an urban setting. The need for research into the process of the creation of collaborative partnerships was discussed. The methodology, research questions and the case study approach have been introduced. The metaphor of creating a map has also been introduced.

II. Forget the Map, Why Should I Even Want to Be On This Road?

In the next chapter the perceived need for professional development for teachers in general and history teachers in particular is examined and the various arguments for

and definitions of teacher quality are discussed. The resources that cultural institutions bring to the table for teacher development both as teachers and learners are outlined and the long history of relationships between schools and cultural institutions for the support of teachers and students is illustrated. The argument is made that joining with cultural institutions in a shared practice for teacher development is logical in an urban setting. The lack of an available "map" within the literature is also discussed.

III. Charting the Course: Finding a Theoretical Lens Through Which to Look

In this chapter, the methods, framework and research questions are revisited and elaborated on. The evolution of the theoretical framework for the research is described. Aspects of organizational theory are introduced and the connections to Wenger's communities of practice are made. The terms 'collaboration' and 'partnership' are defined for the purposes of this research, based on definitions that emerged from the literature explored. The institutional partners involved in the collaborative partnership being used as a case study are described. The data sources are given along with the approaches to analysis used.

IV. Cartography: Sketching the Map

This chapter outlines the journey taken by the collaborative partners from the inception of the project through its implementation and growth over time into a community of practice as evidenced through the research data. The evolution of the vision for the project, the roles and responsibilities, sharing of power and resources and the development of shared practices and communication are examined. Emerging

patterns and insights for staying on track when developing a collaborative partnership that can grow into a sustained community of practice are presented.

V. Developing the Key

In this chapter the research is summarized and the potential roadblocks to collaborative partnerships are discussed. Implications for policy applications of the research are teased out and avenues for further research are explored.

VI. Significance

The final chapter outlines the significance of the study for future researchers into collaboration and for educators working in an urban setting.

# CHAPTER II

## Forget the Map, Why Should I Even Want to Be on This Road?

Working toward the development of a wider community of practice to support teaching and learning is essential if we are to address current barriers to quality education. In order to contextualize this research, I explored literature centered on the debate about what teachers should know and be able to do and the training – both pre and in-service – that is expected to advance them to levels of quality performance. As the research focused on a program designed to support history teaching and learning I also read widely in to the history of history education and the pedagogical approaches to history. Finally, to support the argument that cultural institutions are the logical members for such a community of practice, I examined literature focused on teaching and learning in those settings and the history of school/cultural institution interactions.

### *The Challenges of Developing Quality Teachers and Teaching*

> I am not sure that teacher educators or the critics of teacher education have a sense of how complicated the jobs and roles of teachers have become or how quickly teacher education programs are becoming dated and marginal.
>
> James H. Lytle
> *Journal of Teacher Education*, May/June 2000

Recently there has been focus on the relationship between quality teaching, better prepared teachers and the academic success of students in conjunction with a broad discussion concerning teacher quality and the preparation and growth of quality teachers. With the explosion of different pathways to teaching (Teaching Fellows programs, Teach for America, and Troops to Teachers are just a few examples), the spotlight has been turned on an examination of teacher preparation and its effectiveness for providing quality teachers to the classroom. As Darling-Hammond & Berry (1988) point out, from 1983-1985 more than 700 pieces of legislation were enacted to improve the quality of teachers. Literature in the area of teacher preparation tends to examine subject area competence (Ball and McDiarmid, 1990; Hawk, Coble and Swanson, 1985) and pedagogical competence (Bransford, et al. 2005; Darling-Hammond, 1998, Grossman, 1990) but the definition of the phrase "quality teacher" is difficult to pin down. As Marylin Cochran-Smith (2005) put it, "In short, everybody likes teacher quality and wants more of it. The problem is there is no consensus about what it is" (p.6). In policy statements issued under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), subject matter competence is emphasized as the hallmark of teacher quality (Cochran-Smith, 2005) and competence is assumed by the attainment of credentials – either university degrees or tests passed. Reports covering quality teacher preparation under NCLB also tend to use academic credentials along with certification as the primary marker of "quality" (Schiller, 2004). In the "explanations" section of the federal Department of Education's NCLB web site both subject knowledge and credentials are given as elements of quality teaching to focus on in order to improve the educational experience of all children. The text explains that under NCLB all teachers must not only be fully certified but also have a bachelors

degree and must demonstrate competence in subject knowledge and teaching (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2003). These seem to be reasonable requirements for someone going into the field of teaching to have to meet. What is questionable is whether an undergraduate liberal arts degree is able to adequately prepare one completely for the expected expertise of pedagogy as well as for teaching a core subject area such as history – which has such a wide range of content.

Maxine Greene (1995) writes, "To teach, at least in one dimension, is to provide persons with the knacks and know-how they need in order to teach themselves" (p.14). Herein lies the problem. What are these knacks and know-hows? This is a slippery subject, as content, or what commentators such as Hirsch (1998) define as "what every American needs to know" has and will continue to change. Historically, content and even pedagogical knowledge were not considered as important to teaching so much as being a certain type of person, possessing certain qualities. In a journal she kept while attending the first state-run normal school in the United States, Mary Swift noted the qualities the school administration proposed teachers should have. These were: health, a good reputation, a well balanced mind (she notes that one may have "too much, as too little genius for a teacher"), an interest in children, patience and self control, and a high sense of moral responsibility and accountability (Hoffman, 1981). In 19$^{th}$ Century America, public schools were conceived as panacea for certain social problems (immigration, poverty, the spread of disease) and teachers were to seen to need some of the same dispositions found in a nurse or social worker – or a mother.

Over the past century, schools and the teachers in them have continually been asked to solve the problems of society, or more specifically, to ensure the students didn't

become problems *for* society. Schools were called upon to provide suitable controlling mechanisms for the immigrant "problem" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when citizenship and other aspects of the social studies curriculum began to replace history classes. Special English classes for new arrivals were given, and outreach for immigrant families was encouraged. Teachers in turn of the century schools in New York taught not only children, but their immigrant parents in night-schools and evening classes (Hoffman, 1981). Even cleanliness as deterrent to disease fell under the auspices of schools and teachers.

After World War II and with the beginning of the Cold War, the focus of education shifted to preparing students to contribute to the United States' global competitiveness. Fears of Soviet technological advancement – embodied by Sputnik – prompted policies promoting science and foreign languages as essential elements of the school curricula. The 1983 National Commission on Excellence in Education publication *A Nation at Risk* blatantly drew the line from education to the failing United States economy. Stating that America's "position in the world" was no longer secure, we would need to protect our "competitive edge" through education reform (p.6).

Lawrence Cremin (1989) responded to the flurry of anxiety caused by *A Nation at Risk* by writing,

> …to contend that problems of international competitiveness can be solved by educational reform, especially educational reform defined solely as school reform, is not merely Utopian and millennialist, it is at best foolish and at worst a crass effort to direct attention away from those who are truly responsible for doing something about competitiveness and to lay the burden on the schools (p. 102).

Still, in the federal Department of Education's guide to the No Child Left Behind Act, established in 2001, the relationship of student achievement to the national economic growth is specifically called out. It states, "Satisfying the demand for highly skilled workers is the key to maintaining competitiveness and prosperity in the global community" (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, p.5). The implication is that schools have been failing to turn out a competent workforce, therefore threatening national economic growth and global competitiveness. For "schools" one could easily read "teachers."

Teacher preparation has become even more important in policy circles as some research is showing a relationship between teacher preparation and student performance on standardized tests (Barker, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2000). For example, there appears to be an indication that teachers who have a college major in the subject they teach can contribute to higher student performance on standardized tests (Barker, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2000). Still, the National Center for Education Statistics (2001) reported the results of a survey given in 2000 to 5,253 full and part time K-12 teachers nationwide that found that while 45% of public school teachers have a master's degree, newer teachers were less likely to hold one. Only 20% of teachers with three or fewer years of experience held a master's degree compared to 54% of teachers with ten or more years of experience. The lack of teacher credentials in the area of history/social studies instruction has caused particular concern to those who feel that teachers of history should have a major or minor in the field and that this lack is causing our students to fail (The Bradley Commission, 1988; Ravitch, 1997; Bell, 2005) especially as history textbooks are also heavily criticized as being unreliable (Ravitch, 2004; Loewen, 1995).

Concerns about a lack of teacher qualification to teach content successfully are exacerbated when the National Assessment of Educational Progress reports that only 17 % of public school fourth graders, 15% of public school eighth graders and 11 % of public school seniors are at or above proficient in United States history (U.S. Dept. of Ed. National Center for Education Statistics, 2006) and newspapers report the abysmal student performance on tests to the wider public (Bell, 2005). Recently the New York Times once again reported on a survey showing that teenagers in the United States are woefully ignorant of the country's history. In the survey, twelve thousand seventeen-year-olds were asked 33 questions on history and literature. Some of the dismal results: one-quarter were not able to identify Hitler as Germany's chancellor during WWII (they answered instead that he was the Kaiser, an Austrian premier or a munitions maker); fewer than half knew when the Civil War was fought; one in four thought Columbus sailed to America after 1750 (Dillon, 2008). It should be noted that in spite of the discussion of current challenges to education and students' lack of knowledge about their country's history compared to an idealized image of schooling/student knowledge levels in previous times, as early as 1917 research reflected a woeful lack of historical knowledge among students. Indeed, over the last century newspapers have periodically trumpeted students' ignorance of our nation's history (Wineburg, 2004).

Though much of the concern is focused on a lack of content knowledge, there is also concern about a lack of pedagogical training among teachers who are credentialed within their subject area. A teacher must understand learners and learning in order to support students (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005). Even with deep subject area understanding, these teachers may lack the ability to engage students with

diverse learning styles and needs. Rubin & Justice (2005) refer to this as a lack of "kid knowledge." There is also, as Schiller (2004) reminds us, a difference between a highly "qualified" teacher as defined by credentials, and a highly "proficient" teacher in the classroom. Barker (2004) uses the term "capable" to define quality beyond credentials, measured by the degree of student improvement. Michelli (2004), however, points out that beyond providing access to content knowledge, there are other purposes to education, such as providing access to critical thinking and preparing students to be active participants in our society. To do this requires more than just a major in a particular content area. As Michelli writes, "Having a major, or assuming that teachers understand a discipline does not mean that they know how to teach that discipline so as to allow students to make good judgments in the context of the discipline" (p. 67). Diane Ravitch (2006), though often perceived as a champion of NCLB initiatives, also expressed frustration with the current focus on standardized test performance as evidence of a "quality" education, reminding us that "a full education is one that prepares students not only to pass tests, but also to read, write, think, speak and participate in society" (p.58). Joe Kincheloe (2001) has long championed the development of teachers who are able to apply a critical understanding of social constructs to their own practice in order to prepare students who are "well informed, highly skilled citizens for a democracy" (p. 54).

There are yet more elements emerging from the literature that contribute to the development of quality teachers and teaching. As we are a multi-cultural society, there is a growing feeling that quality teachers in our public schools also need to develop culturally responsive practice (Villegas & Lucas, 2002), and a critical consciousness regarding their own teaching. Researchers and thinkers such as Aronowitz & Giroux

(1993) and Kincheloe (2001) advocate a more critical approach to the history of education that could contribute to a teacher's critical understanding of educational practice and argue that an understanding of history is essential to developing criticality. A critical consciousness, a true examination of their own understandings, can lessen the potential for deploying power that is so taken for granted that teachers are hardly aware of it, while also allowing them to build students' "bicultural competencies" (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001) by making sure they understand the dominant and the non-dominant cultures in which, and through which, they live.

Once we expand beyond the discussion of *what* teachers need to teach into *how* they go about teaching it, and take the discussion to the point where we say that they should be aware of *why* they teach certain things or *why* they teach a certain way, we move into a gray area in which there is little scholarly agreement. The idea that teachers should possess certain *dispositions*, which is being discussed in some quarters, has caused similar difficulty. Harking back to the 19th century descriptions of qualities a teacher should possess, (patience, self control, fondness for children) and including current additions such as a sense of social justice and the capacity to reflect, these remain difficult to foster and to measure. One disposition – that of being a life-long learner – however, is possible to foster through professional development and more will be written about that later in this chapter. Truly, any approach to teacher education and development will first be formed out of the *why* we teach – or why we teach in a certain way – questions. *What* we teach always grows out of the *why*. The changing view of the purpose of schooling and the role of the teacher within that purpose will inevitably keep the

question of what teachers 'should know and be able to do' alive and we need to create a professional community capable of exploring and adapting to changing needs.

*The Disconnect Between Colleges, Classrooms and Cultural Institutions*

> "I found the habitat of the upper class American Educators in the universities", responded the anthropologist enthusiastically… "It is believed in this class that the more incomprehensible the language, the fewer the readers, the more the result is judged to be profound and thus worthy of respect. Over the years, knowledge gathered by the upper class trickles down to the masses. The cultural lag is estimated at fifty to seventy-five years. The upper educational class is separated from the other classes by an extraordinary caste-like barrier termed Ph.D. and Ed.D."
>
> William Van Til, *The Making of a Modern Educator*

There is a gap between teacher preparation and what they take with them into a classroom setting. This is a consistent problem that has been found to exist even in other countries (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005). As the report from the American Educational Research Association Panel on Research and Teacher Education (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005) has highlighted, there is a lack of research showing the effectiveness of teacher education programs. Researchers were not even able to find a significant difference between those programs accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and those which are not. In light of this, it would seem that now is an opportune time to reconsider the entrenched traditions of our teacher education system. Currently, in most programs, content courses are separate from education courses. Educational theory is separated into "foundations of education" courses and kept separate from pedagogical methods courses. This artificial separation can mean teachers entering the classroom find only 1/3 of their preparation useful, i.e.,

methods. Methods are the concrete, "What the heck do I *do* with these kids?" piece that a new teacher can hang his/her hat on. Thinking of methods as separate from content and theory, the teacher is unable to critically examine his/her work or adapt, grow and change it easily. Too often this compartmentalized approach to education also results in students who are deemed to be without basic skills not being exposed to rich content or its applications, as the teacher's expectations are lowered by a skills-first-then content, rather than skills-*and*-content approach. Modeling an integrated approach for pre-service teachers would require a much closer collaboration between university faculty from different departments than is currently in place, and a rethinking of course design.

Patterson, Michelli, & Pacheco (1999) identified four themes in contemporary rhetoric about school reform and teacher education. Among these was "acknowledgment that collaborative partnerships involving schools and the whole university are important in affecting needed and desirable change" (p.10). Unfortunately, it is often easier for a college of education to collaborate with an outside entity, be it a K-12 school or a cultural institution, than with the school of liberal arts in their own university. As Maxson and her colleagues write, "On most university campuses, there's a 'good fences make good neighbors' attitude that discourages extensive collaboration" (Maxson, O'Connor, Maxson, Houk, Isbell, Parsons, Hornsby, Nagel, & Abrahamse, 2004, p.81). Letting go of the way we have always done things is the first hurdle we will need to overcome if we are to create a wider community of pedagogy and practice centered on teacher education. This is certainly a challenge in the relentlessly departmentalized and compartmentalized university setting.

Unfortunately, the narrow focus encouraged in a university setting discourages teacher educators from introducing teaching candidates to all of the resources available to them, whether they are resources within other departments of the university or from cultural institutions outside the university setting. Even with the availability of fine publications such as the Field Museum of Natural History's *Teach the Mind, Touch the Spirit: A Guide to Focused Field Trips* (Voris, Sedzielar, & Blackmon, 1986), and the catalogue of work by authors like Hein, Falk, Dierking, and others, which outline research in museum learning and how and why teachers may want to use museums in their curricula, most university teacher education programs do not emphasize the use of museums as a resource. Interestingly, it is with the increase of in-service teacher education that these resources are more often being included.

*Teacher Development Beyond Graduation*

Education for teachers does not end with graduation from a university, any more than it does for those in any other evolving profession. To view college teacher education programs or alternative programs such as the New York City Teaching Fellows as discrete and the teacher as "finished" at the end of participating in one is short sighted. This view, I would argue, stems from the perception of teaching as something less than a profession. When one reviews the sheer number of things teachers have been expected to know and do and how that has evolved over time, it becomes evident that we need to prepare teachers to be life-long learners, to continually grow as professionals, and that we need to support and encourage them in this endeavor. The focus on pre-service teacher preparation ignores the need for teachers to keep up with new developments in their field

and continue to grow as professionals (an accepted notion in any other profession). In New York State for example, new teachers are expected to hold certain credentials, but veteran teachers are not required to undergo performance assessments or seek advanced certification, earning the state a B- in teacher quality in the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center annual report (2006).

Due to the acknowledgment that the teaching profession grows and changes to make use of new knowledge and situations and that teacher training programs cannot possibly cover all of the things teachers should know and be able to do, professional development experiences are increasingly being encouraged and funded, and cultural institutions are prime partners in this endeavor. Research reveals that focused, extended professional development does indeed impact positively on teaching practices (Porter, Garet, Desimone, Yoon, & Birman, 2000; West Ed. 2000; Ridgway & Bowyer, 2000; Cohen, Gerber, Handley, Kronely, & Parry, 2001; Hassel, 1999; NCES, 2001). Giving teachers the opportunity to continue as learners is also considered important to their performance in the classroom and may even impact on teacher retention during the "danger zone" for leaving – between seven to ten years in the classroom. (Huberman, 1993). Barker (2004) asserts that an interest in pursuing "professional upgrades" is one of the six "essential characteristics of a highly qualified, capable, responsive teacher" (p.57). Professional development experiences for teachers can allow them to continue as learners and grow as professionals.

The U.S. Department of Education lists "respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of teachers" as one of the principals of high-quality professional development (Hassel, 1999). Creating consistently high-quality professional development

experiences, however, is proving as challenging as creating a quality pre-service teacher training program. For example, in spite of growing research showing that consistent, extended, coherent professional development aligned with other school or district goals is the most successful approach (Desimone, et al., 2003), a 2001 National Center for Educational Statistics survey shows that 77% of teachers received less than 32 hours of professional development in their main content area and only 18% felt that their training was connected to other school improvement activities. This mirrors the disconnect between the pre-service training prescribed for teachers and the realities they face in the classroom. Professional development needs to be part of a wider initiative. Multi-year partnerships, like those funded through the Teaching American History grants have the potential to alleviate this disconnect. If the school is part of a wider community of practice that collaborates for the continuing educational support of teachers, the professional development experiences will be much more meaningful and teachers can continue to self-develop through their relationships in the community as well as through formal programs or teacher institutes.

*Creating Communities of Practice to Support Quality History Teaching*

> The history of our Revolution will be one continued lie from one end to the other. The essence of the whole will be that Dr. Franklin's electric rod smote the earth and out sprang George Washington. Then Franklin electrified him with his rod, and henceforward these two conducted all the policy negotiations, legislatures, and war.
>
> John Adams[1]

[1] Quoted in Nash, Crabtree and Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (Vintage Books, 2000), 17-18.

History is real simple, it's what happened.

Rush Limbaugh, TV broadcast 10/28/07

Defining quality teaching when it comes to the content area of history is as difficult as defining quality teaching in general. The field of history education in the United States is, and has always been, contentious. United States history in particular has caused great debate since the country's inception. Part of the reason for this is that influencing the choice of historical content – *what* we want our teachers to teach – is the *why* of history teaching. Why do we want history taught?

The subject of history is a powerful one. As Joseph Diorio has outlined, the teaching of history in the 19th and early 20th century was seen as essential to the moral training of students. "The study was seen to provide, if not a laboratory of ethics, at least an observatory in which the consequences of various human actions could be watched from a safe distance and the appropriate lessons drawn" (Diorio, 1985, p. 74). In 1893, the National Education Association's Committee of Ten issued their report on the secondary level curriculum. The Committee's Subcommittee of History, Civil Government and Political Economy recommended that all students take four years of secondary level history as it "broadened and cultivated the mind, counteracted a narrow and provincial spirit, prepared students for intellectual enjoyment in after years, and assisted them to exercise a salutary influence upon the affairs of their country" (Bradley Commission, 1988, p.1). History can certainly be taught with the goal of inspiring pride in one's country – or the opposite. Giroux (1979), for example, wrote of the potential of history to inspire subversive behavior. Nationwide, the conversation as to the *what* and

*why* of history instruction has as many answers as there are school districts. There is nothing approaching a consensus as to what should be covered in the curriculum. For example, since the request to withhold funding from schools using non-inclusive history textbooks was denied in the 1960s, there has been a localized control of history textbooks, and thus the history curriculum. Southern areas often rejected textbooks that depicted the brutality of slavery, racial violence against African Americans or even African American heroes. Northern critics often lobbied to remove books where race or class was depicted as a causation of strife in the North (Zimmerman, 2002).

The teaching of history is potentially contentious because it is tied into issues of identity. The accepted history of a nation contributes to the national identity in myriad ways. This was true when we were a new nation, struggling to define ourselves as separate from Britain, and it is true today as we face an increasingly interconnected world. Seen in this light, the teaching of history can be perceived as irrevocably political (Kincheloe, 2001). It is, in a sense, myth-making and, as Moreau (2003), writes, "Americans have continuously renegotiated their myths" (p. 334). At the beginning of our history as a nation, we were already constructing myths to bolster our sense of nationhood. As early as 1840, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in his *Democracy in America* that there was not yet an "American" character, given that most of the citizens came from somewhere else, but that national pride was rampant and Americans would tolerate no criticism of their new country. In the late 19th and the early part of the 20th century, cultural institutions saw themselves as providing views of both history and culture that helped instill a sense of what it is to be an American in the waves of newly arrived immigrants. As Scales (1917) wrote for the Metropolitan Museum's bulletin, the museum

played a part in "the making of Americans" through exposure to its collections and educational experiences that honored the home culture of newly arrived immigrants while also introducing them to American culture (p.191). In 1988, the Bradley Commission in their *Building a History Curriculum: Guidelines for Teaching History in Schools* reiterated the need to use history to unite a diverse population through teaching the heritage of our "democratic vision." They emphasized that history is the "central humanistic discipline" that can "satisfy young people's longing for a sense of their identity and of their time and place in the human story" (p5), and stated, "History can be best understood when the roles of all constituent parts of society are included: therefore the history of women, racial and ethnic minorities, and men and women of all classes and conditions should be integrated into historical instruction" (p.8). In contrast to the idea that the curriculum can honor the diverse social-cultural background of our students and examine the challenges we have faced as a nation while still instilling a "vision" of what it means to be an American, some ultra conservative writers such as Schlesinger (1993) and Gingrich (1995) insist on a need for a uniformly positive, uncomplicated vision of our national history as a means of unifying our diverse population.

Complicating matters further is the absorption of history as a subject into social studies, along with economics, political science, geography and civics. In 1916, the Committee on Social Studies, a subcommittee of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, put out its final report entitled, *The Social Studies in Secondary Education*. Concerned with social order and issues of citizenship, they recommended courses with titles such as "Problems in American Democracy" which would include discussions of health, recreation, education, charities and other social issues (Lybarger,

1983, p. 463). After WWI, "Progressives" concerned with efficiency and usefulness of education, dismissed much of traditional history as having no practical use in student's lives, and therefore as not important in the modern curriculum (Nash, et al., 2000). It was felt that history could be studied by the relatively few students who were bound for college, but the majority would not need it, or, as some thought, were not capable of learning it (Ravitch, 2000). The social studies were also seen as a way of inculcating citizenship into the growing number of immigrants entering the school system. Versions of the "core" and "social living" curricula, popular in the middle of the 20th century, combined subjects like history, English and home economics, and were largely geared toward preparing students to have skills they could parlay into work in the adult world or in the home (Kliebard, 1995). By 1987, 15 % of students in the United States did not take United Sates history in high school and 60% no longer took classes in world history or western civilization (Bradley Commission, 1988).

What does all this mean when faced with creating partnerships to support history teaching and learning funded by a grant whose stated purpose is to "promote the teaching of traditional American history" so that "students will develop an appreciation for the great ideas of American history" (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2001)? Even if we ignore extremists on both sides of the issue, with oversimplified versions of a happy Euro-centric history ruined by multiculturalism such as Gingrich's *To Renew America* (1995) on one side, and the call during the 1960s and '70s for separate ethnically and gender specific history instruction on the other (see Zimmerman, 2002, chapter 5; also Moreau, 2003 chapter 7), we are still left with a plethora of traditions in United States history teaching to choose from and many potential "great ideas" to cover in a relatively short

period of time. Content choices have to be made. As Wineburg (2004) writes in his overview of the historical expectations of student knowledge in United States history, "We can not insist that every student know when World War II began and who our allies were while giving tests that ask about the battles of Saratoga and Oriskany" (p. 1412).

*Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching History*

> "Who shall write the history of the American Revolution?" Adams asked. "Who can write it? Who will ever be able to write it?"
>
> "Nobody," Jefferson answered, "except perhaps its external facts."[2]

Clearly there is more to understanding history than the mere memorization of facts. As Kincheloe (2001) states, students in a fact-driven situation "become fact collectors, not knowledge workers who can conduct research and interpret data" (p.50). He goes on to say that the teachers of these students become more like factory foremen and become deskilled and isolated from the spirit of their work. When John Goodlad and his colleagues were researching schools they found that isolated facts – names, dates, places – were all that were being taught and tested, in spite of teachers' self reports of providing a wider variety of experiences for their students (Goodlad, 1984). In recent years there been a movement to provide a history education that encourages students to think like historians, do research and view history as being less about facts than about informed interpretation (Wineburg, 2004; Levstick & Barton, 2005). The 1988 Bradley Commission recommendations for history instruction included a thematic approach, rather than the presentation of facts devoid of context, and also suggested the use of

[2] From David McCullough, *John Adams*. (NY: Simon & Schuster, 2001) p. 605.

original sources as the study of history should include the exploration of contexts and the exercising of "critical judgment based on evidence" (p.7). Even the newly issued New York City *K-8 Scope and Sequence for Social Studies* (2008-2009) emphasizes thinking skills such as "handling diversity of interpretations" (p. iii) and includes "Essential Questions" that group factual information conceptually such as "How does a nation balance its own needs with the needs of the world?" (p. 31).

The inclusion of primary source interpretation, with document-based and constructed-response questions in the curriculum and on tests, allows students to do the work of historians and construct their own knowledge. Cultural institutions have many resources to support this approach. Many cultural institutions, such as the National Archives and the Library of Congress, have digitized and uploaded selections from their collections to their websites and organized them so they are easily searchable. In some cases these institutions have included lesson plans to go along with their resources. The series *A History of US* (Hakim, 1993/2003) embodies this approach in a textbook form, including reproductions of letters, prints, newspaper article excerpts, etc. along with suggested approaches for exploring them such as: "Sometimes it's hard to see things with the eyes of another age. But if you want to understand history, you have to do that. Try it right now. Imagine you are in Philadelphia in 1787, listening to James Wilson, Pennsylvania's scholarly delegate…" (p. 181).

Pedagogical approaches that encourage research into primary sources and the use of imagination for interpretation of the sources and the construction of understandings would seem non-controversial. After all, this is what historians actually do. Many cultural institutions use the constructivist nature of an experience at their history-rich sites to

foster dialogue around issues of historical interpretations, democracy, civics and current events (Korza, Yuen, & Bacon, 1999; Mazda, 2004). While scholars such as Nash, Crabtree and Dunn (2000) argue that the sort of dialogue and knowledge construction that comes from historical exploration is a positive act, mirrored in the sciences, the view that history is factual, true and un-interpreted remains an ideological stance of many conservatives who are uncomfortable with the idea of a variety of interpretations (Nash, Crabtree and Dunn, 2000). Even a scholar like E.D. Hirsch who likes to present himself as a more moderate conservative accuses educators who use a constructivist approach of being anti-knowledge and anti-subject matter (Hirsch, 1996).

Teachers who are encouraged to use primary sources and a more interpretive approach must find a way to be comfortable with guiding the interpretations, while leaving room for differences. They also must be comfortable knowing that allowing an exploration of history that is not predigested may lead to some strong feelings on the part of students, such as the elementary school child who, after studying the earliest European encounters with people in the Americas declared "I think Columbus went to Hell" (Levstik, L. & Barton, K. 2005). They must be ready to assist the student who is not making connections, for, as Carlton Bell noted in 1917, some students are easily able to work with primary sources and synthesize information in a logical way, while others end up with a bunch of disconnected facts (Bell, 1917; see also Wineburg, 2004). An approach to history that encompasses the skills of "doing" history requires the teacher to have a firm grasp of those skills – the skills of the historian – as well as a depth of content knowledge that enables them to guide their students to a nuanced understanding of the

past. A teacher who is not confident in those areas or afraid of the controversy born of certain conclusions by students may think it is simply safer to cleave to the textbook.

Depending exclusively on the standard textbook or the presentation of unexamined "facts," however, ignores the potential use of history to understand our present – "the historical roots, of contemporary problems" (Ravitch, 2006, p.58). It also can remove the human narrative, what Scott (1992) calls "vividness and humanity of original sources" (p.157) that can make history engaging and provoke curiosity and dialogue. Though education staff in history-rich cultural institutions also have to deal with the fear and resistance that some have towards new discoveries in, or interpretations of, history (Appleby, 1998) many choose to employ a pedagogical approach that encourages the connection of past to present. The staff at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, for example, refer to "the useable past" and encourage dialogue in order to inspire students to use the past in order to examine and understand their personal experiences as well as wider contemporary issues (Korza, Yuen, & Bacon, 1999; Kennedy & Kim, 2000; Abram, 2005). This approach has also caused them to be viewed as questionable sources of "good" history by some.

The national or state standards for history and social studies can provide some guidance for establishing a working idea of "quality" history teaching, but these have also come under fire. The National Standards for History received tremendous criticism from those who thought they were too negative and neglected to include some "important" history (Nash, et al., 2000) while including other events such as the founding of the National Organization for Women which were deemed unimportant by the likes of Lynne Cheney (1994). The state standards didn't fare much better. In 1998, the Thomas B.

Fordham Foundation issued a report written by David Warren Saxe in which Saxe and a panel made up of two professors of history and two professors of education (with additional comments by a CUNY Graduate Center history professor) reviewed state history/social studies standards and graded them. New York State received an "F," which they coded as meaning "useless." The author and his panel object to standards that are outlined using a social studies framework (such as New York's). They also object to any evidence of "presentism" and give as a negative example the New York standards' inclusion of language encouraging multiple perspectives and a values perspective when learning history that involves slavery and totalitarianism. Their explanation is "Applications of present-day sensibilities to the past may easily confuse and divert students from understanding people and their times" (p.18). Clearly, institutions and individuals coming together to create a collaborative partnership will need to create a shared vision and goals out of a wide variety of ideologies surrounding quality history instruction and the best way to "develop" quality history teachers.

*Why Include Cultural Institutions as Part of the Community of Practice?*

Before discussing the essential elements that cultural institutions bring to a community of practice for the support and development of teachers, it is important that the term "museum education" is explained. Much of the literature surrounding education in cultural settings comes from the field of "museum education." Zoos, parks, aquaria, botanical gardens, theaters, dance spaces – cultural institutions of every type in New York City – boast education departments. Educators from all of these are constituents of the New York *Museum* Educators Roundtable. As Talboys (1966) writes when defining

the word "museum," museums "act as a national and cultural memory" (p.12) and are a "place that offers the opportunity to see, touch, hear, and have sensual, emotional and intellectual interaction with what is in that place" (p.15) – a definition applicable to education in many types of cultural institutions. Much of the literature looked at for this study uses the word "museum" to mean this larger definition which includes all kinds of cultural institutions. Other strands of useful literature looked at the effectiveness of the using the arts to teach traditional academic subject areas (see Deasy, 2002) and research from the field of informal education as cultural institutions are sometimes examined as "informal learning environments."

Cultural institutions contain collections and/or opportunities for experiences that augment the classroom experience as well as giving teachers access to content specialists and experts but the approach to education in cultural institutions is unique. Though stemming from many of the same influences as teaching and learning in schools, particularly constructivist and experiential approaches (Hein, 1998), the tradition of pedagogy in cultural institutions has also been separate from many of the elements that have shaped approaches to teaching and learning in the school setting, such as standardized testing and government educational policies and this is important. If one of the goals of a professional development experience is to reinvigorate teachers as learners who are passionate about their subject, and to cultivate their "qualities of mind in diverse domains" (Greene, 1995, p. 179) so they are prepared to help diverse learners to construct understandings of subject content, then cultural institutions, free from some of the entrenched stress regarding the need to "teach to the test," are logical partners. Collections and programming in cultural institutions can prove to be important tools for

teaching mandated subjects and skills in an accessible and engaging way. Educators in cultural institutions have cultivated an "outside the box" approach to content that takes advantage of the institutions' unique environments. In the wake of the American Associations of Museums report, "Excellence and Equity, Education and the Public Dimension of Museums (1992), educators in these settings have worked to ensure their programs acknowledged and reflected diverse populations of learners. This has been particularly successful for school audiences, for, as Falk and Dierking write, the change of modality in a cultural institution "frequently permits 'problem' children to shine" (1992, p.153).

This change of modality in cultural institutions is also positive for teachers as adult learners (Bain & Ellenbogen, 2002). It permits classroom teachers to re-examine their teaching practices in new ways, have access to content experts and exposure to this similar yet different pedagogy. Cultural partners can provide experiences that allow teachers to explore, discover the feeling of becoming learners again and exercise the creativity which is so important in the educational experience, or the process of "coming to know" (Bruner, 1962). For as Csikszentmihalya and Hermanson (1995) write, "The learning experience involves the whole person, not only the intellectual but the sensory and emotional faculties as well" (p. 67) and when the whole person is engaged, there is an intrinsic motivation to go on learning. Cultural institutions can reawaken teachers' capacity to feel wonder, which Greenblatt (1991) asserts must be invoked before a content discussion can begin and can help teachers perceive the "magic" that "is all around when we stop worrying about numbers and charts and start perceiving the enchantment that transpires when people interact with things" (Silverman, 2002, p.23).

George Hein (1998) tells us, "Never underestimate the value of wonder, exploration, expanding the mind…these are an integral part of learning" (p.153), and Eisner (1991) also emphasizes this idea of wonder and the importance of enjoyment in the educational experience. For teachers who have arrived at the point of boredom or burnout in their teaching, these sort of experiences can "recharge their batteries" and/or take them to the next level.

One of the elements of pedagogical practice in cultural institutions that classroom teachers may find different and refreshing is its focus on the holistic process of learning rather than testable outcomes. In an article for *Museum News*, Randi Korn (2004) quotes the Dean of Education at the Denver Art Museum, "I am not sure the word I would choose for the museum experience is 'learning'…Now if 'learning' means having anything new happen – a new feeling, thought, sight, smell, etc., then 'learning' may be a useful word" (p. 50). In an attempt to clarify what a visitor experiences at their institution, the Head of Visitor Research and his colleagues at the Science Museum of London identified five categories of museum learning: cognitive, affective (including inspiration of interest, curiosity, awe and wonder), social, developing skills, and personal (including increased self-confidence and self-efficacy, motivation to investigate further, and associating curiosity and thinking with enjoyable experiences) (Korn, p.50). The staff of the Ft. Worth Museum of Science and History think about the experience at their museum as being centered on "Extraordinary Learning Environments" which are "a stimulating, multi-dimensional immersive place where visitors have opportunities to hear real stories, interact with cool stuff, construct their own knowledge, and because of their experiences, visitors will never be the same" and go on to say that their visitors should

"have fun" and "experience Aha!" (Korn, p.51, see also Walter, 2002). John Falk and Lyn Dierking (2000) examine the different contexts of the learner and learning, and suggest that it is more typical for visitors to cultural institutions to learn "global ideas (*i.e.* history or science is fun)" (p. 153) along with idiosyncratic facts of specific interest to the visitor. According to Silberman-Keller (2003), "Some unique features of informal learning include its position within an existing social context, its idiosyncratic integration of the relationship of goals to learning methods, and its holistic use of cognitive and emotional elements in learning" (p. 9). Researchers using an ethnographic approach have been able to document the importance of the social aspect of learning in a cultural institution (Gottfried, 1980, Falk & Bolling, 1980). For example, seemingly off-topic discussions among students on a visit to a museum have been shown to have the positive impact of building harmony and trust among the group (Smith, 2001). All of these seemingly non-academic elements can help teachers make their class content engaging, accessible and inclusive for their students and teaching more engaging for themselves. To summarize: though history-rich cultural institutions provide access to much that is traditionally valued in school in terms of content, they also provide opportunities for what Dewey (1938/63) called "collateral learning," which, as it helps to form attitudes, likes or dislikes, "may be, and often is much more important than the spelling lesson or lesson in geography or history that is learned…The most important attitude that can be formed is that of a desire to go on learning" (p.48). Providing classroom teachers with professional development experiences and access to resources that allow them to explore the elements of the learning experience that make them excited, that allow them to have fun and drive

them to want to know more, has the potential of sustaining (or reawakening) in them the passion that brought them to teaching in the first place.

*A Long History of Supporting Schools*

> To make itself alive, a museum must do two things: It must teach and it must advertise. As soon as it begins to teach it will of necessity begin to form an alliance with present teaching agencies, the public schools, the colleges and universities, and the art institutions of all kinds.
>
> John Cotton Dana, 1917

Given their long history of dedication to education and their continued support for classroom teachers and teaching, cultural institutions are well positioned to be partners with public schools and teachers and to create a community of practice across the curriculum. In the second half of the 19th century, an increasing number of cultural institutions began to emerge in urban areas, often erected as symbols of the city's affluence and power (Hein, 1998). Cremin (1977) calls the museums, aquaria, botanical gardens and libraries of this period "elite centers of culture" (p.104), but they were conceived as places of public education and often included educational statements in their missions. From the end of the 19th century to just before World War II, there was an explosion of cultural institutions, including opera houses, theatres, public libraries and museums, with an appeal to a more diverse public and more clearly articulated educational missions. These later cultural institutions span as great a variety as do the institutions we have today – ranging from large and eclectic to institutions specialized by subject matter or even target audience, such as children's museums and theaters. In New

York City alone there were “more than a dozen art museums, a score of historical museums, and a half-dozen botanical gardens or zoological institutes” and a variety of specialized libraries, galleries, and theaters (Cremin, 1977, p.115). To many of these, school children made regular visits.

Though the large museums in metropolitan areas, such as New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, had articulated education as part of their overall mission when they opened, they hadn’t really fleshed out their mission regarding schools and school children. However, their potential as supporters of students and teachers was definitely a part of their internal, and external conversations. The 1898 report for the Brooklyn Institute for Arts and Sciences (which later evolved into the Brooklyn Museum, the Brooklyn Children’s Museum and the Brooklyn Academy of Music) shows that they had a Department of Pedagogy and that the department had an annual exhibition of “works of art suitable for decoration of school rooms.” In addition the department had presented a conference entitled, “The Uses of Public Museums as an Educational Force” at which George Kellogg from the Metropolitan Museum of Art presented an opening paper. In the1904 and 1905 reports of the museums of the Brooklyn Institute (then known as the Central Museum and the Children’s Museum and Library) service to schools and teachers, specific adaptations to support public school curriculum and visits by teacher training groups are mentioned.

Librarian John Cotton Dana, who founded the Newark Museum in 1909, was one of the first to formally celebrate the learning that occurred in museums, to advocate for school/museum partnerships, to provide lending collections to support visual instruction and above all, to make museums of use to their communities (Dana, 1999). In 1918 the

Metropolitan Museum of Art published an "Educational Credo" (Howe, 1918) but as early as 1908 had included a short piece in its bulletin titled *What the Museum is Doing for Public Schools*, which tells us that the New York State Education Department Division of Visual Instruction was storing slides there for use by schools (Metropolitan Museum, 1908). In 1917, the Metropolitan Museum not only offered lectures, events and classes in various languages that celebrated the culture of New York's immigrant population, but also used collections to offer students a view of history that wasn't only about wars and "great" men, but centered on "the lives of the people, their homes, the things they made, used and cared for" (Scales, 1917, p. 192). The American Museum of Natural History also provided many services to schools and teachers, including slides, traveling exhibit kits for the classroom and "branch" natural science education rooms in schools on the Lower East Side.

In 1906, the American Association of Museums (AAM) was founded, professionalizing the field. In 1939, Lawrence Coleman, then Director of AAM, surveyed museums in the United States and reported that museums were broadening their methods for reaching out to their communities, and that they were natural resources for assuming a broader role in education. In her 1948 article, *Museum Education: Some Practical Considerations*, Christison makes some good connections between the goals and objectives of educators in a museum setting and the wider American education system. She describes programs that integrate subject areas, and the possibility of discussing art with students not only as "art" but also as "social or historical document" or artifact. Even earlier, under the New Deal, the importance of the arts to the educational experience was recognized with Federal Project No. 1, which encompassed art, music,

theater and writing and which funded not only works of visual, creative and performing arts by professionals, but brought visual, performing and creative artists into schools to teach (Cremin, 1988). Peters (1934) provided a survey of services offered to schools at museums and galleries in northeastern and north-central cities. These included, docents and "museum teachers" for tours, in-school lectures, lending collections and film screenings.

"By the end of the 1970's, the nation's thirty thousand libraries, and five thousand museums were more decisively and self-consciously in the business of education than ever before" writes Lawrence Cremin *in American Education: The Metropolitan Experience* (1988). It was then that the New York City Museum Educators Roundtable was established as a professional organization for not only those who worked as educators in traditional museums, but in any non-school setting. The American Association of Museums had also started a Special Interest Committee on Education. When the arts were cut from the New York City's education budget during the fiscal crisis of the 1970s it was cultural institutions that stepped in to provide arts programming for students and professional development for teachers. This support has continued. Based on a yearly survey of their members, The New York City Arts in Education Roundtable – a professional organization for those involved in arts education – estimates that cultural institutions in New York City raise funds for $103 million worth of educational programs for public schools annually (New York City Arts in Education survey results 2006-07). Throughout the 1980's and 1990's, many articles and evaluations centered on the potential of cultural institutions to provide learning outcomes that supported classroom goals and called for educators in these settings to clearly

articulate this in language commonly used in the school setting (Harrison & Naef, 1985). In 1992, the American Association of Museums released *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums*, which outlines the ways in which museums should expand their roles as educational institutions, especially with regard to diverse audiences. In 2002, the Education Committee of the American Association of Museums released *Excellence in Practice: Museum Education Standards and Principals*. This document was created to inform education in museums, supporting the museum education community's efforts to provide excellence in content and methodology. The first standard in the document articulates the need to "maintain sound relationships" with schools.

New York City has a wide range of cultural institutions with education departments and a variety of professional organizations that support education in these institutions. In addition to the New York City Arts in Education Roundtable and the New York City Museum Educators Roundtable, there are also the New York State Theater Education Association, the New York State Alliance for Arts Education and the International Museum Theater Alliance – to name a few. The Office of Arts and Special Projects in New York City's Department of Education has built on the historical relationship of New York City cultural institutions with schools by inviting representatives to contribute to the development of their Curricular Blueprints for the Arts and there is even a public school, the New York City Museum School, founded in partnership with several city cultural institutions.

*To Conclude*

Though there are still many challenges to crossing boundaries from our current models of education within the university setting, within the school setting and within the setting of cultural institutions, each of these potential partners in a community of practice brings a piece of what is needed for the support of quality history teaching and learning. Collaborative partnership programs like the one that is the subject of this research provide a new model of resource sharing than can be replicated to reach the goals of providing quality teacher preparation and support, contributing to a quality educational experience for all students.

# CHAPTER III

## Charting the Course: Finding a Theoretical Lens Through Which to Look

> It sounds obvious, but if you want to provide knowledge that will be useful to the field, it's important to begin by listening carefully to those you eventually want to use the research, and then draw on the field perspective to develop the topic for study.
>
> Ann Stone, Senior Research and Evaluation Officer,
> Wallace Foundation (2006)

Deciding on a theoretical frame for research always poses a challenge. In this case, a feminist stance, a critical theory stance, or any other "stance" typically encountered in research in a social science field would not have been appropriate. For research done by an education professional interested in exploring a question others in the field were also interested in – the question of why some partnerships between different types of educational institutions thrive and grow into sustainable, effective collaborations while others are ineffective and end in frustration and bad feelings – a theoretical frame or lens more closely aligned to actual practice within the field needed to be found.

### *The Evolution of a Theoretical Frame*

The overarching research question grew out of several years of Teaching American History grant-funded partnerships aimed at the professional development of teachers so it is from that part of the educational spectrum that my colleagues and I began to discuss this issue. In light of this, it is from this part of the educational spectrum that a case to study was identified. The case in question is by all accounts and outward appearances a successful collaborative partnership between several different institutions. In the field of teacher education and professional development an ongoing complaint by practitioners is about the disconnect between research and the reality of practice. It was clear at the outset that the research needed to be useful to the field and to the educators and administrators that work within it. As stated in the first chapter of this work, Lawrence-Lightfoot's concept of "looking for goodness" also served as an inspiration by showing that the research needed to highlight and foster the potential of educational partnerships in the urban setting. In addition, Goodlad's "centers of pedagogy" idea contributed a view in which the research would assist in widening the circle of what we perceive as sites of teacher education. A potential theory or conceptual frame for the research would need to fit the professional understandings of an educator and a teacher of teachers, be able to clarify the research questions and be useful in advancing towards the goals inspired by Goodlad and Lawrence-Lightfoot.

Burawoy (Burawoy, Burton, Ferguson, et al., 1991) writes that our situations are shaped by external forces and that an examination of historical and current structures is necessary when examining a case. This also echoes C. Wright Mills' classic *The Sociological Imagination* (1959/2000) in which he emphasizes that one needs to examine phenomena in its social/historical context. Thus, as shown in the previous chapter, I

began the research by outlining the long history of relationships between cultural institutions and K-12 schools, the unique pedagogies cultural institutions employ, the current push for "teacher quality" and the need for an approach to teacher education that extends beyond the traditional university setting. All of these historical and current structural threads intersect within the partnerships that are mandated by the Teaching American History grant program.

As discussed earlier in this paper, cultural organizations and schools have long explored the potential of collaboration to aid in the support of both teachers and students. Cultural institutions have myriad resources for the continuing education and professional development of teachers. These have recently have been tapped in a more formal fashion by Federal Teaching American History grants geared towards the social studies/history education community. After outlining the intersecting "macro" threads that come together in cases such as the one being researched, the focus was narrowed to examine the issue highlighted by the initial, overarching research questions – What makes a partnership collaborative? How does a collaborative partnership evolve into a community of practice?

Qualitative researchers often adhere to the hermeneutic paradigm which avoids "premature conceptualization or theorizing" (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007) but in this case, the need for a conceptual frame to assist in forming detailed, operationalized, questions for research was evident. Simply describing a successful partnership would not be enough. To describe without examination through a theoretical frame would, as Anyon (2009) reminds us, reduce the work to journalism. Articulating a theory for the examination of the facts allows us both to acknowledge our own lens and to more easily

identify themes and patterns emerging from the data. Identifying a framework to direct inquiry into the patterns and practices that lead to a successful meeting of collaborative objectives and the providing of quality teacher development, would make available a language to describe what was being examined, help identify useful data sources and assist in the ordering and sense-making of the data collected. Published educational research into partnership projects like the case identified for this research is heavily weighted toward outcome or evaluative research, which did not speak to the issues to be examined in this case. Surprisingly, the published research speaking to the issue of collaborative partnership creation that attempted to illuminate aspects of collaboration such as those being researched here came from the branches of organizational research primarily in the world of business. (Though given the recognized power of collaboration and the merging of assets in the corporate world, perhaps this should not be surprising.)

*Organizational Research and Collaborative Partnerships*

> collaborate: to work jointly with others or together especially in an intellectual endeavor
> partner: to join or associate with another as partner
>
> Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2009

Organizational theory (and its related field of organizational behavior) provides researchers with frameworks to examine how organizations work both as a macro entity and as a collective of individuals. Through this lens, organizations can be viewed as having cultures defined by specific discourse, artifacts and patterns of behavior. Organizational theory makes use of models and concepts from the behavioral sciences such as sociology and anthropology to examine such things as organizational culture and

structure and to identify specific conditions that promote or block organizational effectiveness. For example, themes explored within this research literature include interpersonal relationships and individual identities and status, communication flow and responsibility delegation. This dissertation research explores how the different partner organizations in the case study, each with its own culture, identity and practices, could work together to create a new collaborative partnership culture that developed into a community of practice. The themes pursued in organizational theory served as avenues for examining the collaborative partners as the individuals representing the larger organizations created new identities and relationships and learned and adapted to an agreed upon set of cultural norms – means of communication, status, etc.

Examining a multi-organizational collaboration poses a problem even for those working within the professional fields of organizational research and it is only relatively recently that a coherent use of theory began to emerge. John Friend writing in 1993 stated that by relying on theories of operational research and organizational development in which the model of examining a single organization is the norm and by applying these theories to a multi-organizational field "there is a substantial risk that these theories and methods will lead them [researchers] seriously astray" (p. 585). He went on to suggest that rather than relying on statistical analysis and "well structured interview schedules" (p.589) – the traditional approach to researching an organization – the researcher examining a multi-organizational field needs to employ exploratory social research and "proceed by a highly adaptive strategy" (p. 589). He continues with, "To pursue such a strategy can involve meeting many individuals and asking exploratory questions informed more by a developing theory of inter-organizational relations than by a tightly-

structured interview schedule; seeking access as an observer to key organizational meetings; and being prepared at all times to use each such experience as a springboard to others" (p. 589).

Today, organizational researchers utilize many of the same methodological approaches used in the social sciences to examine whatever issue is in question. Indeed, the tools of the ethnographer long used to study what we traditionally think of as cultures are put to good use in the corporate and organizational worlds – participant observation, interviews and artifact collection. The understanding of culture in this frame is similar to the understanding put forth by Sewell (1999) – culture as practices and a system of symbols and meanings (schema) that operate within fields – and was therefore familiar from its application in the educational realm. An individual operates within many fields in their daily life – work, school, home, etc. – and the boundaries between these fields are porous and overlapping (Sewell, 1992). Each of the partner institutions in the case study has developed its own internal culture, each with its own practices and schema. Each of the individuals involved has numerous fields in their own lives. We speak of collaborative partnerships as being between the institutions, but ultimately the partnership is between the individuals representing the institutions who bring with them elements – ideologies, practices, discourses – from both their institutional and personal fields. These individuals come together and create the new field of the collaborative partnership, constructing and defining the culture of the partnership – a shared culture of collaboration (Wood & Gray, 1991; Finnerty, Ingram, Huffman, Thimmesch & Gilman, 1998) and their own identities within the new field. The new culture is then capable of being studied through the examination of its practices and schema. The understanding of culture and

the methods for examining it was only one of many crossover points between organizational research and the writings of those thinking about educational issues. From the work in both research areas theories applicable to multi-organizational collaborative partnerships began to emerge.

*An Emerging Definition of Terms*

In order to develop a working definition for the terms "collaboration" and "partner" I had initially started with the basic step of looking up the definitions in the dictionary, which were presented at the start of this section. These simplistic definitions, however, did not reflect the richness and complexity present in many of the collaborative partnerships developed under the auspices of Teaching American History grants or in the case being researched. Collaborative partnerships go beyond the simple "work together with others" that can be extrapolated from the Merriam –Webster dictionary definitions. When thinking of collaborative partnerships, each partner can be thought of as being a spoke and a part of the rim on a wheel. Each partner institution has its own institutional culture with unique strengths and weaknesses. If the differences are complimentary – if each institution has what the other lacks – a partnership can create what Goodlad (1994) refers to as a "powerfully productive symbiosis" (p.103). It is in the space where the partners come together through this symbiosis – the hole at the hub of the wheel – that a new shared culture of collaboration emerges with it's own "shared rules, norms, and structures" (Wood & Gray, 1991) relating to the partnership and even the development of a shared language (Finnerty, et al., 1998).

In their primer *Organizational Behavior,* Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn (2008) come closer to the definition of collaborative partnership embodied by these Teaching American History grant funded projects when they describe work *group*s. "In a true group," they write, "members (1) are mutually dependent on one another to achieve common goals and (2) interact regularly with one another to pursue those goals over a sustained period of time" (p. 170). They go on to state, "When groups are effective…they offer the potential for synergy – the creation of a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts" (p. 171). The authors put forth three levels of analysis for studying organizational culture: "observable culture" at the top, "shared values" in the middle and "common assumptions" at the base (p. 370). Huxham (1993) also wrote of the creation of synergy between collaborating organizations. In this description, a collaborative partnership is much more than each partner performing a task for another partner that they could perform for anyone anywhere – a museum being hired by a school to do one of their generally offered education programs, for example. In the business model, "a partnership between companies exists when joint efforts are multifaceted…this characteristic differentiates a partnership from a single-facet relationship with a vendor, supplier or service organization" (Gerdes, 2003, p. 8). To recap – what emerged from the literature is a view of a collaborative partnership between institutions that can be defined as a situation where staff from separate entities join together to achieve something they cannot achieve on their own and develop a new entity with a shared culture – the collaborative partnership - which includes a shared vision of the hoped for outcome, along with shared discourses and practices. The collaborative partnership then becomes a new field in which culture is enacted and out of which a community of practice can emerge.

*Researching the Elements of Successful Collaboration*

Writing about the same time as John Friend, Chris Huxham began to explore the idea of the "collaborative advantage" (Huxham, 1993). She explains this term as "being concerned with the creation of synergy between collaborating organizations." "Collaborative advantage," she writes, "will be achieved when something unusually creative is produced – perhaps an objective is met – that no one organization could have produced on its own" (1993, p. 603). She went on to examine the factors that need to be present in order for a collaboration to succeed. These include: a common sense of mission and values; shared power and resources; an agreement on who is included in the partnership and their interdependence; and good relationships and communication (p.605). These factors served as areas on which to focus this research lens. The idea of the need for a shared vision or common mission is especially important. It is echoed in literature from the world of education. Michelli & Keiser (2005), and Goodlad (1994) write of the need for a "shared vision" to evolve between partners in teacher education. Lauer, Wilkerson, Goodwin and Apthorp (2002) tell us that a clear vision for the goals of the partnership is what allows it to move forward. In a research design applied to the Eisenhower Professional Development Program published as *Improving Teacher's In-Service Professional Development in Mathematics and Science: The Role of Post Secondary Institutions* (Desimone, et al., 2003), the researchers established an alignment of goals between post-secondary institutions and district standards as one of six features

of quality professional development. Also, Ridgeway and Bower (2000) placed "have clear goals and focused vision" first on their list of guidelines for partnering with cultural institutions and Linden (2002) calls the shared purpose that the partners must endeavor to achieve the "first basic" of collaboration, writing, "if there is no shared purpose or goal why collaborate in the first place?" (p.74). Many authors in the business world refer to the importance of creating this shared vision in a way that is clear and goes beyond an "abstract exercise in creative thinking" (Rackham, Friedman & Ruff, 1996) and "exposes assumptions," "prevents false starts" and avoids wasting time and resources (Gage, 2004). It is this type of relationship – one in which partners have developed a shared vision with shared goals and understandings, along with shared responsibilities – that is essential to creating a collaborative partnership that has the potential to evolve into a community of practice.

If a truly shared vision is not created, the partnership will fall short of its potential. Lincoln Center Institute (LCI), the central educational arm of Lincoln Center – whose philosopher in residence is Maxine Greene – has created several partnerships with teacher education programs. The focus of their professional development is the fostering of the imagination and the integration of aesthetic education into teacher training. The Institute has years of experience in these collaborations behind them and thousands of teachers have passed through their much-loved professional development experiences, yet the impact on instruction has remained limited. When describing the limited impact of a partnership between the Lincoln Center Institute and Queens College, the City University of New York, Anderson (2005) uses the analogy of Ahab's quest for Moby Dick. He describes the tendency of LCI workshop participants from the college to return

to the traditional, known way of teaching in spite of exposure to new ideas from the Institute. He writes of the project he participated in, "I still think we would have caught the white whale if we hadn't kept returning to the usual course" (p.36). Without a clearly articulated shared vision for real change that has "buy in" from all participants, familiar patterns will re-assert themselves.

When attempting to create collaborations around teacher development, coming to a shared vision of what teaching and learning actually mean requires stepping outside ingrained practices and assumptions. Given the tendency to hold on to the familiar approaches to teaching as described by Anderson (2005) and at length by Cuban (1993) as well as Tyack & Cuban, (1995), if a professional development program is to make change in classroom practice, its organizing partners must have a clear, shared, vision to articulate to the teachers. Steps must be taken to include the teachers and their administrators and foster their "buy in" to the vision. Developing a shared vision is something that happens over time and evolves with new experiences, increasing familiarity and feedback (Ridgeway & Bower, 2000; Ascher, 1988; Baily, 1998; Larson, 2004). In her examination of the collaboration within higher education institutions Kezar (2005) writes of the time that needs to be spent creating the context that allows collaboration to happen. Even before a shared vision is developed, Kezar proposes, there must be a building of commitment and a time for building networks. Kanter (1994) refers to this as the "courtship" phase in the development of a collaboration. In the introduction to *Teaching Together: School/University Collaboration to Improve Social Studies Education* (Christenson, Johnston & Norris, 2001), the editors praise the possibilities of partnerships, but then warn, "nevertheless, it takes more time to collaborate than work

alone" (p.6). Time is perhaps the biggest challenge to creating partnerships. It takes time to reconcile goals, institutional cultures, and perspectives into a shared vision at the outset. Time must also be allowed for reflection and adjustment at each step along the way. To harken back to Huxham's articulated factors that need to be present in order for a collaboration to succeed, time can be considered as a resource that needs to be managed and shared. In this light, the resource of time and its relationship to collaborative partnership building emerged as another element to be considered in this research.

Another factor highlighted by Huxham is that of "good relationships." As organizations are made up of individuals and collaborations are in the end achieved through the relationships of individuals, the experience of the individuals representing the larger partner organizations emerges as an important element to examine. New relationships among individuals must be developed within the new collaborative culture. Relationships affect individual behavior, and the networks they create affect the larger institutions they represent and the new collaborative culture they are creating. These relationships need to be marked by feelings of trust and responsibility, cooperation and "connectiveness" (Hausma, Becker & Brawer, 2005, p.693). To truly collaborate, the partners must view each other as colleagues, which means letting go of established hierarchies with regard to credentials and relationships dictated by job titles (Ridgeway & Bowyer, 2000; Linden, 2002) and developing a culture of cooperation (Lewis, 1990) that allows a sense of shared ownership for the project. In collaborations the individuals representing different institutions must create or recreate their relational schemas within the new entity or field that is the collaborative partnership. Redefining status is essential for the development of the collaborative partnership and new forms of social capital must

be agreed upon by the group. For example, an individual with a career in the classroom must be honored as much as an individual with a PhD in history, for they both bring a needed expertise to the project. They must build a relationship that is based on mutual acknowledgment of interdependence and equal importance. Individuals must also grow to perceive themselves as essential to the group. Very often one partner will be the initiator. In spite of this, it is essential that the other partner, or partners, must be made to feel the project is theirs as well and the initiator must avoid autocratic behavior (Gage, 2004). Shared ownership, along with shared benefits, helps create holistic institutional "buy in" and support, which is essential if innovation and change are to be given the time and space to take root (Linden 2002). Shared ownership also lends itself to partners taking on shared responsibility and contributes to sustainability (Lauer, Wilkerson, Goodwin & Apthorp, 2002).

The concepts of ownership, status and social capital all relate back to issues of power sharing, another one of Huxham's factors for collaborative success. Power can be enacted by individuals or by the larger organizations. Power relations are also dynamic and can shift depending on what stage the collaborative project is in (Huxham, 2003). As Friend (1993) points out, the traditional "petal diagram" which represents a multi-organizational collaboration as a simple flower with the shared task as the center or stigma of the "flower" and with each partner organization represented as a "petal" (not unlike my initial vision of the spokes on a wheel centering on a hub) is misleading. In reality at different times different partner organizations may have more power or "the various organizations participating in a multi-organizational task may differ widely in terms of their internal complexity and the level of commitment they can bring to this

particular task" (Friend, p.597). Therefore the "petals" would not be of equal size at any given time. The shifts and sharing of power among the partners – both in the sense of organizational partners and in the individuals representing them – emerged as another area to focus the lens of this research.

*Fostering Communities of Practice*

Exploring the literature and the emergent research themes of organizational research led me back to the work of Etienne Wenger, whose initial work was utilized in the field of education. The work Wenger did with Jean Lave, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (1991), introduced the idea of coming to belong to a community of practice through an apprenticeship model, which acts as a means of fostering learning and community integration. In the field of business it is his book, *Communities of Practice* (1998), and subsequent publications leading from it, that are being referenced by researchers examining organizational structures and practices. Wenger went on to develop his ideas for the corporate uses of his work in publications such as *Cultivating Communities of Practice* (Wenger, McDermott & Synder, 2002) geared specifically to the corporate world. Wenger's ideas underscored the appropriateness of the use of the work of organizational theorists in this research by providing a clear bridge from organizational research to learning theory and the world of education. It also extended the idea of collaborative partnership to be something sustainable without an outside prompt such as a grant – that collaborations can become communities of practice.

Indeed, Wenger's concept of communities of practice has already been used to examine teacher professional growth, but has mainly focused on the pre-service experience (Barab, Barnett & Squire, 2002) or on the relationship between universities and schools (Bullough, Draper, Smith & Birrell, 2004). Levinson and Brantmeier (2006) outline the use of the communities of practice concept to examine learning both in and out of schools as well as for teacher development, noting that many scholars using the communities of practice concept are asking "whether the CoP [communities of practice] concept can serve to organize the learning of novice teachers as they enter the profession" (p. 328).

Not limiting his concept of communities of practice to collaborative enterprises but rather discussing its application to all relationships, Wenger (n.d.) describes communities of practice in the following manner:

> Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavor: a tribe learning to survive, a band of artists seeking new forms of expression, a group of engineers working on similar problems, a clique of pupils defining their identity in the school, a network of surgeons exploring novel techniques, a gathering of first-time managers helping each other cope.

As has been previously stated, elements of collaborative partnership that emerged as central to this research were the development of a common culture, an understanding of a shared vision and common mission, the management of resources, the relationships of the individuals and the dynamics of power. In his work, Wenger echoes the findings of the business world. He addresses the formation of communities evidenced by "practices, routines, rituals, artifacts, symbols, conventions, stories and histories" (1998, p.6) which, to harken back to Sewell (1999), can be defined as evidence of a culture. He speaks of the

importance of negotiating a joint enterprise that "gives rise to relations of mutual accountability among those involved" (1998, p. 81) and emphasizes goal alignment, writing, "Alignment requires the ability to coordinate perspectives and actions in order to direct energies to a common purpose." (p 186). He also discusses the importance of identity development within the community of practice. In Wenger's view, individual identity is formed by being a member of the group and participating within the community. Members of a community of practice feel legitimate and confident in what they bring to the group and are treated as legitimate and competent by other members. Community members also know the expectations of communication and interaction with other community members.

Also highlighted by Wenger are theories of *social practice*, *collectivity, power, subjectivity* and *meaning* – once again echoing elements discussed in the literature of organizational research. The concept of *practice* is essential to Wenger. Theories of *social practice* address the "production and reproduction of specific ways of engaging with the world" (Wenger, 1998, p. 13). These practices take place in everyday settings but this concept emphasizes, "systems of shared resources by which groups organize and coordinate their activities" (Wenger, p 13). Practice is how we actually engage with our world and each other. Theories of collectivity "address the formation of social configurations of various types" (p.14). These can be social groups as simple as families or church groups or as complicated as global organizations or large social movements. Theories of collectivity and practice also attempt to describe how groups sustain themselves and function together over time.

The "theories of power" described by Wenger address issues of status and symbolic capital (1998, p 284, note 10) similar to those Everett (2002) emphasized should be examined by organizational researchers. Finally, Wenger discusses theories of meaning that "attempt to account for the ways people produce meanings of their own" (Wenger, 1998, p 15). For Wenger, making meaning is both an interpretative and an active process (p 54). It is an ongoing negotiation. All of these theories contribute to his idea of social practice. Social practice, Wenger tells us is not just doing something but rather "doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do," (p 47) and includes "the language, tools, documents, images, symbols, well defined roles, specific criteria, codified procedures, regulations and contracts" that make practices explicit. (p. 47). He reminds us that the concept of practice in this usage also includes the implicit, "the implicit relations, tacit conventions…underlying assumptions and shared world views" (p. 47). According to Levinson and Brantmeier (2006), practice is portrayed "as the process through which person, setting and knowledge are mutually constituted" and, they argue, this is different than most approaches to researching learning which "presuppose dualisms that are endemic to Western thought (individual/society; inner mind/outer world; self/other, etc.)" (p. 329). This understanding of practice as encompassing the reality of an experience once again finds an echo in organizational and operational literature. Huxham (2003), for example, emphasizes the importance of examining common practice – how collaborations are really enacted – as opposed to common wisdom – what people think is occurring. Wenger's concept of a community of practice resonated for the examination of the work schools and cultural institutions were doing together. The emphasis on practice seemed to fit the active, living,

dynamic process of working together. Wenger writes that a community of practice is not defined by mere proximity or social relationships, but rather also necessarily tied to the idea of practice – the idea of engagement with each other, of 'doing' together. "Membership in a community of practice is therefore a matter of mutual engagement" (Wenger, 1998, p73). Engagement must be enabled. Space must be allowed for it to happen, both literally and conceptually. Also present in this definition of a community of practice is a joint enterprise that is negotiated communally and that requires mutual accountability and the development of a shared culture. In this construct, the members of the collaborative partnership develop a community of practice by creating "routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence and which have become part of its practice." (p. 83).

Wenger's use of the term "reification" in which an understanding is given form as an artifact or process including "making, designing, representing, naming, encoding and describing" (1998, p 59) was very helpful in the process of thinking about collecting evidence of the development of shared visions, worldviews and understandings around teacher development and history education as well as what it means to collaborate. He emphasizes that the products of reification are reflections of larger practices and meanings. (p. 61). Building on this allowed for a clear selection of artifacts or products that could be collected and would reflect the larger practices and negotiated meanings of the collaborative partnership used in the case study.

Artifacts that were identified as sources to examine the original vision, goals and timeline for the partnership, roles and responsibilities of the partners as outlined in planning documents and that reflected adjustments and changes made over time were:

- The original grant proposal submitted to the Federal Department of Education
- Planning documents for teacher professional development sessions
- Project reports submitted to the Federal Department of Education

To examine descriptions of the group dynamics between partners when they set goals and planned professional development experiences, the practices the partners engaged in, the development of the communication strategies and a shared understanding around the professional development of history teachers, the following artifacts were identified:

- Minutes from planning and debriefing meetings
- Professional development workshop outlines submitted by cultural partners
- Department of Education curriculum unit planning outlines
- Email correspondence

Finally, for a description of the process of setting goals and objectives for the professional development experiences, a detailed description of the professional development experiences as implemented, the teacher's evaluations of the professional

development experiences and the outside evaluator's findings on actual usage of methods, strategies and content in the classroom, the following artifacts were identified:

- Handouts, outlines, transcripts and materials developed for professional development experiences
- Teacher created work in response to professional development experiences
- Completed evaluations of professional development experiences
- Independent evaluation research reports covering classroom crossover of professional development experiences

In his work, Wenger lays out a list of indicators that a community of practice has formed (Wenger, 1998, pp125-126). These criteria established that the members of the collaborative partnership identified for the case study indeed began to function as a community of practice, further underscoring the examined project's success as a collaboration. The case study collaborative partnership's "fit" to the criteria of a community of practice will be further discussed in the following chapter. It should be made clear that where Wenger is emphatic about the fact that though the term community is generally perceived as a positive one and conjures images of a positive environment, tying it to practice means that is not necessarily so. He writes, "In some communities of practice, conflict and misery can even constitute the core characteristic of a shared practice" (1998, 77). For the purposes of this research, however, the focus is on finding elements of positive, collaborative interactions. This is not to say that evidence of misunderstandings, imbalances, etc. are ignored, but the purpose of the research is to

highlight as much as possible what makes a collaborative partnership grow into a positive, successful, sustainable community of practice. With this in mind the focus is on how the partners dealt with missteps or conflicts.

Another deviation from Wenger's use of the community of practice concept is that each of the individual partner institutions in the case study used for this research could be defined as a community of practice within itself. Where Wenger might say that their interaction though the collaboration is actually a negotiation across boundaries, I am arguing that over time these partners have created a new entity through their collaborative partnership that is a community of practice within itself, and indeed fits Wenger's own criteria for such a community. Wenger does acknowledge that this broader type of community of practice can exist across boundaries, writing, "Communities of practice that bridge institutional boundaries are often critical to getting things done in the context of – and sometimes in spite of – bureaucratic rigidities" (p119).

*The Methodology: Choosing a Qualitative Approach to Research*

As the purpose of this research is to examine how a community of practice is developed between disparate partners, not to evaluate the success or non-success of a specific initiative, a qualitative research approach seemed the most appropriate. A qualitative approach generally emphasizes inductively building concepts or theories (Merriam, 1998). The researcher in this paradigm gathers information and through analysis lets the patterns and generalizations emerge into theory. Allowing for the emergence of patterns is central to the approach employed here but for this case study the research was started within a framework composed of the organizational theory as

described in the previous sections of this chapter. As Creswell points out, "The case can be made that no qualitative study begins from pure observation and that prior conceptual structure composed of theory and methods provides a starting point for all observations" (Creswell, 2003, p. 133). Though framed within the theories of partnership and collaboration and the concept of communities of practice, an approach that allowed for emergent research questions gave a greater scope to the research. This approach allows for a "reciprocal relationship between data and theory" that "permits the use of *a priori* theoretical frameworks, but which keeps a particular framework from becoming the container into which the data must be poured" (Lather, 1986, p. 267, quoted in Creswell, 2003, p. 134). An approach framed in theory yet open to emergent themes, issues, questions and the possibilities of new theory development allowed me to be responsive to my own inductively developed concepts as a stakeholder (a practitioner within the field), feedback from the research participants and new avenues of inquiry.

*Why This Case Study?*

"The case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a variety of evidence – documents, artifacts, interviews and observations" (Yin, 2003, p. 8). Merriam (1998) and Stake (1994) also support this methodology when the subject requires examining a variety of elements – various institutional cultures, history, processes, etc. As researching just one collaborative partnership created between several institutions required the examination of a variety of artifacts generated over an extended period of time as well as an exploration of both individual and institutional relationships, a case study approach was the logical choice. As mentioned in the Introduction, when choosing a case to study

the literature suggests that one can choose to examine a case that is representative of the norm or to choose a case that stands as a unique example (Yin, 2003). The collaborative partnership chosen as the case for this research is unique in that the same group of institutions has continued to work together for an extended period of time, developing into a sustainable community of practice. The multi-organizational nature of this collaborative partnership allowed for exploration of the challenge of creating a true collaboration between very different institutional cultures. Stake writes that the first criterion in choosing a case to study "should be to maximize what we can learn" (p. 4). Examining and describing how these very different institutions negotiated the initial challenges of collaborating and evolved into a sustainable community of practice can highlight many aspects of a boundary-crossing community of practice.

*The Members of the Community of Practice*

As described in Chapter I, this research focused on a grant that involved five very different institutions. The collaboration chosen for this case study research was purposefully selected for its inclusion of radically different types of institutions and its location in a large urban center with an extensive public school system. From each of the partnering institutions at least one core member of their staff was interviewed. In each case the individual is the person charged with "representing" the institution to the community of practice. In some instances, more than one individual from an organization was interviewed as staff involvement in the project had changed over time or more than one member was directly involved in the community.

1) The New York City Department of Education Regional Office

The Regional Office is the administration office of a Region of the NYC Department of Education, a part of the structure created under the previous Department of Education reorganization. The Region was comprised of several school districts in two different boroughs of the city. The main administrator having contact within this community of practice I shall call the Region Supervisor*. Two other Region staff members are highly involved in the community in a more hands-on fashion, attending all professional development days with the teachers. I shall refer to these as DOE Liaison Bill* and DOE Liaison Tom*. Though the New York City Department of Education has once again reorganized out of the Region system, the Region Supervisor and his colleagues continue as members of the community of practice with the other case study partners as representatives at the Community School District level.

2) The University-Based History Center

Founded in 1981 and active in professional development for New York City public schools, this is a university-based history research center whose mission is largely focused on social history and which is dedicated to making history resources accessible to teachers and the public. They have no gallery or collection of their own, but work closely with the university library archive, have a team of historians on staff, access to the network of history faculty of several universities and consider their work "grounded in their wide array of multimedia history materials" (TAH Grant Proposal, p. 20). The

* All names have been changed and titles modified

representatives to the community from this organization include Helen*, the Program Director, Ann,* the Program Coordinator and Steve*, a retired teacher hired specifically to mentor teachers participating in the professional development experiences.

3) The Art Museum

According to information available in their own publications and marketing materials, this is one of the largest museums in New York State housing an estimated 1.5 million art objects and artifacts from around the world and across many eras. This institution has offered support to local teachers and students since the late 19th century. There is a large staff involved in this partnership but I chose to focus on Michelle*, the Education Manager, as her participation has been most consistent over time though Shelley* is also referenced as her name appears in several documents and communications.

4) The Media Museum

This is an institution dedicated to the preservation and presentation of broadcast media, including television and radio programs as well as advertisements created for television and radio. Their collection houses an enormous archive of recordings for radio and television "selected for their artistic, cultural and historical significance" (TAH Grant Proposal, 2004, p. 23) and the education staff at this institution has a long history of tying their museum-based education programs to the public school Social Studies Curriculum.

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* All names have been changed and titles modified

Suzanne*, the Museum Educator is the primary contact for this community being researched.

5) This Historical Society

This is a New York City Borough-focused historical society founded in the 19th century with an eclectic collection of artifacts, oral histories, maps, art, images and a large research library. The institution has served teachers and students through the publication of neighborhood guides, educational programs and materials and by providing access to a database containing 33,000 images from its digital collection (TAH Grant Proposal, 2004, p.22). The institution has been through several staff and other changes (physical plant, and fiscal) since the beginning of the grant being used as a case study, but Vice President Kiera* and Education Director Donna* have consistently been involved in the community of practice that has developed.

Also included in this research due to his key role in the project from nearly the beginning is the Evaluator. Though not considered a "partner" in the sense that he does not represent a larger institution officially involved in this project, he definitely can be considered a full participant within the collaborative community.

* All names have been changed and titles modified

*The Researcher's Role: Situating Myself*

As a former employee of one of the partner institutions and a former Chair of a professional organization that serves professionals who work in cultural institutions, I have an insider status that allowed me a certain level of access to this community of practice that an outsider would, perhaps, have trouble achieving. Potential drawbacks to insider status are, of course, also present. I have met all and, in some cases, have worked with, the people involved, which may have meant that participants were more open with me during interviews, or conversely, it could mean that they were a little more guarded, particularly if they wanted to criticize someone else. However, as all understanding and interaction is imbedded in context, I see it as an advantage that I came to the research with a "pre-understanding" (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007) of some of the dynamics, discourse and institutional world views of the community members.

Inevitably, as researchers we choose to examine areas that resonate with our own experiences and examine questions that we find compelling. As the product of a large, urban public school system and schools within a blue-collar area during a decade when fiscal crisis caused school budgets to be drastically cut, I came to be thankful to the cultural institutions that provided free programs and experiences to the schools which opened up windows into whole new ways of seeing the world for students. Cultural institutions became an integral part of my life. When studying for my Masters in Education I focused on the pedagogy of non-classroom settings and I have spent more than a decade working within their education departments. As a researcher I knew how important it was to be aware that all of this experience – along with the feelings, biases, assumptions and viewpoints on the educational role of cultural institutions as well as my

personal relationships with some of the people involved – were inevitably going to be present as I reviewed, coded and analyzed the collected data. Indeed, this research will contribute to my own growth within the profession as an educator, a partner and a member of communities of practice dedicated to teacher professional development.

*Research Questions*

In *The Craft of Inquiry* (1998), Robert Alford writes, "Deciding on questions is a rolling process of raising a series of them, discarding some, reformulating others, and then thinking about their theoretical implications" (p.27). The research began with the hypothesis that it would be possible to trace evidence of negotiations toward the development of a successful culture of collaboration and the development of a community of practice between the partner institutions which included a shared understanding of quality teaching, a shared vision for history teaching and learning and shared goals for working together.

The initial over arching questions were:

- What makes a partnership collaborative?
- How does a collaborative partnership evolve into a community of practice?

Building on the understandings of collaborative partnership put forth in the literature, and framing the research with the concept of communities of practice, the conceptual questions framing this study came to be:

1. How is a multi-organizational community of practice created and enacted?

2. How does a multi-organizational community of practice sustain itself over time?

The literature provided key themes for examining collaboration that assisted in the selection, organization and analysis of data. These themes were:

- The negotiation and adoption of a shared vision and agreed upon goals and objectives
- A clear understanding of roles and responsibilities within the group
- The sharing and shifting of power
- The evolution of individual and institutional relationships
- The maintenance of clear communication
- The development of a shared culture as evidenced by practices, artifacts and shared understandings

The themes let to the development of the following questions:

1. How did participants from these differing institutions work to create a shared vision for the partnership with shared goals and objectives?
2. How did participants from these differing institutions share administrative and conceptual responsibilities?
3. How did participants from these differing institutions learn to communicate with each other?
4. What kinds of shared practices and understandings developed over the course of the partnership?
5. How did individuals from these institutions experience the partnership?

*Data Sources*

Chart A in the appendix outlines the specific data sources and artifacts collected in order to examine the questions above. Interviews with participants and field observations are added to the artifacts discussed previously. Each type of data has its advantages and disadvantages (Cresswell, 2003, p. 186), but by looking for patterns and themes that emerge from a variety of sources the validity of the research findings are strengthened. For the observations my role was that of "observer as participant." Merriam (1998) describes this approach to observation as being when "the researcher's activities are known to the group; participation in the group is definitely secondary to the role of information gatherer" (p. 101). My reason for attending the meetings and retreats was known to all those who were present, and as I was also known to many of them, at times I would be brought into a discussion or asked a question, therefore participating in the group.

*Analyzing the Data*

The themes derived from the literature led to analyzing the data for evidence of shared culture, the development of shared vision, power dynamics, the understanding of roles and responsibilities, relationships within the group and communication. In looking at the process of creating a community of practice, the development of a shared culture emerges from the literature as a key element and encompasses many of the other themes discussed. This idea of a shared culture encompasses a shared vision and aligned goals as well as identity and power relations that I believed would be reflected in the artifacts and

interviews collected from the partners. Unfortunately, it was not possible to go back in time and observe the interactions between individuals as the partnership came into being and developed. The research needed to rely on document analysis and interviews to identify and follow the development of this new culture and the new relationships, power relations and the development of a shared vision over time. However, the inclusion of a variety of different documents as well as the inclusion of voices from all of the partnering institutions allows for a rich picture of the process to emerge.

*Examining Communication and Practice*

Discourse and practices are nested within ideological frameworks, so their analysis provides clues to the ideologies of the partners as individuals, of the individual institutions and of the growth of shared ideologies within the culture of the community of practice. From my pre-understanding of some of the issues involved in collaborating within the field of history education and teacher development, I knew that the discourse between partners and how communication evolved as they became a community could provide me with clues to the collaboration process. Just the heated discussions in the field around the use of the terms "history" or "social studies" could provide enough material for an entire book. Using one or another term can signal a set of assumptions about quality education held by the user. I hypothesized that many of the themes highlighted by the literature of organizational and operational research and Wenger's communities of practice concept would be manifest in the discourse between partners. I am referring to 'discourse' as in the idea of "language-in-use" described as discourse with a small "d", or language, either written or verbal, that is mixed with "non-language stuff" which

becomes Discourse with a capital "D" ( Gee, 1999/2005 p. 7). Though observations of interactions during group meetings allowed examination of non-language interactions, much of the data collected consisted of documents and therefore was language-in-use, or *d*iscourse. As the intent was to examine the process of creating a community of practice, Gee's idea of "building things through language" seemed to support the previously discussed importance of communication (Huxham 1993) to the development of a successful collaboration and Wenger's inclusion of shared words, symbols, stories, naming, encoding and describing as elements present in a community of practice. Gee writes, "We actively use spoken and written language to create or build the world of activities (*e.g.* committee meetings) identities (*e.g.* committee chairs, members, facilitators, and obstructionists) and institutions (committees) around us" (p.10). Because the partners in the case study collaboration come out of different traditions of pedagogy and history education, it was possible that there would be evidence of shared discourse or intertextuality as the partnership grew, with the employment of one another's "texts" in both the written and spoken language as well as the development of new terms and shared naming. To examine the "non-language stuff" that makes up *D*iscourse, provide an opportunity to see elements of culture in practice and give context and richness to the document analysis, observations of selected planning meetings and teacher retreats were undertaken.

Though it was not possible to directly observe every workshop, teacher institute or meeting that the partners developed and implemented, I hypothesized that evidence of the evolution in practices as their shared vision evolved would be available in the workshop outlines and planning documents for the professional development experiences

and in the minutes from the planning meetings. For example, it would be possible to see if there were adjustments made in the professional development sessions in response to what was recorded in the evaluations held after each experience, during which the partners reviewed what they felt succeeded and what should be adjusted.

*Looking for Patterns*

After coding the data, I began the "pattern level of analysis" (LeCompte & Schensul (1999) of all data sources, examining the evolution of creating a shared vision for the collaboration with agreed upon goals and outcomes related to history content, and history pedagogy as well as evidence of the development of a new collaborative culture including the evolution of relationships, communication, roles and responsibilities and power dynamics. As patterns emerged so did new questions, taking me back to the data and to the participants for clarification in a cyclical process.

*Validity/Authenticity*

It is important to remember that whatever research methods are employed in any given situation, it is not ever possible to represent the absolute truth. Even the information received from individuals within the situation being studied "has less to do with how they, or reality, really are (or how they perceive a reality out there); rather, it is about the way they temporarily develop a form of subjectivity, and how they represent reality in relation to the local discursive context created by the interview" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000, p.193). As Huxham (2003) points out, there is also the issue of common knowledge versus common practice – what people think is happening as opposed to what

really is happening. In this research I employed strategies for increasing internal validity that are recommended in the literature on qualitative research (see Merriam, 1998). By utilizing a variety of data sources in this research, the internal validity of the findings was increased through triangulation. I have consulted with my colleagues and advisors as my findings emerge. By "member checking" – sharing my findings with the participants periodically during the research process – I have received feedback that gives my constructs nuance and an increased validity. The member checking process also fulfills the "fairness" authenticity criterion put forth by Guba and Lincoln (1989) that call for the researcher to actively solicit and honor the stakeholders' constructions of meaning from the data. I am conscious at all times of the need to respect and incorporate the understandings of the participants while doing research and feel that the research can only benefit from their contributions.

# CHAPTER IV

## Cartography: Sketching the Map

> *In the second year of the grant my superintendent looked at me and said, "There's this grant. Could you apply for it?" I said, "What are you, nuts?"*
>
> The Region Supervisor, Interview, January 17, 2008

The journey undertaken by the partners in the case study collaboration started long before their official work together began. In order to receive funding for the project, the partners needed to begin negotiations and make decisions that would lay the groundwork for their later collaborative success. The elements that emerge from the literature as being essential to successful collaborations are already present in the proposal for funding made to the Federal Department of Education. Beginning with the narrative from the funding proposal, we can examine the journey toward successful collaboration as it was originally envisioned and articulated and then follow through to its evolution into a community of practice.

### *An Overview of the Project as Proposed*

In the Fall of 2004, the federal Department of Education awarded $980,782 to a division of the New York City Department of Education then known as a Region. Regions were made up of several Community School Districts with a consolidated

administration. (The New York City Department of Education has since returned to separate Community School Districts and disbanded the Regional divisions.) The money was part of the Teaching American History grant program and was earmarked to fund a three-year project entitled *Teaching American History: A Collaboration Among Teachers, Scholars and Museums*. According to the grant proposal narrative, the project was intended to focus on major themes in American history that would support the content of the New York State Core Curriculum for Social Studies. The themes were to be connected to chronological events and each theme would be covered for one year. For example, during the second year of the grant the theme would be "Becoming American" and the historical content explored would be: 1) The Three Worlds Meet; 2) The Colonies Become a Nation; 3) 19th Century Immigration; 4) The Melting Pot: Since the 1960's (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p.7). The historians and educators from the cultural institutions acting as partners on the project would supply materials and scholarship supporting the historical content.

The project was designed to serve 96 teachers in 40 school districts. Through the teachers, the project had the potential to impact on the instruction of 12,000 students. Teachers were to be recruited from grades 7, 8 and 11 as those are the grade levels in which the New York State Core Curriculum for Social Studies covers United States History. Twenty-two middle and high schools were identified as sources for teacher recruitment into the project. The goal for teacher recruitment was to find an equal distribution of sixteen middle school teachers and sixteen high school teachers for each cohort. In order to promote "school site support and leadership for the Project and its teachers" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p.1) the recruitment of eight

assistant principals was also planned for each year of the grant. As with the teachers, the goal was to have the assistant principals evenly split between those representing the middle schools and those representing the high schools.

*Before the Journey Begins: Goals and Objectives*

The literature centered on collaborations emphasizes the need for a shared vision or aim for the collaborative endeavor. When describing the development of communities of practice, Wenger also highlights a shared aim and the importance of an alignment of goals, "to direct energies to a common purpose" (1998, p.186). The partners involved in the case being researched had indeed developed clear goals for the collaboration as one of their initial steps in working together. The narrative of the grant application lays out the goals, objectives and activities of the project as initially envisioned. They are listed as follows:

Goal 1, Teacher content knowledge: Deepen teacher content knowledge & skills as historians

Objective 1.1: Provide direct professional development activities for 96 teachers and 12 Assistant Principals over three years

Objective 1.2: Improve teacher awareness of historical debates, issues of change and continuity, and impact of key individuals in major events studied in the program

Objective 1.3: Improve teacher ability to situate documents (visual/textual) in historical context, assess their reliability, and to integrate them into historical narratives and interpretations

Goal 2, Instruction: Apply new content knowledge and skills to improved instruction

Objective 2.1: In teams of five, produce units of instruction that: focus on issues debated by historians; employ "Regents-like" document-based lessons and essays; include pre/post assessments

Objective 2.2: Test new units in classroom during school year following institute

Objective 2.3: Assess student learning on classroom-tested units and use to improve the unit

Goal 3, Student Learning: Deepen student motivation, knowledge, skill & achievement

Objective 3.1: Increase student interest in U.S. History

Objective 3.2: Strengthen student grasp of content knowledge & analytical strategies promoted by the Project.

Objective 3.3: Produce higher achievement among Project students on state History & English exams, relative to matched comparison group.

Goal 4, sustainability: Make lasting district-wide impact on teaching/learning in U.S. history

Objective 4.1: Disseminate project materials to all teachers in district.

Objective 4.2: Use Project materials as basis for ongoing professional development in district.

Objective 4.3: Produce ongoing collaborations and professional affiliations.

(Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, pp. 5-7)

For each of these objectives, activities were listed that would foster their achievement and data sources were identified that would provide evidence that they were indeed achieved. For objective 4.3, "Produce ongoing collaborations and professional affiliations," for example, one of the activities listed is for the participants to go on field trips and participate in workshops with the cultural partners. The partners also planned to use grant funding to obtain educator memberships in the Organization of American Historians (an organization for professionals working in history and related fields) for all of the participating teachers and Assistant Principals (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, p.7).

Purchasing memberships for teachers into a professional organization for historians and history teachers is indicative of a wider vision for the project and is evidence of the partners' hopes that the project would expose the teachers to a wider community of support. One of Wenger's criteria for a community of practice is "sustained mutual relationships" (Wenger, 1998, p.125) and from this project's inception

there was the articulated goal of creating an extended professional community that would sustain itself after the initial project funding was finished. For example, it is stated in the proposal that, "The structure is designed not only to immerse teachers and supervisors in rigorous study of major events and themes with leading historians, but to engage them in a sustained and collaborative process of implementation" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p.2). Participation in the project would introduce the teachers to colleagues that spanned the world of universities and cultural institutions. By providing classroom teachers an opportunity to work with academics, public historians and museum education professionals over a sustained period of time and obtaining memberships for them in a professional history organization, the planners of the grant hoped to foster the teachers' self perceptions as professionals in the field of history education. As fellow professionals, comfortable with historians and the resources of cultural institutions, the teachers would then – it was hoped – "produce ongoing collaborations and professional affiliations" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p.7). These ongoing collaborations and affiliations would be manifested by the teachers continuing to participate in new professional development workshops, by teachers taking their students to visit the cultural institutions "for direct exposure to their rich collections of historical cultural materials" (p.15) and by teachers making use of the Organization of American Historian's professional and scholarly resources "after the period of grant funding" (p. 15).

Fostering a new identity among history and social studies teachers as professionals in their field who have access to resources for their teaching was essential. As an explanation of the need for such a project, the partners included in the project

proposal a description of "the declining level of experience and expertise among Region [X]* American History teachers" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p18). More to the point, surveys that the University-Based History Center had undertaken with New York City public school teachers had shown that the teachers themselves had recognized the problem. Teacher responses to these surveys had shown that they "feel they lack intellectually engaging resources," "feel isolated from fellow educators" and "feel isolated from the latest ideas in the field." It is further stated that, "Few of them [the teachers] have a strong sense of professional identity as historians and as history educators. They often do not know where or how to join professional discussions that could build their knowledge, skill and satisfaction as American history teachers" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, pp. 19-20). Through their collaboration the partners hoped to introduce the teachers into the wider community of historians and history educators and build their professional identities. This, more than simply providing exposure to historical content, was the shared vision for the collaboration that had been recognized by the partners from the beginning.

*Before the Journey Begins: Laying Out Roles and Responsibilities*

"Knowing what others know, what they can do and how they can contribute to the enterprise" (Wenger, 1998, p. 125) was another one of Wenger's criteria for the development of a community of practice. Clear roles and responsibilities were also deemed necessary elements of successful collaborations in the organizational research literature. As they developed the funding proposal it is evident that the partners were

* The Region # has been removed to protect the privacy of the participants

already defining roles and clarifying responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities of the partners would evolve and change over time and, indeed, some of the roles as initially defined or assumed were for the purposes of the initial proposal only.

An example of this "for the time being" designation of roles is the management structure as laid out for the purposes of the funding proposal. As Teaching American History grants can only be awarded to what the government refers to as Local Education Agencies (Schools, Districts or Departments of Education) the application for funding was officially considered to be written and submitted by staff of the New York City Department of Education Regional headquarters. The Region's Instructional Specialist for Social Studies (referred to in this work as the Region Supervisor) was named in the proposal for funding as the Project Director. His responsibilities to the project are described in the following fashion, "He will supervise the recruitment of participants, attend all meetings and events associated with the Project and facilitate and oversee all efforts to incorporate Project materials and approaches into AP [Assistant Principal] meetings, district-wide staff development days and school-based workshops" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, p. 26). A Project Coordinator position to be held by a Regional representative was described as someone who would be hired as a consultant to attend all teacher retreats and institutes, participate in meetings and serve as liaison with the partner institutions. A second Project Coordinator position representing the cultural partners was described, this time naming Helen from the History Center, whose job it would be to "plan and facilitate the retreats and summer institutes" and " oversee the budget and facilitate the relationship between Region [X], [the University-Based History Center] and the project's other partners" (p.27).

A Steering Committee made up of the Project Director, the Project Coordinator, Helen from the History Center, one participating Assistant Principal and one participating teacher was also described as part of the project's management (p. 28). Another element included as part of the management plan was a chart that listed various activities that would happen during the first year of the project along with which personnel would be responsible for each aspect of the activities. The Local Instructional Superintendent, the highest staff position in the New York City Department of Education Regional structure, was named as the over-all Project Supervisor whose job it would be to ensure dissemination of pedagogical approaches and curricula materials developed by the project to the rest of the Region's middle schools. We will see upon closer examination how these roles and responsibilities played out in the actual implementation of the project.

*A View of the Journey: Looking Closer*

Now that the description of the project has been laid out as initially conceived and articulated in the proposal, we can focus the lens in for a closer examination of how the collaborative journey actually progressed. First, it must be emphasized that the journey started long before the proposal document was written, when the idea for the project was developing and the partners were being chosen. The journey then played out in the reality of a changing New York City Department of Education and through the evolving relationships of the collaboration.

*In the Beginning: Choosing a Destination and Deciding Who Gets to Go On the Trip*

> *Say I am doing an ELL grant, who do I approach? OK I am going to approach Queens College because they have an ELL department and I am going to use somebody from there and I am going to approach LaGuardia because they have a reputation for doing great stuff with ELLs. I will put these two together. That's my pedagogy, they are going to translate this into activities. Then "Who do I need for experts?" Here it doesn't matter because I want an expert to give the teachers content knowledge, it doesn't have to be an expert in elementary education. It has to be an expert in that content topic. So I'll then approach the American Social History Project, The Brooklyn Museum, etc. Here's what I want. If they agree then you set out what the topics are going to be. Then the proposal goes in. Then if I get the grant I hit the ground running.*
>
> The Region Supervisor, Interview, January 17, 2008

As anyone can tell you, going on a long trip with someone can provide a whole new view of that person. This changed view can highlight positive aspects of your travel partner or negative ones. Educational and cultural organizations that attempt to partner during an extended grant such as those offered under the Teaching American History program are embarking on a three year journey together. Before applying for Federal funds, perspective partners have to consider the potential their institutions have for working together. Through the interviews with participants on this project it became clear that deciding who the traveling companions on this three year collaboration would be was the first step to their successful journey. Again and again the importance of wisely choosing partners was mentioned by the individuals representing the various institutions, reinforcing Huxham's (1993) finding that an agreement of who will be included in the partnership is one of the factors that needs to be present if a collaborative partnership is to succeed. This also supported Wenger's claim that there must be "substantial overlap in participants' description of who belongs in a community of practice" (1998, p. 125). In the quote from the Region Supervisor at the beginning of this section it is clear that he is

thinking of what skills and knowledge the partners will bring to the table that his colleagues at the Department of Education are not able supply. This is one way of choosing partners that will lead to successful, effective collaboration where the "sum of the whole is greater than its parts" (Schermerhorn, et al. 2008) or to the "powerfully productive symbiosis" that Goodlad (1994) describes. The process of choosing good partners in this case also highlighted the importance of building good relationships. The Region Supervisor went on to say that there were places he would never approach for a collaborative project, "Because city-wide they have a reputation of being hard to work with" (Interview, January 17, 2008).

Relationships can be seen as being built between both organizations and individuals. Relationships between collaborating individuals are found by Huxham and others who employ social theories of organization to examine partnerships (see Hausma, Becker & Brawer, 2005) to contribute greatly to the success of any collaboration. In the collaborative partnership examined for this research – indeed in any collaboration involving several organizations – it is not only a matter of finding suitable institutional partners that bring to the table assets which compliment each other but also *individuals* from those institutions that can become contributing members of the collaborative community. In contrast to the example given by the Region Supervisor, the evidence gathered from this case study indicated that individual personal relationships were in some cases the first link between potential institutional partners, with the institution and its assets coming along with the individual after pre-existing relationships had been utilized for contact. In this case, the pre-existing relationships between individuals from the partner institutions were through work-related activities such as other projects or

career-related activities such as being acquainted through professional organizations. The University-Based History Center, for example, had done a couple of one-day professional development programs organized by the Region Supervisor for teachers in his Region, so they were comfortable approaching the Regional administration with the idea for this project. They had also worked previously with the Art Museum. Steve, the retired teacher hired by the University-Based History Center had participated in their professional development programs while he was still active in the classroom and the staff had gotten to know him and respect his teaching. In one case, the relationship of the individuals representing two different institutions was that of an old friendship where they had been roommates early in their New York City lives.

Having respect for each other's programs and expertise was essential to keeping and further developing good relationships as the planning for the professional development experiences progressed. Suzanne from the Media Museum shared that she gets annoyed when working with a scholar or a Department of Education employee and the person doesn't seem to trust her expertise in the subject matter or her ability to write curriculum (she has an education degree and has worked at her institution for many years). With the partners on this project, however, she described the planning process as "really nice" and "fun" (Interview, February 6, 2008). All of the individuals interviewed for this research described enjoying the approach to planning and mentioned feeling that their expertise and strengths were honored in the process. The words "symbiotic" and "symbiosis" were used by three separate individuals from three different partner institutions to describe the process of collaborating around the development of the professional development experiences. It was clear that they enjoyed each other as

colleagues and as resources not only for this project but also their own work. As Donna from the Historical Society put it, "As professionals it is nice to connect with other cultural organizations and schools and to see what their approaches are …. If I disagree or they disagree we can have a discussion" (Interview, March 19, 2007). The professional give and take was seen as an asset to the collaboration.

With programs that focus on teacher professional development, relationships must also be built with the professional development participants, who can almost be thought of in a group as being another partner. These teachers, Assistant Principals and, to a certain extent, their Principals and schools will also be on this journey for several years. It is essential to create positive relationships and receive 'buy in' from all members being asked to participate. This need was emphasized by the Region Supervisor who has had extensive experience working with teachers and schools to develop professional development programs:

> In June I start emailing principals, "We got this grant, you have the honor of … you know." I give them all that and then I ask "Whose coming? Do you want to be part of it?" The Principal has to sign a commitment letter- that's important, because then I know, both of us know that she is committed to this and however many people they want to involve. Once the people are involved, Once the Principal has approved, once the teachers are selected – once the teachers approve, because I also want them to feel credible in this issue so they have to accept this offer. Then we start our meetings and by October I am all set – I am going (Interview, January 17, 2008).

The Region Supervisor also hired two retired long-term teachers turned administrators to function as the DOE Liaisons to the project, as he generally wouldn't be

able to be present. They served a second purpose as they were familiar with the everyday life and pressures of classroom teachers and school administrators and would help build relationships with the participants. At specific times, they deliberately aligned themselves with the teachers and Assistant Principals though their behavior in order to build trust. In the professional development retreats observed for this research, for example, DOE Liaisons Bill and Tom participated in the diagnostic activity used to evaluate teacher understanding at the beginning of each section – answering the questions along with the participants. The University-Based History Center also hired a retired teacher, Steve, to assist in building relationships with the participating teachers who often see "experts" as being completely out of touch with the reality of the classroom. Helen described Steve's hiring as "an inoculation" against the tendency of teachers to mistrust outside experts (Interview, January, 23, 2008). Patterson et al. (1999) cite several examinations of school-university partnerships that found cultivating trust in the relationships among partners in a collaboration was a key element for success.

As the project examined for this case study progressed, good relationships and trust developed among all of the partners and participants. This was exemplified during a professional development retreat held in the third year of the project. The teachers were asked if they ever actually had time to teach Vietnam. In spite of the fact that they were with "experts" and representatives of the New York City Department of Education as well as, in some cases, an administrator from their school, several teachers admitted they rush through teaching it in a couple of days at the end of the year and several more confessed that they never managed to get there. Laughing, Steve stood up and said, "The nice thing about working with teachers for three years is the level of honesty when we

ask questions like, 'Do you teach Vietnam? Do you get to it?'" (Field Observation, April 16, 2007).

*The Journey Unfolds: Roles and Responsibilities*

As is apparent from the proposal submitted to the Federal Department of Education in order to receive funding for this collaboration, thorough planning around goals, partners and assessments must be done before the proposal is even written. However, these evolve over time as the concept of the collaborative partnership becomes a collaborative partnership in practice. The roles and responsibilities of various key personnel also morphed and changed over time as the planned project went into practice. Throughout the journey there also remain occasional differences between how the roles were articulated and how they played out on the ground. Looking at the language taken from the interview on January 17, 2008 with the Region Supervisor, he continually uses the words "I" and "my." Here are some examples:

> "Here's how you dive right in. You decide who your audience is. 'I want 3rd graders.' Then 'How do I get the grant?' I go out and get the statistics…"

> "My evaluators I don't perceive as evaluators, I perceive them as partners in writing and implementing the grant."

He takes his sense of ownership to the extent of saying "my evaluators" rather than "the evaluators we work with." If one were to read only his version of the origins of the project one would get the impression that he was the lone driving force behind its

conception and development. This impression would be further strengthened by the fact that he is named as the Project Director and due to the submission protocol for this grant, the proposal for funding was submitted from his Region office. In reality, it was Helen from the University-Based History Center who made the initial approach to the Regional Administration with an idea for this project (an event The Region Supervisor confirmed when questioned further). In the same vein, though he is named as the Project Director it was others who took on much of the coordination and planning – indeed the direction of the project – once the grant was approved. The probable cause for this redistribution of responsibilities was that the Region Supervisor was also named as Project Director for several other large projects and the reality was that his time and attention must be split between them. There was no way he could logistically "attend all meetings and events associated with the Project" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p.26) or handle all of the other responsibilities outlined in the proposal. His main areas of responsibility for the project became teacher recruitment and budget administration. He trusted his partners' ability to make decisions and reach the goals and objectives of the program. Another example of the difference between the roles outlined on paper and the reality of their implementation is that the Local Instructional Superintendent was named in the grant as the Project Supervisor. His responsibilities for the Region were too large to permit any real interaction with the project and then his position was eliminated when the NYC Department of Education re-organized. In reality, he had little to no involvement in the collaboration.

This difference between the articulation of roles and responsibilities in the paperwork or even, at times, in verbal communications and the actual practices engaged

in by the individuals is not unusual to find when researching how organizations function. There is often a difference between what people *think* is the case or what it appears to be on the surface (what Huxham refers to as "common wisdom") and what actually *is* the case -or "common practice" (Huxham, 2003). Upon examination one can see that as the project progressed it was Helen from the University-Based History Center – who was originally named in the proposal as one of the Project Coordinators (she was later renamed Program Director) – and then Ann (who came on board from the University-Based History Center after the grant was underway and was awarded with the title Program Coordinator) who took on most of the planning and coordination duties that influenced the direction of the project.

The delegation and evolution of roles and responsibilities needs to go on at a micro level as well as at the macro level if a collaborative partnership is to proceed smoothly. There is a folk wisdom about good marriages breaking up over the cap being left off the toothpaste and this same principle can be applied to a collaborative community in development. Just as it is the little things done badly that can erode a marital relationship, a lack of attention to details can derail a collaborative partnership. In their interviews, several of the individuals participating in the collaboration being researched here mentioned other experiences with collaboration that didn't go well. Some of the problems mentioned were seemingly trivial things like arguing over which institution picks up the tab (and does the labor) for copying handouts, or ordering lunch. In contrast, the participants in this collaboration thought through the details from the beginning and continued to address the small but crucial elements of making each event or meeting go smoothly. There was also an understanding that flexibility would be

needed as years would pass between the conception of the project and its completion. Email correspondence between staff of the Art Museum, Ann and the Region Supervisor, for example, showed them working out how to allocate more money to the Art Museum than was originally allotted as "catering and programming expenses have risen" but that the Museum would continue to waive security and parking fees (Shelley, email communication, May 24, 2006). One of the best examples of attention to detail was the creation of what came to be called "leaders' notes" – a blow-by-blow breakdown of the professional development days that outlined the responsibilities of each partner during the day. These were then distributed to each partner so there would be no confusion whatsoever about the flow of the day and the individual's role in it. What follows is an example from an early teacher professional development day from the first year of the project. The overarching theme was "Democracy" and the first content topic was the American Revolution. In the left column are the agenda items for the morning that the teachers received (Agenda, November, 2, 2004). In the right column are the comparable leaders' notes given out to the individuals representing the partner institutions[*] (Leaders' Notes, November 2, 2004). (It should also be noted that the partners' day started earlier than that of the participating teachers, indicating an understanding that they should all be there, set up and ready to greet the teachers.)

[*] All names have been changed and titles modified

| American Revolution Retreat Agenda | American Revolution Retreat: Leaders' Notes |
|---|---|
| **8:30 am Coffee**<br>**8:45 am Welcome and Agenda Review**<br>**9:00 am Brief Evaluation Exercise**<br>**9:30 am American Identities Tour**<br>**10:30 am Break**<br>**10: 40 am Lecture: How Revolutionary was the Revolution?**<br><br>**11:30 am Discussion** | **8:00 am Coffee**<br>Ann manage sign-ins, hand out<br>WBA vol. 1. Cato document, Charleston document<br><br>**8:45 am Welcome and Agenda Review**<br>Helen introduce historian, mention others coming later, introduce Michelle<br>Review agenda, rationale for the day re: using art and artifacts, AR and slavery; explain Cato and Charleston documents<br>Submit parking receipts to APs for reimbursement<br>Leave notebooks in conference room<br>Introduce Evaluator<br>Ann, Michelle and Steve distribute boards and pencils<br>ALL travel to American Identities gallery<br><br>**9:00 am Evaluation Exercise**<br>Evaluator and Steve administer concept maps, analysis of Elijah Boardman painting. Ann help distribute and collect papers<br><br>**9:30 am American Identities Tour**<br>Michelle leads a brief tour of American Identities exhibits, includes a close reading of the Deborah Hall and Dona Moriana Belsunse y Salasar portraits.<br><br>**10:30 am Break**<br>ALL travel back to 6th floor conference room<br>Leave chairs and boards in gallery<br><br>**10:40 am Lecture:** How Revolutionary was the Revolution?<br>At the end of the talk, Steve instructs teachers re: taking a few minutes to collect their thoughts and develop questions<br><br>**11:30 am Discussion** |

**Figure 3: Leaders Notes**

The clarity of individual roles and responsibilities that had developed within the group is an important element of the partners' success in growing the collaboration. From interviews it appears that each individual working within this collaborative community was clear in his or her understanding of the individual roles and responsibilities on both the micro and macro levels and how these roles and responsibilities shifted with the growth of the community. On the "big picture", conceptual side, "Each organization seemed to bring its expertise to the table rather than scrabble around trying to prepare something which isn't what you really do," stated Kiera from The Historical Society (Interview, January 22, 2008), "Together we'd create some stellar programs." On the logistical side, elements like the leaders notes and the pre-planning of copying and catering costs into the budgets ensured that no detail was overlooked and no partner felt as if they were taking on an undue financial or administrative burden. Clear roles and responsibilities also cut down on the communication clutter that can accumulate when colleagues are not sure about who to go to with a question or request. Lamenting a problem she has encountered on other projects involving multiple partners, Donna stated, "In other grants I am one of ten people included on this email and I'm not clear what the question is or if I need to respond" (Interview, March 19, 2008). In this case, however, roles and responsibilities were so clear that this was avoided.

External forces sometimes impacted on the individual roles within the collaborative partnership. With the reorganization of the New York City Department of Education back into Community School Districts instead of the larger Regions, a redistribution of responsibilities within the Department effected how the individuals representing the Department engaged with the collaborative community. Fiscal

management of the project, for example, which originally had been handled by support staff at the New York City Department of Education Regional Office, was now the direct responsibility of the Region Supervisor and the DOE Liaisons for the project. DOE Liaison Bill described it this way, "Now we have to do it all ourselves. It is really difficult because we are not trained in that …. I personally don't like it. I want to be an educator not a bookkeeper" (Interview, January 17, 2008) and the Regional Supervisor (Interview, January 17, 2007) stated, "DOE pressure is beyond irrational." Having to take on these duties left these partners with even less time to contribute to planning and programming around the pedagogical goals of the professional development.

*On the Road: Power Sharing*

Discussion of the assigning of roles and responsibilities inevitably leads one to the concept of power sharing and how it works in a collaborative partnership. When discussing "power" as it plays out among a collaborative partnership, the word itself can be misleading as it often resonates as existing in a hierarchical or even oppressive structure. It may be better, in this case to think instead of authority, as "when social understanding and social consensus develops to accept, ratify and even prefer the distribution of power, then the power becomes legitimated and becomes authority" (Pfeiffer, 1981, p. 3). In a collaboration, all partners must be made to feel as if they have power to make change and contribute ideas but there are those with authority and management responsibility that exercise more power with the consensus of the group. Power, however can still exist among partners without any authority at all. As Huxham (2003) points out, each partner at the very least has "the power of exit" (p. 407). She goes

on to describe the less obvious ways that power is enacted in the practice of collaboration as "points of power" and goes on to give examples such as the naming of the collaboration, the decision about who gets to join, the chairing of meetings, the choosing of the location for meetings, etc. (p. 407). Around these seemingly small decisions the power balance shifts throughout the collaborative journey. On the more macro level, authority may shift as well. For example, in this case, Ann from the University-Based History Center organized planning meetings and created the finalized agendas for the professional development retreats and the leaders' notes. These were the blueprints followed for each interaction with the teachers and Assistant Principals who participated in the project, therefore she held significant power over the professional development retreat days. Different partners in a collaboration may take on more authority at different times. Indeed, the "common practice" of power shifts during the life of any collaboration. As Huxham points out, "In a pre-start up phase those who get to write bids for funding may be powerful … once money is available, those who are appointed to administer the collaboration may be highly powerful in determining quite a lot of parameters concerned with direction and ways of working" (p. 407). In this case, professional development retreats held on site at one of the partner institutions meant that the individual representing that institution had more power and authority over decisions effecting the events of the day than other partners would; or as deadlines for reports to the Federal Department of Education neared, power and authority over how the project was presented shifted to the Region Supervisor and the Evaluator who put together and submitted the report.

Sometimes giving the illusion of shared power or even the illusion of complete power is enough to promote the positive feelings between partners that can lead to the extended collaborative communities. Though it was staff from the University-Based History Center who clearly emerged as the individuals taking on the lion's share of the planning and implementation of the project and the individuals from the various partner institutions were very clear about the level of their involvement in relation to them, all documents generated by the University-Based History Center describing the project emphasize the contributions of the other partners. In an interview, however, while still giving credit to the other partners, Ann was clear that she understood that she and her institution had emerged as leaders in the collaboration, stating:

> In this particular grant we've taken the lead in coordinating the professional development events. And by that I mean we plan the content for the day, we choose the staff for the day, we choose the materials for the day and we implement that plan. In terms of bringing the teachers to the event, to the professional development experience, our partners play a big role in that, our DOE partners. They are responsible for coordinating with principals to explain the release policy, to handle recruitment. So they a play a big role in finding the teachers and dealing with the school release issues. When we hold retreats at a partner's, a cultural partner's museum, the planning becomes more collaborative in that they are going to help plan some of the materials and activities and staffing. Broadly we're at the lead of that kind of planning but certainly on the days we are at the museum the planning becomes much more collaborative (Interview, November 21, 2007).

Additionally, though he was barely present during most of the events over the three years of the grant, the Region Supervisor is given due respect by all of the partners as being the Project Director by being named as such in all memos and copied on all

correspondence. From the quotes of his interview given throughout this section, it is easy to see that the Region Supervisor considers himself very much in a leadership position within this collaborative community. He speaks with ownership of the project, constantly emphasizing his individual work to get the project up and running. Possibly also contributing to the over-use of "I" in the Region Supervisor's description of the origins of this grant was the reorganization of the New York City Department of Education, which led to his retirement. At the time the interview took place, the Region Supervisor was kept on part-time as the Project Director for this project and the others he had already underway. Future, similar employment would rely on his being perceived as being indispensable and holding power and authority in the project. (The need to self-promote for self-preservation during times of upheaval in the New York City Department of Education has been observed by this researcher before.) Whatever the reason, he clearly enjoys the idea of the collaboration and is proud that it exists. As he is someone who has been in the system a long time, is dedicated to supporting these kinds of collaborations and who has had good relationships with the other individuals involved in the grant, they are happy to give him status and let him take credit for the collaboration's success with his supervisors. In addition, as was discussed earlier, the Region Supervisor did continue to hold power in his continued capacity as the administrator of the project's budget. It could be seen that this actually meant he held the ultimate power as it is often thought that the control of the purse strings dictates who has the authority but is clear that the Region Supervisor perceived the fact that he now was responsible for doing all of the paperwork himself – not just making sure it was done – as an oppression, lamenting, " I am trying to pay the grantees that I have and I am trying to do the contracts. I'm trying to

do this and trying to do that and getting nowhere. I don't know what they are doing downtown. It is a bureaucratic muddle, but that is my biggest difficulty" (Region Supervisor, Interview, January, 17, 2008).

*The Journey Unfolds: Developing a Shared Practice*

As outlined earlier, individual relationships served as powerful drivers of the collaboration. Moving from a mere collaboration on a finite project for a limited amount of time into a community of practice that would grow and sustain itself and its members over time, required the *individuals* representing the partner institutions to develop a shared practice. A "mutual engagement" (Wenger 1998) must emerge among the partners that is manifested by the trappings of a shared culture, the "routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions or concepts" that the partners adopt in their practice (p. 83). In the case being studied, the coming together to plan, develop and articulate a shared vision around the teaching of history and the training of history teachers led to the alignment of goals for the professional development days, new language in the description of the days themselves (for example, using the term teacher "retreats" rather than "professional development workshops") and the type of artifacts generated by the partnership such as the Leaders' Notes or the teacher-created work.

Using Wenger's concept of "reification" as being an understanding given form as a process engaged in by the community (1998, p.59) we can see, for example, that ongoing evaluation and reflexivity began as and became increasingly central practices to this collaborative community. Indeed, it can be seen as one of its defining characteristics. In order to make sure the professional development experiences offered to the teacher-

participants was going to be useful and have impact on classroom practice, evaluation was envisioned as integral to the project from the beginning. Though at first glance it could seem as if the evaluation described in the project proposal was of the typical "let us see if the test scores went up" sort, the narrative of the proposal for funding goes on to state that "the goals of the evaluation are two-fold: to provide a helpful check on whether the project is meeting its implementation and dissemination targets, and giving timely feedback to guide program improvements" (p.32). The dedication of the partners to an ongoing recursive evaluation process is evident in their inclusion of the Evaluator as a full collaborator. Unlike traditional evaluators who are named in the grant proposal and then come along at various points once implementation is under way in order to evaluate progress, in this case the Evaluator was part of the discussion from the beginning – before the project proposal was even submitted. From his early inclusion, it is clear that the partners intended to include formative evaluation from the start, allowing the professional development participants to have a voice. Including the teachers' voices showed the partners as having a willingness to adapt, rethink and change in relation to the feedback even though there had been a great deal of preplanning. Indeed, in the narrative of the application for funding it is stated that, "Teachers and administrators who are recruited for the Project will attend an after-school orientation session where they will fill out an application and survey designed in consultation with the evaluator…The application and survey will generate baseline data on knowledge and practices, facilitate the creation of a matched control group and provide formative feedback on the following project design" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p.2). An examination of the agendas for professional development retreat days showed that time was always allotted for a 30-

45 minute diagnostic activity and discussion led by the project's Evaluator. Diagnostic questionnaires administered by the Evaluator typically asked questions about the topic that was going to be covered by the scholar. These questions probed for facts about the topic, asked why it might be important to teach about the topic and asked about materials and strategies that might be used to teach the topic to students. Sometimes the diagnostic activity would be the creation of a concept map around one of the topics to be discussed in which the teachers were asked to show what information they felt was important about that topic and show the information in relationship to other information. At the end of each retreat day, time was left to collect participant feedback on the day's experiences. Feedback was collected on the effectiveness of the readings the teachers were given to prepare for the historian's lecture and the work of the day, reactions to the morning diagnostic exercises and specific questions about the historian lectures and/or learning experiences. Together, partners would review the information gathered by the Evaluator. Information gleaned from these evaluations helped the partners shape the planning for the next professional development experiences. This reflective practice, agreed upon and engaged in by the whole collaborative community, guaranteed the project would continue to evolve and effectively meet the teachers' needs. Indeed, this practice confirmed the shared understanding that the teachers' voices were central to the success of the collaboration and that as a group the participating teachers and Assistant Principals served as another partner in the collaborative community. The historians changed their presentations in response to the teacher feedback, incorporating more images and primary sources and modeling their use for the teachers. Michelle, the Education Manager for the Art Museum described the evolution of one historian, "The difference between the first

lecture I saw him give and the last lecture I heard him give – his use of objects as a skeleton for the kind of historical inquiry he was promoting…the power of the images he selected to underline his points were as effective as I would have expected from someone in my field" (Interview February 1, 2008). This historian's delivery had evolved based on the feedback of teachers who wanted to see more of the sources used for the historian's work and from the collaboration with the cultural partners whose pedagogy centers on teaching through the objects in their collections. Finally, the partners also hoped that the tools employed by the Evaluator would model approaches to evaluation, reflection and assessment for the teachers to employ in their own classrooms. "Evaluation can measure the success of the program in achieving its goals, but can also teach teachers about evaluation" (Helen, Interview, January 23, 2008).

Examination of the evaluation questions shows an evolution of the goals and objectives for the outcomes of the professional development experiences. For example, in the first evaluation given at the end of a retreat day, the question evaluating the readings is, "How effective were the readings in preparing you for today's retreat? Do you think you could use these readings in your teaching?" (Teacher Feedback, November 2, 2004). By the second semester of year one, the question reads as, "Your assigned reading was 1877: The Grand Army of Starvation: a) What did you think of the pamphlet? b) Has the additional information you learned today changed your view of the reading?" (Teacher Feedback, February 4, 2005), and an example from year two reads, "How has your understanding of the early encounters between Native Americans and European settlers been changed or enriched by today's retreat?" (Retreat Reflection, October 3, 2005). These questions show the growth of the partners' interest and focus on the development

of historical thinking rather than just knowledge acquisition or classroom application. Other questions and exercises show that knowledge acquisition and classroom application were still important but the designing of questions to document how the teachers were taking new information and letting it effect and change previously held knowledge shows that the promotion of historical thinking and the development of historical understanding were moving to the fore. On one survey the teachers were asked to describe a moment when they felt their students were acting like historians (Field Observation, February 28, 2007). It can also be noted that the naming of the data gathering changed to make explicit the practice of reflection to the participants. On the early questionnaires, for example the title at the top of the page is "Teaching American History, Teacher Feedback." Later it changed to "Retreat Reflection." The emergence of the word "reflection" rather than "feedback" or even "evaluation" in this instance and in other artifacts can also be taken as an indication of "a shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world" (Wenger, 1998, p. 126). Through the naming of the practice the partners were clarifying their priorities.

Another practice that evolved among the collaborative partners was that of regular face-to face planning. Though finding time during the day was difficult for the partners from the smaller institutions, the Region Supervisor stated, that when they were asked to come, "90% of the time all the partners come" (Region Supervisor, Interview, January 17, 2008). Planning sessions could also take place with different configurations of partners as needed and outside scholars would be invited for discussions centered on the professional development days they would be involved in. Before and after each teacher professional development retreat held at a cultural partner's site, the individuals

representing the University-Based History Center would go to the site and meet with the partners there. This was an experience described in extremely positive terms by all of the individuals involved. Before the event, the topic for the day would have been previously decided and then together the partners would explore the resources of the institution and craft the professional development experience to support that topic. After the event they would meet and examine the teacher reflections and share their own thoughts so that they could improve their practice.

Field observations supported that these face-to-face meetings generated positive energy among the partners. At a planning meeting that was observed for this research, staff from the University-Based History Center, along with Steve (the retired teacher) and University faculty were present. The Evaluator was also invited to the meeting but had been unable to make it. At this meeting, it became clear that due to the system of communication that had been set up and will be more fully explained below, the attendees already had all the information to hand and had begun a virtual discussion around the planning. However, it was also clear that they enjoyed each other's company and the give and take that a face-to-face meeting had to offer. Though work was being done there was a lack of formality that indicated a high comfort level. At lunch they all sat and ate together in the University cafeteria. My field notes record "All body language is relaxed, no one is in a suit, there is a lot of laughter" (Field Observation, April 20th, 2007). This enjoyment of each other's company explains the continuation of the practice of meeting in person regularly, even though by the final year of the project the majority of the planning could have been handled via other means. Field observations in the final year of the project also recorded behaviors exemplifying the "rapid flow of information,"

"absence of introductory preambles," and "the very quick set-up of a problem being discussed" indicative of a community of practice (Wenger, 1998, pp.125-126).

*On the Road: Communication*

> *What working on this grant has shown me is the importance of communication, trust, having a shared set of goals, having a culture that you can understand. Again communication, that can't be stressed enough.*
>
> Ann, Interview, November 21, 2007

The practice of communication – the mechanics of it as well as overt and implicit discourse – was cited in nearly all of the literature as being essential to a successful collaboration. Communication is "in many ways the lifeblood of a healthy organization" and is much easier to define and elaborate on than it is to master in practice" (Hale, 1998). Simply sending memos and lists of directives is not communicating. Communication requires a back and fort of information, it means listening and encouraging participation from others.

Developing systems for communication in a multi-organizational partnership is challenging, as is the development of common understandings of terms and interactions. The jargon of the various types of institutions involved in the collaborative partnership being studied alone could cause confusion. The fact that the New York City Department of Education uses many acronyms for its positions and programs has resulted in those that work in cultural institutions joking that they "Speak DOE" if they know what the acronyms stand for. Cultural institutions also use their own shorthand for elements from their professional world such as AE (aesthetic education) and specialized terms such as

"visual literacy" or "teaching with objects." To further complicate the usual need to learn each other's terms and acronyms, the New York City Department of Education was for the second time in a relatively short period reorganizing itself. This entailed the creation of new positions, new ways of organizing boundaries and changes of administration titles. When confronted with new Department of Education terms such as LSO (Learning Support Organization), PSO (Partner Support Organization) and ESO (Empowerment Support Organization) one of the university faculty members involved in a professional development institute exclaimed, "I just got used to LIS and RIS!" At which point one of the partners explained that the LIS and RIS were no longer going to be used as titles and, "No one really knew what the LIS did anyway" (Field Observation, April 20, 2007).

The practical mechanics of communication among such a variety of partners also presented a challenge. As was discussed, the practice of face-to-face meetings was popular among the partners but could be difficult to achieve for those institutions with a smaller staff. With so many experiences to plan, reflections to be analyzed and dissected and details to be organized, the staff of the University-Based History Center decided to make use of new technology to foster both communication and organization. They used a web-based collaboration software as a tool to create a project tracking site, allowing the partners to log in and have discussions, post comments and documents, assign tasks (with due dates) and check off tasks when completed. All pertinent information for any of the professional development retreats or institutes was stored centrally on this site. It was the use of this software and the project tracking site that allowed the individuals observed in the meeting previously described to arrive prepared and up to date on the planning progress. Interestingly, the Region Supervisor and the DOE Liaisons were not trained on

this software and were not given access to it. Ann explained that, "It didn't seem worth the trouble of training them on the software. They communicate more easily by email so we just did that" (Ann, Interview, November 21, 2007).

In the same interview Ann also mentioned that she and Helen learned to use email more like the representatives of the New York City Department of Education did, saying, "Email is the dominant way we communicate yet how we email and how they email is different." The DOE had issued BlackBerry phones to all administrative staff including the DOE Liaisons and the Region Supervisor and the culture of the Department was such that nearly immediate responses were expected to any emailed inquiry or comment. This approach led to short, to-the-point communications fired off while attending a meeting, visiting a school or attending to other work related business. These missives were often comprised of bulleted lists or just one question at a time. The individuals at the cultural and university-based partner organizations had institutional cultures that valued well constructed, thoughtful emails containing thought processes and explanations that were generally composed during time allotted out of the day for email communication. These emails often contained several questions or points of information. Ann and Helen, for example, had been in the habit of using email to communicate a lot of information in a narrative form. These long emails when read on the small screen of the phone by someone trying to multi-task led to information being lost as the phone-recipient only scrolled down to the first questions, answered those and moved on to the next email. Ann explained that they realized it was better for the technology of the BlackBerry phone to forgo the narrative form and chop what would have been a long email up into small chunks easily read on a small screen and easily answered quickly on the fly. Ann's point

is borne out by the email record. Emails did get shorter and to the point, though the partners from the cultural institutions continued to include a salutation and a sign off such as “Best” or “Best regards” with a first name while those from the Region Supervisor and the DOE Liaisons had no salutations and just the automatic full name “signature” at the end.

Communication also happens through implicit means and the partners were conscious of the implicit messages of their actions. They decided to switch from using school settings for their professional development retreats, for example, because – though the schools were more easily accessible to the teachers they were working with – a school setting made it hard to set an adult, professional tone. The partners wanted the teachers to view themselves as scholars and historians and they discovered that the setting must help them feel that way. In response, the professional development retreats that were not held at the partner cultural institutions were moved to the University that housed the University-Based History Center. The partners also wanted to send the message to teachers that they should view themselves as full participants who had agency within the program. In addition to the formative use of their reflections described earlier, teachers were asked to contribute ideas for topics to be studied for the summer institutes and the most popular of these were chosen. Teachers also received materials pre-retreat that they were to review and be prepared to discuss and there were visits from the DOE Liaisons to their schools – communicating the message that this program was not something that was to be engaged in once a month but something that was to be reflected on and participated in on an ongoing basis.

*On the Road: The Evolution of a Shared Vision*

> *These things are really important and can be very difficult. It is one thing to recognize "OK it is important to do these things" but it is challenging sometimes to pull that off. I had moments when the way I was talking about history was very different than the way an administrator for the New York City Department of Ed was talking about history or a lesson…*
>
> Ann, Interview, November 21, 2007

Examining the artifacts generated by the collaborative partnership of this case study gives rise to a picture of a strong collaboration with shared goals and vision. This vision is evidenced in the types of shared practices that evolved such as the focus on reflection and evaluation and the approach to planning professional development experiences as well as in the use of language and the approaches to history teaching that were emphasized. As apparent from Ann's observation at the beginning of this section, here, as in other areas, there is some evidence of Huxham's finding of the difference there can be between the common wisdom and common practice of things. A good example is the understanding and usage of the word "history." As outlined in the funding proposal this project is to support "history" teaching and the word "history" not the phrase "social studies" is used consistently with the exception of stating that the project "supports the New York State core curriculum in social studies to which Region [X] teachers must adhere" (Teaching American History Grant Proposal, 2004, p.7). The professional organization named as the one chosen to expose the participating teachers and Assistant Principals to is the Organization of American Historians, not the National Council of Social Studies. This may seem to imply that all of the partners adhere to the history side of the history/social studies argument discussed in chapter II. In reality

though, the funding being offered was a Teaching American *History* grant, and though care was taken in the proposal (and subsequent reports) to use the word "history" it can not be taken as proof of an ideological stance as much as a pragmatic one. The New York City Department of Education models itself on the New York State Department of Education which adheres to the social studies model – using social studies standards and calling its core curriculum the core curriculum for *social studies*. At the time the proposal for funding was written, the City Department of Education had an Office of *Social Studies* and went on to develop a *Social Studies* Scope and Sequence for grades K-8. It is only at the High School level that the courses begin to be referred to as history courses and the teachers are identified as history teachers (i.e., Global History teacher or U.S. History teacher) as opposed to the elementary and middle school Social Studies teachers. There is some evidence, however, that there was a general acceptance among the partners that history was central to the project and, indeed, central to social studies instruction. That does not mean that everyone was on the same page about which approach to history was the best to model for the participants, or indeed, what lens history should be interpreted through. Though the original plan behind the Teaching American History grants, for example, was to promote "traditional U.S. history" (US Dept of Education, 2001), the University-Based History Center has a distinct focus on social history. Their approach to history was "Exactly not what they were looking for …but we tried to state the content in such a way it could be construed as traditional history," said Helen, "For example, we would not say the 1877 railway strike was the topic, we would say 'The Gilded Age' and then in there we'd teach the 1877 railway strike" (Interview, January 23, 2008).

What all of the partners did agree on was the need for teachers to view themselves as part of a larger professional community. They also agreed that the teachers needed be able to have historical understanding and to assess for themselves what it would be important for their students to understand. As Donna stated, "We all want to teach New York City History. We all want to make sure teachers are equipped to work with their students well with primary sources and talk about the problems and the natures of U.S. history" (Interview, March 19th, 2007). Even DOE Liaison Bill, who believed there was some disconnect between the professional development offerings and the needs of the classroom, shared:

> The teacher is still pretty free to be creative. The problem is you need to know the content first of all. To know what it is to use the past to instruct in the present. What is it about those events of the past that is worth looking at? Let's take the Civil War. You know history to some extent is a funeral science- everybody is dead. Why look at these dead people? There has got to be a reason. I used to ask teachers that. You decided as a teacher to spend 45 minutes on this - why as opposed to something else? 'It's in the curriculum' Well so are a lot of other things. Tell me why kids should know this particular thing (Interview, January 17, 2008).

The partners also agreed upon the need for the teachers to be able to "do" history – to identify, analyze and interpret the raw material of the historian. Indeed, according to the New York State Core Curriculum for Social Studies, these skills are listed as being skills the *students* should acquire and to a certain extent they are assessed on the state assessments through document based questions and essays. The partners were mindful of the need to support the goals of the Regents and the 8th grade social studies exams. They

included questions based on the Regents exams as part of their diagnostic and evaluative process because the questions also fit with the goal of promoting the skills and understandings of historians. In a personal communication (March 3, 2009) The Evaluator explained, "The idea was that since the high stakes US history tests in NY – both 8th grade and Regents – have a significant document-based component, we could work with teachers around these skills, weave them into teaching, and perhaps – perhaps – see improvement on student assessments that focus on the document-based portions taken from past exams."

The one "partner" that came into the project, if not skeptical, but less excited about the focus on "doing history" or developing historical thinking, was the group of participants. The pressure of "coverage" – not just getting to Vietnam, but *beyond* by the end of the school year when one has started back at Columbus (a typical 11th grade pacing calendar) – was a major concern of the classroom teachers and having students take the time to examine letters written by a soldier rather than taking notes on the major battles of a war initially seemed like an indulgence they could not afford. Even DOE Liaison Bill sometimes thought that there needed to be a more basic approach to the history content, and that the historians from the University-Based History Center were in some ways having too much control over the retreats:

> I find that to be in some sense a weakness. For example, I am a history person, I am a retired teacher from High School, I have a Masters in history. I love listening to the scholars. OK. Whether or not a teacher who is teaching a survey in American history needs to listen to three hours of whether or not John Brown was insane or not, the value of that, I question. They need history 101. That's basically what they are doing in High School. The American history curriculum is a mile wide and an inch

> deep…While I might find the scholars very entertaining, very interesting, I'm not sure how much value in terms of the needs of the classroom, how valuable it is (Interview, January 17, 2008).

Bill also expressed concern about the thematic approach to organizing the content – connecting events around large concepts as opposed to a chronological approach. "They'll teach the Revolutionary War and the next unit will be Irish immigration. They do it thematically, following the concept of freedom for example. The more traditional teacher will sit there and say "What happened to the last 50 years of American history?" (DOE Liaison Bill, Interview, January 17, 2008). He quickly followed this up with the statement, "I love these guys, don't get me wrong." This was the only mention that there had been some dissent in the approach to history and history teaching taken over the course of the collaboration, but it was interesting to note that there had not been complete buy-in from all the individuals representing the partner institutions. It should also be noted that the interview with DOE Liaison Bill took place after the final year of the project, so his opinion had not been swayed with time.

Aware that it is hard for those who teach in classrooms to let go of the anxiety about coverage, the partners looked for ways to address the issue. The concern with helping teachers transform their teaching and transfer some of their new skills and knowledge to the classroom was evident in the project's design. Some projects funded by the Teaching American History grant program have been little more than lecture series for teachers without the inclusion of a discussion around classroom practice. In this case the partners felt "It was not very useful if you don't have a component to address classroom application" (Helen, Interview, January 23, 2008). By the end of the project, as

the collaborative community began to look forward to planning similar projects together, discussion minutes show that they wanted to go forward being even more explicit about the need to examine the process of historical thinking and the development of historical understandings as opposed to teaching just for content acquisition. However, they also acknowledged the need to reassure the classroom teachers. The discussion minutes record, "We should be explicit about the historical understandings we are trying to teach for each school year retreat" and " should offer anecdotal or demonstrable evidence that teaching for historical understanding will boost student test scores" (Staff/Coaches Debrief, 2007).

As noted in Chapter II, the discussion around history is intense and ongoing. Even the comments by DOE Liaison Bill illustrate the perceived divide between doing good history and history/social studies as it plays out in the K-12 classroom. Designing a professional development program that satisfied those who were concerned with a nuanced understanding of the past and the development of historical thinking and those concerned with the everyday needs and challenges of the classroom was not a simple task but the partners all shared the purpose of trying to do so. Wenger (1998) has pointed out that consensus is not necessary to a community of practice, but a shared purpose is. In this case, an agreed upon set of goals, if not complete consensus of philosophies, was achieved early and the rest was a continued process of negotiation and exchange of ideas. As the Region Supervisor stated, "Certainly with certain partners there are always going to be conflicts but we work it out" (Region Supervisor, Interview, January 17, 2008).

*Not to Be Forgotten: Journeys Take Time*

Planning a trip from New York to California by car and only allowing 2 days to get there would make no sense. Similarly, expecting several institutions to come together and create a collaborative partnership that can make lasting change or produce something of worth in a given area requires time. One of the prompts for this research was that in many scenarios of grant-funded projects such as this one, the grant is awarded with only a few months or even weeks to spare before implementation is to start. Collaborations will have a higher chance of being successful if they focus on the areas highlighted in this research. The success of the case study collaboration is partly to do with how much time was given over to identifying partners, planning and articulating clear goals, roles and responsibilities, etc. before the grant proposal was even submitted. This research also shows that the Teaching American History grants are a good model in that they support the collaboration over several years. This kind of time not only allows for the adjustments necessary to building a strong program as it moves from planning into practice, it also allows for bond of trust to build between participants which can lead to the creation of a sustainable community of practice that persists long after the initial funding is gone.

*Not to be Forgotten: Mutual Benefit for Individuals and Institutions*

There must be mutual benefit to any collaboration. Each partner brings something to the table, but also gains in some way through interaction in the collaborative community that is built. This is true for both the institutions and the individuals that represent them and in a non-corporate world it goes beyond what funds they receive for participating. For the institutions there can be the benefit of gaining status or good public

relations as well as new perspectives on how to work with their own resources. For the individual, there are the benefits of receiving feedback and support from colleagues.

Many of the individuals representing the cultural institutions mentioned the benefit of having contacts within the New York City Department of Education for outreach to teachers and principals. For an institution with a relatively small staff it is difficult to reach out to individual schools. Through a collaborative partnership like this one, teachers and school administrators who would never otherwise have visited an institution are exposed to the resources and get to know the individuals who work there, making it more likely that they will include them in other projects and suggest visits to their colleagues. Most importantly, the teachers then bring their students to take part in the educational programs. Suzanne from the Media Museum put it succinctly, "If you don't do teacher workshops you get no kids. It's the best PR for your program" (Interview, February 6, 2008). She went on to say that this partnership helped the teachers see the collection of her institution – television and radio programs and commercials – as historical texts that they can use to make their lessons more engaging and rich.

Benefits to the quality of the education programming offered by the cultural institutions were also brought up again and again. As Ann from the University-Based History Center stated:

> The cultural partners bring an entirely different set of assets and energies and a lot of it is just sort of an infusion of new staff, new ideas, new approaches, new resources. It is always really great to work with people who also work on the delivery end but at a different cultural institution, because we share a very similar planning and coordinating language and

> have similar objectives but our expertise is different. And it is just great to have new people and new resources to work into the day (Interview, November 21, 2007).

Seeing each other's resources and approaches to interpreting and teaching with them provided ideas and inspiration for rethinking their own approaches. Michelle from The Art Museum had recorded in the School Programs Event Report records kept by her institution how inspired she was by the way the historian approached the content at one of the professional development retreats. She wrote, "[The Historian] presented three perspectives on the West: the Imperial West, the Industrial West, and the Mythic West. His lecture was based largely on paintings and photographs. The structure was very provocative and we might want to consider how we could organize ideas in a tour this way" (School Programs Event Report, November 1st, 2005). Suzanne from The Media Museum stated that at her institution they taught "A really bad version of Civil Rights" until working with these partners on this collaboration pushed the Media Museum staff to research and find new sources for a stronger program. She also learned from her partners on the project not to be afraid of substituting more content driven questions for open ended questions and letting teachers generate their own questions about sources (Interview, February 6, 2008). Having the opportunity to receive in-depth teacher feedback and observe them as they worked with the materials of the institution was also cited as an important benefit of having a long-term collaboration and one that helped make education programming at the institutions stronger. This direct contact and communication with teachers as colleagues allowed the cultural partners to gain ideas of

how to adjust their programs and accessibility to their resources in ways that more adequately supported the needs of teachers.

Finally, it was apparent that the collaborative partnership allowed a type of programming to happen that would not have been possible for any one institution to achieve on its own. "You have to realize that these things can't happen on their own," stated Donna, "You can't saddle two people with the job of 10 people" (Interview, March 19, 2007). A rich, extended professional development program like this one required the imagination, knowledge and resources of all of the partners. Each partner supported the others as they worked to plan and implement the project.

The individuals in this case also described the benefit of growing within their profession, gaining new skill sets and contacts:

> It has been hugely valuable for my professional growth. Before I came here and started working on these programs I worked in an wholly academic institutions either in the role of graduate student working on her dissertation, a teaching assistant or planning my own course. The opportunities for this kind of collaborative work were much fewer. There were aspects of graduate study that had collaboration but it wasn't sustained towards the goal of implementing a project on a regular basis….you know I think it has been humbling in a good way …. When you are in collaborations you see your own strengths and weaknesses within that bureaucracy and at least for me it starts to become less some abstract beast that is easy to blame but real decisions and personalities and you're accountable in that system. You can say, "Wow if I'm not getting along with that person that is going to make this harder to do." Versus "If that goal is important to me than I have to be more assertive in this way." And so I just take work and collaboration more seriously and thoughtfully than I did at the outset (Ann, Interview, November 21, 2007).

Ann's description of learning to collaborate shows her growth in an area that was new to her. Other individuals, whose professional life had included more experience with collaboration both inside and outside of their institutions spoke more if their learning new pedagogical approaches, or different perspectives on history.

*A Bump in the Road*

Not all of the goals and objectives were met by this project. As described in the proposal for project funding, the teachers were to develop units of instruction and test them in the classroom during the school year following a summer professional development institute. Translating the experiences of the professional development back into the classroom proved problematic when approached through a "quick turnaround" rather than giving time for the teachers to digest and fold in new practices organically over time. Following the initial plan, teachers generated curricula based on the retreats. One of them would then volunteer to try out one of the teacher-created lessons in the classroom. Members of the collaborative team would observe the lesson and then conference with the teacher about how it went. This often had lack-luster results. "When I went into the classroom I was amazed at what the teachers took away, which in my opinion in many cases has nothing to do with what we had done and was vastly different from what I though they would do. They didn't understand some of it. They didn't know how to use the some of the documents because they really didn't understand at least weeks later what the documents were supposed to be showing" (DOE Liaison Bill, Interview, January 17, 2008).

The Evaluator had also noted that teachers often had difficulty working with the primary sources and had trouble getting students back on track when their inferences about a source had gone too wide of the mark. In this respect, the findings of these partners are supported by the findings of the evaluation of the Teaching American Grant programs undertaken by the United State Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development (2005). Discussing the findings from the examination of all of the grant funded projects given since 2001, the evaluation report stated, "While TAH teacher work products demonstrated teachers' knowledge of facts, they also revealed participants' limited ability to analyze and interpret historical data … Although the teacher work products reviewed ranged in quality, nearly all products earned low scores on historical analysis and interpretation" (p. XV). "We were asking them to run before they could walk," said Helen, "They weren't thinking about backward planning. They're not thinking about 'What do I want my students to know about the Lowell Mills?' They're thinking 'How do I get through the Lowell Mills in two days?'" (Interview, January 23, 2008).

The partners from the University-Based History Center expressed another possible reason for the lack of success in achieving the goal of classroom integration. This reason stemmed from a difference between the institutional cultures of the Department of Education and the cultural partners. As retired Assistant Principals, DOE Liaison Bill and DOE Liaison Tom, whose responsibility it was to observe the lessons being implemented in the classroom, could not conceive of going into a school without contacting the Principal and Assistant Principal and inviting them to join in the observation. This was simply good manners within that culture. However the teachers

were being asked to risk-take and try new things in the classroom, which is nerve wracking enough even without being officially observed. It had not occurred to the cultural partners that there would be anyone except one of the DOE Liaisons or another one of the partners present. "We're pushing them to try new things and suddenly there's six people in the back of the room" (Helen, Interview, January 23, 2008). The teachers became less willing to try lessons in light of this and the lessons became less reflective of the work of the collaborative partnership project.

The teacher-developed lessons were intended to act as an assessment of their skill development but the partners had begun to question the usefulness of having the teachers generate lesson plans in the traditional sense in light of the observations. They also felt that some teachers lesson plan almost by rote without really thinking about the specific components or reasoning behind it. Realizing this was an issue, the task was changed from creating units to creating focus questions for documents and identifying strategies for using them in the classroom. A good deal of time was set aside at the 2006 summer institute for the teachers to create their own resource packets – researching and choosing their own resources for use with their students and designing experiences around them. This eventually led to the development of a resource packet compiled by the Art Museum made up of the learning experiences the participating teachers had developed based on the pieces they selected from the Museum's collection. This packet – published for the use of other teachers in binder form and including images prepared for overhead projectors – was cited by the Art Museum's Education Manager Michelle as the thing she was most proud of. It served as not only a product of the collaborative project, but also as an assessment of the participating teachers' growth. "That particular packet, I am still so

proud of what was created….It is both a resource for other teachers but it is actually the ultimate evaluation tool. We got those teachers so excited that they did the work and fused these two worlds together in a way that is pedagogically sound" (Michelle, Interview, February1, 2008).

# CHAPTER V

## Developing the Key

> The community maintains schools for education. Attach the museums to the schools.
>
> John Cotton Dana, 1917

### *The Trip so Far: A Summary*

Before the implications of this research are discussed, it would be helpful to briefly re-visit all that has been discussed. The research questions emerged from several contexts that are nested into one another like a collection of Russian dolls. Concerns over the quality of teaching taking place in urban public schools have grown over the past few decades. This concern is inevitably tied to the quality of the pre and in-service training classroom teachers receive. Each of the many pathways to teacher certification attempts to build both subject matter competence and pedagogical competence in the teacher candidates who participate in their programs. Though there are deep divides over those who favor the traditional pathways to the accelerated pathways such as the New York City Teaching Fellows, the reality is that no one pathway can provide a candidate with all of the skills and knowledge needed throughout their teaching careers. That this is widely acknowledged is evidenced by the growth of professional development experiences offered to teachers and, in some cases, mandated professional development hours that teachers must fulfill after they have entered the classroom. Yet, in spite of the research

that shows extended professional development experiences that are aligned with school or district goals are the most successful, most of what the teachers receive is one-day, disconnected general packaged experiences. For teachers of history, this is particularly problematic, as many are coming in without a college level major or minor in history or related field (The Bradley Commission, 1988; Ravitch, 1997; Bell, 2005). Given that there is some evidence that there is a relation between teacher preparation and student performance on standardized tests (Barker, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2000) this could explain the lackluster performance of students on United States History assessments as tracked by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2006). Collaborations with history-rich cultural institutions for extended professional development and the creation of communities of practice between schools, cultural institutions and universities can provide classroom teachers with the support and resources they need to build confidence and competence in their history teaching.

The potential of cultural institutions to provide professional development support to pre and in-service teachers has been recognized for over a century. Partnerships between public schools and museums have been attempted with various levels of success since the 19th century. Goodlad (1994) and Paterson, et al. (1999) proposed the development of centers of pedagogy – collaborations between schools and universities – as a new structure for strengthening the quality of classroom education. Given the previous history of providing services to schools, it would seem logical to include history-rich cultural institutions as part of this vision or indeed as part of any teacher training and professional development program that was concerned with improving the quality of history teaching and learning. As Patterson and his fellow authors point out,

however, the "tradition bound cultures" of universities and schools pose many obstacles to collaboration. In addition, most cultural institutions have a very different organizational structure from schools or universities. Thinking beyond the usual practices of pre and in-service teacher training and professional development is therefore challenging. Creating communities of practice that include all of these potential partners for teacher support could greatly improve the quality of history teaching, for as Wenger writes, "Communities of practice that bridge institutional boundaries are often critical to getting things done in the context of – and sometimes in spite of – bureaucratic rigidities" (p. 119). That the collaborative partnership of the case study had evolved into a community of practice in spite of entrenched organizational cultures and bureaucracies is evidenced in many ways.

*Evidence of a Community of Practice*

> *My feeling is once I know a place, once I know I can trust them, them I go on with them.*
>
> Region Supervisor, Interview, January 17, 2008

> *A collaboration is just the start of what possibilities there are. You always have this community of people you can reach out to.*
>
> Donna, Interview, March 19, 2007

As is shown throughout the previous chapter, there is a great deal of evidence that a community of practice has grown out of this collaboration. Using Wenger's criteria (Wenger, 1998, pp.125-126) we can easily see the correspondence with a few examples.

Wenger states that there should be a "sustained mutual relationship, harmonious or conflictual." Even before the project being used as a case study for this research was completed, the partners had embarked on another collaborative project. Since then they have collaborated on several more. In addition to working together on several new projects they also feel that they have built individual relationships that they can call upon. As Donna put it "I can still reach out to [The University-Based History Center] to bounce ideas off of them, I can call any one of the teachers to say, 'We're trying to pilot this or we have this ad hoc committee for an upcoming exhibition, or could you give us feedback or could you send us student work" (Interview, March 19, 2007). Kiera echoed this feeling stating, "We're not only learning from the teachers but the administrators. It is great to be able to pick up the phone and call [the Region Supervisor] and ask, 'What do you think about this person? Should we do this?' He has become sort of a counselor for us" (Interview, January 22, 2008). In addition, the teachers who participated in this case have made use of their relationships with the cultural partners, bringing their students and reaching out to them for resources – showing that they too feel themselves as part of this on-going community of practice.

Members of a community of practice should have developed "shared ways of engaging in doing things together." The partners' practice of meetings, their use of reflection to improve their practice and their generation of shared artifacts such as leaders notes, agendas, flyers, etc. show a shared approach to getting things done. Communication between the members should show, "the rapid flow of information and propagation of innovation," an "absence of introductory preambles, as if conversations and interactions were merely the continuation of an ongoing process," and a "very quick

set up of a problem being discussed." These criteria are evidenced by the email exchanges examined and the conversations observed between the partners. The use of each other's jargon and the development of their own new terms such as "retreats" and "scholar talks" made interchanges that would require explanation to the outsider quick and clear to the participants within this community.

In a community of practice there should be, "substantial overlap in participants' descriptions of who belongs," a sense of "knowing what others know, what they can do, and how they can contribute to the enterprise" and "mutually defining identities**."** These elements have been made clear by the descriptions the partners gave of their own and each other's roles and responsibilities within this collaborative partnership as well as discussions of how they have continued and can continue to be part of a community of practice.

Wenger tells us that the members of a community of practice should have "the ability to assess the appropriateness of actions and products" and should develop and make use of "specific tools, representations and other artifacts." The practice of evaluation and reflection that began during the collaboration used as the case study has continued as central to their work together. The re-thinking of appropriate teacher "work products" generated from professional development experiences is one example of the community members' ability to assess their work together. Organizational tools such as the project management software and the leaders notes are still in use among the partners. They also had developed a logo or header that went on all of the artifacts of their partnership, giving them almost a "brand" identity as they wanted to be "recognizable as

a source of good classroom activities and primary sources" (Ann, personal communication, March 4, 2009).

Community members share "local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter." During observations the partners evidenced a shorthand for retelling stories, whether it be funny anecdotes about an event, or shared understandings of people they had been involved with. "Was that the right-wing group?" asked one partner, speaking of teachers not involved in the case being studied but who were participants in another collaborative project that had begun among the partners. Everyone in the room laughed knowingly and another partner added, "That last group was a tough sell" (Field Observation, April, 20, 2007).

Other markers Wenger attributes to a community of practice are "jargon and shortcuts to communication as well as the ease of producing new ones," "certain styles recognized as displaying membership" and " a shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world." These markers were evidenced in the partners' use of each other's discourse and in the development of the language the partners used to describe their own practices – such as the switch from "teacher feedback" to "reflection." Words used to describe elements of the partnership definitely reflected a perspective on the world. The decision to use the word "retreat" for example, instead of "workshop" or "seminar" was "in order to convey to participants that this would be a day away from the normal work routine, a time to be thoughtful about teaching and learning, and a place where they would be supported and respected as hard working educational professionals" (Ann, personal communication, March 4, 2009).

*Ensuring a Successful Journey*

Because the elements of a successful collaboration as outlined by organizational researchers such as Chris Huxham were planned for and nurtured by the partners in this case study from the beginning, the project evolved into a true collaborative partnership that naturally segued into a sustainable community of practice once the original funding source was used up. The elements needed for a successful collaboration are the development of a shared vision for the partnership with clear goals and objectives, shared power and resources, clear roles and responsibilities, good relationships, communication and the development of a shared culture. For a multi-organizational partnership to succeed, the negotiation of many of these elements must begin at the initiation of the planning phase. There must also be a perceived benefit for all of the partners to ensure "buy in" to the process of collaborating and adequate time to allow for good planning and growth of the collaboration.

If the organizations that can provide resources and support for the professional development for pre and in-service history teachers in an urban setting are to successfully enter into communities of practice with schools – and ideally the universities and colleges with teacher education programs – the challenges and solutions of multi-organizational collaborations needed to be mapped to ensure maximum success. The collaborative partnership identified as the case study did not include a college of education but had partners of a variety of institutional types. Based on evidence of continued collaboration, a shared discourse, stories and other criteria Wenger (1998) laid out as markers of communities of practice, this group had collaborated so successfully they had grown into such a community. This provided an opportunity to examine how a community of

practice focused on the support of history teachers and quality history teaching was created, put into practice and sustained.

*Questions and Answers: Some Clear Directions*

Using the literature centered on collaboration I was able to examine the collaborative partnership chosen as the case for this study in order to explore both the initial research questions and those that emerged through the process. The conceptual questions were these:

1. How is a multi-organizational community of practice created and enacted?
2. How does a multi-organizational community of practice sustain itself over time?

Related questions that emerged during the course of the research and that brought a focused lens to the choosing and examination of data were:

1. How did participants from these differing institutions work to create a shared vision for the partnership with shared goals and objectives?
2. How did participants from these differing institutions share administrative and conceptual responsibilities?
3. How did participants from these differing institutions learn to communicate with each other?
4. What kinds of shared practices and understandings developed over the course of the partnership?
5. How did individuals from these institutions experience the partnership?

Both Huxham and Wenger, as well as others researching the inner workings of collaborations emphasize the need for the partners to share an aim, a goal or vision for their work together. As was shown, the members of this collaborative partnership identified clear, concrete goals and objectives for their project from the initial conceptualization. The specifically articulated the importance of building a sustained professional community that included history teachers. As they worked together, a shared vision of history teaching was negotiated with the emphasis shifting from exposure to content to the development of historical understandings and processes.

Having clear roles and learning to share power were the next elements that emerged from the literature. From the research it was apparent that the roles and responsibilities of both the partner institutions and the individuals representing them was clearly thought out at the outset of the project design. As the collaboration progressed, however, there were shifts in roles and the points of power amongst the individuals at different times. Some of these shifts occurred organically as the project developed (the use of different host sites giving more responsibility to the individuals representing each site for example) and some because of the changing bureaucratic structure of the New York City Department of Education. The ability to be flexible around these shifts, to be willing to share power at different points was key.

Maintaining flexibility around goals, objectives, roles and points of power relied heavily on good communication. We could see that the partners took time to develop their communication on a variety of levels as the collaboration progressed. There was the basic level of learning each other's jargon and developing their own discourse that encompassed a shared understanding of terms. In addition, the partners needed to deal

with the practicalities of sharing information among such as diverse group of institutions. Face-to-face meetings were augmented by an online project management site and a style of email that functioned for the technology and usage patterns of the various partners evolved. Finally, as communication is more than just information sharing, practices were put into place that allowed for reflection and integration of individual thoughts and ideas and made clear to the participants that they were professionals whose opinions were respected.

For a partnership to develop an identity as a community of practice a shared culture needs to evolve and in some cases be cultivated. In the case being studied the practice of evaluation and reflection emerged as one of the markers of the partners' common understandings of how to ensure the project's success in supporting the needs of the participating teachers. The continued practice of regular face-to-face meetings long after the practical need for them had passed also was indicative of a dedication to fostering a collaborative bond and an indication of a sense of camaraderie amongst the individuals in the group. The group identity was also cultivated by the creation of a "brand" –a heading that went on all artifacts generated by the group for public consumption, such as agendas for meetings and announcements.

Organizations are made up of individuals and it is the individuals who actually put the collaboration into practice. Relationships of respect and trust are key. The individuals observed and interviewed for this case study evidenced a high level of comfort with their colleagues and a genuine enjoyment of each other's company. Interactions were animated and full of laughter. All the individuals interviewed gave examples of ways the collaboration had contributed to their professional growth and

indicated that they perceived the other individuals in the partnership as respectful of their expertise and contributions.

*Potential Road Blocks*

If there is such a tremendous need for this kind of teacher support and a clear model for an approach to collaboration which, as this case study supports, works for inter-organizational partnerships, why isn't everyone doing it? In truth there are many challenges to achieving the elements of a successful collaboration and these challenges are daunting. Most of these challenges stem from the entrenched organizational structures of the institutions.

*The Department of Education Structure*

> *There is a large cultural gap between the DOE and us. It is just a whole different institution. It is a highly bureaucratized culture. Nothing is simple to pull off. The institution of the DOE writ large is, you know – expectations, the pacing calendar, the 'Do Now' – you are supposed to do this. I don't know how much effect we can really have. It is distressing sometimes. We put so much effort into this and there is a built in limit to how effective we can be.*
>
> Helen, Interview, January 23, 2008

On the surface, both the State and City New York Departments of Education value the same elements in social studies and history education that are considered important by the partners in the case study. The New York State Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum (New York State Education Dept., n.d.) emphasizes making connections between content and larger concepts and the acquisition of a variety of social studies skills, such as being able to identify and analyze different sources of information.

The New York City K-8 Social Studies Scope and Sequence (2008-2009) is organized into in-depth units of study guided by "Essential Questions" or big ideas that conceptually link content and also emphasize data gathering and analysis skills. The state social studies assessments given in the 5th and 8th grades as well as the Regents examinations given in high school assess whether or not students have attained these skills and conceptual connections – including document based questions and document based essays as well as thematic essays. Even the 5th grade assessment asks students to analyze maps, charts, images and quotations. Yet, there is such a worry about coverage that it is difficult for some to see the use of working with a historian to go deeply into a subject or working with a museum educator to learn how to use the primary sources. There was an indication of this in DOE liaison Bill's comment about the curriculum being "a mile wide and an inch deep."

Outside of this project, the social studies administration of the Department of Education has worked to introduce the use of thematic units and teaching of big ideas by creating their scope and sequence and holding trainings around the city. They have even made examples of teacher-created units available through the New York City Department of Education website, yet the fear of not covering enough persists at many schools. A teacher working in a school with a strict pacing schedule, whose principal has not bought into a richer history instruction is likely to get reprimanded or even lose his or her job for attempting anything outside the prescribed sequence. Based on his experience with the anxiety over coverage, the Region Supervisor made it a priority to get the principals to sign off on having teachers participate in the case study project so they could work on the

historical thinking skills of their students and take the time to delve into historical content in a rich and nuanced way.

Professional development that emphasizes making use of the City's cultural resources also means some out of classroom time for the teachers – whether it be for attending a professional development experience or taking some of their students to an education program at a museum. This leaves the principal needing to bring in a substitute for class coverage, particularly in the upper grades where a teacher may have several classes during the day and taking one class on a trip means leaving others to be covered. Always a challenge, under the current structure of the New York City Department of Education the money for substitutes now comes out of the individual school budgets, making getting principal permission more of a hurdle. Again, predicting that coverage would be an issue, the Region Supervisor had put money into the budget for the hiring of substitutes. Once the funding is finished, however, a teacher who has become part of a community of practice that involves history-rich cultural institutions may have to forgo taking their students for education programs at an institution due to this very nuts and bolts stumbling block. Even with the money for substitutes available, some school principals report a challenge of finding good substitutes who are willing to come to their schools.

In addition to the challenges of getting out of the classroom to make use of the City's resources with students and the breakneck pacing schedule, edicts centered on specific teaching approaches such as the "workshop model" can stifle the ability of the teacher to explore content in a way that is relevant and meaningful for the students. The workshop model –which became the approach emphasized in many schools in the last

several years – is generally a good, student-centered approach to teaching. Like many good ideas, however, it has been implemented in oppressive ways in some schools. Teacher talk at the professional development retreats as well as teacher blogs on the web are full of descriptions of teachers being reprimanded for exceeding 10 minutes of direct instructional time (known in the workshop model as the "mini lesson") and some report having been told that the students must always be working in groups. Having to fit every lesson into this model is another restraint, making the use of a variety of approaches in the history curriculum more difficult.

Finally, the daily routine of the school can become a stumbling block for teachers who try and bring their new skills and understandings into the classroom to make lasting change. At many schools, the social studies teachers do not have their own rooms but rather make their way from room to room with a cart of materials. Most schools are still operating on a 40-45 minute period schedule, making deep exploration and discussion very challenging. Schools where the use of the copy machine is tightly controlled challenge teachers who want to use primary and secondary source materials not in the textbook. For many, access to the school library is limited as is access to working computers with Internet access. The frustration Helen voiced in her interview has its roots in these issues. If lasting impact is to come of developing communities of practice such as the one that developed from this community of practice, a rethinking of school structure is needed.

*University Structure*

In the collaborative partnership examined for this research, the historians were participating through the University-Based History Center. Working for the Center freed most of them from the Byzantine tenure track requirements that can preclude work outside of research, writing and course load but this is not the case for most historians in the academy. Historian Kelly Ann Long (2006) wrote an article describing her experience working on a Teaching American History grant funded project. Echoing the feelings that were expressed by the historian participants in this case study, she writes of the benefit the historian receives from sustained engagement with classroom teachers and argues that such relationships are "a legitimate means of disseminating new scholarship and knowledge" (p. 494). As it stands with most institutions of higher learning, however, historians who are not yet tenured are not rewarded for engaging in an activity that does not conform to the traditional view of research activity. Long calls for a "rethinking of tenure and reward systems within historians' home institutions" and cites the former president of the Organization of American Historians, James Horton, who encouraged the field to put a greater value on public involvement from those within the academy (p. 494). Even though it may be true that "universities are slower and more difficult to move than cemeteries" (Patterson, et al., p. 32) projects such as the Teaching American History programs and partnerships between schools of education and K-12 schools are increasing and can provide models for rethinking the type of work that is honored within the academy. This is especially important as the involvement of historians was shown to be one of the keys to successful Teaching American History grant funded projects (U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, 2005).

*Cultural Institution Structure*

The education departments of many cultural institutions tend to be small. Indeed, many history-rich institutions such as historic houses or historical societies have limited staff in general. Yet, the work these institutions do is relatively enormous. According to its website, for example, the Historical Society who participated in the case study collaboration has served an average of 20,000 students per year since its renovation in 2003. They have achieved this with three full time staff members in their education and exhibits department. As has been shown, engaging in a collaborative partnership is a time consuming and labor intensive prospect. For any one or two staff members of the Historical Society to give a whole day to a workshop or go off site to attend a planning meeting, the institution has to limit the number of paid school programs they can provide that day. Due to space constraints, a professional development retreat for teachers hosted by the Historical Society also precludes school programs. Smaller cultural institutions tend not to have the financial cushion to participate in an extensive collaboration without there being funding attached. For a cultural institution to enter into a collaborative partnership, therefore, the budget and funding must be present to make up for missed earned income. Though the financial problems in the case study were limited, the tendency of the New York City Department of Education to freeze funds when the City's budget is being reviewed or have a delay in the issuing of checks, can put financial stress on a partnering cultural institution. Teaching American History grant funds are given to the Department of Education for dissemination to the other partners so the Department has a responsibility to be timely in administration of the funds.

*Funding*

> *It's being able to do these wonderful things, but they don't come cheap and they don't just happen by themselves.*
>
> Donna, Interview, March 19, 2008

Funding is essential to encouraging collaborative partnerships such as these. As has been discussed there is the reality of needing to pay for substitutes for class coverage, of paying the cultural institutions to make up for lost earned income, of paying for lunch for the teachers and materials for the workshop. Hiring an expert evaluator to track performance also costs money. Providing a university with funds to garner course release time for the faculty involved in the partnership fits their traditional tenure-track paradigm. Publishing teacher-created work, as was done in this grant as part of their dissemination plan, costs money. The participating teachers were paid an hourly per-session rate to encourage participation. As Donna stated, these projects "don't come cheap." In truth, any professional development experience is going to cost money. The question is, is it worth it to spend money on the sort of disconnected experiences that research has shown as being ineffectual, or rather to invest in the more successful sustained professional development experiences that collaborative partnerships can provide? In his *Real Collaboration: A Guide for Grantmakers*, La Piana (2001) writes, "Real Collaboration is voluntary. Nonprofit leaders should come together because they perceive potential synergies and benefits for their constituencies, not because a funder "encouraged" them to do so, and least of all because a grant may be available" (p. 5). But the reality is that as much as the *will* to collaborate may be there among partners it is the

funding that gives them the *way* to get it done. The relationship that begins with the funded collaboration can then lead to a sustained community of practice.

*The Roads Not Yet Traveled: Implications for Policy*

When the Teaching American History funds were allotted, there was a mandate that "A local education agency must agree to carry out the proposed activities in partnership with one or more of the following: institutions of higher education, nonprofit history or humanities organizations, libraries or museums" (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2001). Another grant program from the United States Department of Education, the Professional Development for Arts Educators, Arts in Education grants, also mandates partnerships. Funding programs such as these can be used to promote effective policies such as collaborative partnerships that foster the development of communities of practice. Funding can provide the incentive for even the most rigid organization to attempt change.

Continued funding of partnerships involving cultural institutions by the United States Department of Education can also send the message that cultural institutions are places of education, that they are valuable and have resources and expertise that can be used to improve quality education. This message can help principals understand that time spent engaged in an education program at a museum is a valuable part of a curriculum, not simply time being spent out of school. It can also provide an argument against those in other areas of government that would lump cultural institutions in with casinos and other institutions not deemed worthy of government support. This perception was exemplified during the United States Senate consideration of the economic recovery package. Senator Tom Coburn proposed amendment # 175 which stated, "None of the

amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to this Act may be used for any casino or other gambling establishment, aquariums, zoo, golf course, swimming pool, stadium, community park, museum, theater, art center and highway beautification project" (American Association of Museums, *Museum Advocacy Alert*, 2009). This amendment did not pass in its entirety, but in the end zoos and aquaria were prohibited from receiving funds. That these institutions rich with resources to support science curricula were excluded and that other cultural institutions nearly were excluded from being eligible to receive funds shows that there is still a widespread ignorance of the educational role cultural institutions play. Continued policies through the United States Department of Education can do much to change this perception.

On a local level, the New York City Department of Education can do more to create policies that ease the use of cultural institutions as educational partners. Specific funding can be set aside for substitutes allowing teachers to make use of the cultural institutions both for their own development and their work with students. Professional development can be mandated for school leadership teams to expose them to cultural institutions as partners. There can be a mandate that all teachers must include at least one visit to a cultural institution with their students in their curriculum. Schools without strong parent associations to raise funds for field trips can have a Community School District representative assigned to them to assist in applying for grants and other financial support. A rethinking of the school day around larger blocks of time – a policy already being implemented in many of the new schools – can make the exploration and implementation of new historical skills and understandings more feasible in the classroom.

At the university level there are also avenues for new policy in addition to rethinking the rewards system for faculty. Particularly in teacher training programs, there is room for formal integration of the City's cultural resources. For example, mandated methods courses for social studies instruction can be co-taught with educators from history-rich institutions. This approach would also be logical for science methods courses. An actual plan to co-teach would alleviate the problem of a lack of meaningful impact on instruction noted by Anderson (2005) when describing the work done between Queens College and the Lincoln Center Institute. Having a professor of education and the educator from a cultural institution collaborate on and co-teach a course would begin a relationship that is more likely to foster systemic change in instruction than having the professor simply attend a workshop.

*Implications for Further Research*

This research established that there are clear guidelines for creating a successful collaborative partnership that are applicable in the field of teacher professional development and upheld Huxham's theory that there is a collaborative advantage. Through collaboration these partners were able to achieve goals and objectives they could never meet on their own. It was also evident that it was possible to develop a sustainable community of practice through the deliberate planning of a collaboration rather then having one emerge completely organically. Having begun to research the case at the end of its official collaboration, however, this research had to rely on documents and individual recollections to piece together the process of learning to collaborate. A full

ethnography with the researcher embedded in the culture of collaboration as it grows would provide a more nuanced examination of collaboration on a micro level.

Research into the attitudes of the teachers towards collaborations and risk-taking in their classrooms would also be an interesting focus for more research. In this study the teachers' voices were represented through their session reflections, responses to diagnostic activities and materials created out of their experiences. An intimate portrait of one or two teachers as they engage in a sustained collaboration such as this one would provide another, seldom seen point of view as they build their identities as history professionals within the collaboration and a community of practice.

Finally, this research focused on the development of the collaboration over three years. A follow up with the teacher participants who are two years out of the experience could examine how much of the historical understandings as well as new content knowledge has made it into their classroom practice. Evidence can also be gathered to document their continuing participation in a wider community of practice – if they kept up their Organization of American Historians membership and/or joined other professional organizations, attended conferences, made use of their contacts in the cultural institutions, etc.

*Looking for Goodness*

I began the journey of my own research inspired by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot's suggestion that researchers should go looking for goodness, that we should ask first, "What is good here?" (1997, p. 9). There is no question that the urban educational landscape is full of potential goodness to support teachers and students in all areas. It is

particularly full of resources to support good history and good history teaching. Well-constructed collaborative partnerships like the one offered up as the case study for this research provide examples of how we can take advantage of that goodness. It is undeniable that there are many structural deterrents to creating collaborations like these. There is a strong tendency in education to jealously guard territories and continue practices for no other reason than that is the way they have always been done. The more collaborative partnerships that are undertaken, the more research that is done to show their potential and highlight the advantages collaborations bring to the meeting of educational goals, the more communities of practice will be created. It is possible that we will eventually get out of our constraining silos and the schools of arts and sciences will collaborate with the schools of education and both of them will reach out to include K-12 schools and cultural institutions. In this way teachers will be supported in their professional development from the beginning of their training to their retirement and universities and cultural institutions will have their horizons expanded by working closely with teachers and schools. In such a community of pedagogy and practice the students, too, will become part of the community – being exposed to cultural institutions and places of higher education throughout their school experience.

# CHAPTER VI

## The Significance of a Map

In the United States we have many institutions dedicated to education. We maintain a public school system that serves students, colleges and universities that train the teachers and promote research, and places of public education such as museums, libraries, zoos, aquaria, to name a few. These institutions exist in close proximity to each other within urban settings. Creating a community of practice around education that includes each of these educational organization types, focused on the training and continuing professional development of teachers, represents one way of maximizing the potential of education in the urban setting. All of these organizational types, however, inhabit institutional cultures that make the creation of such a community challenging. A clear map for bringing these organizational cultures together in collaboration is lacking.

Due to the tendency of each of these organizational types to remain enclosed in its own world, and view themselves as separate fields of practice, they are not making use of the work that is being generated around common themes or disseminated outside of their knowledge niches. In general, publications put out by the universities are not read by practitioners in the K-12 or cultural settings, for example. The same can be said for publications in any one of these professional settings. What is more, education professionals in all three of these settings are suspicious of language, methods and initiatives employed by the corporate world. “Corporate” has become associated with the

"tunnel vision of test scores, achievement targets and league tables of accountability" increasingly being brought to bear on public education in the United States (Hargreaves, 2003).

Saltman (2005) has described this trend as the "near stranglehold that business ways of thinking and describing education now have on the culture of public schooling." For-profit education organizations such as EdisonLearning Inc. (formerly the Edison Schools Inc.), known as educational management organizations or EMO's have exacerbated this association (Saltman, 2005). Indeed, it is jarring to hear the complexities of public education, both its goals and potentials, reduced to a discussion of service delivery or the outcomes on standardized assessments.

Organizational theory, having its roots in the study of workplace efficiency and its early concentration on the use of quantitative research methods is inevitably associated with the negative aspects of the corporate world. Therefore, publications geared to that audience are not generally read by educators. Even if these publications were to be read, chances are the language and examples given would fail to resonate with a professional working in an educational setting. *The Fifth Discipline* (Senge, 1990), for example, is an enlightening treatise on creating learning organizations but in the opening chapter the reader encounters examples from IBM, Polaroid, and Royal/Dutch Schell. It is possible, however, to identify concepts and theories from the corporate world that are genuinely useful in the educational setting. This is particularly true when it comes to inter-organizational partnerships. Using the knowledge gained from the corporate world's examination of the internal workings of organizations can assist those working in

education to better foster collaborations across organizational boundaries to reach shared goals such as the development of quality teachers.

In the last decade or so we can see an increase in the use of qualitative methods derived from sociology and anthropology – such as ethnography and case study – in the field of organizational theory to examine relationships within organizations or in multi-organizational partnerships (Friend, 1993). Etienne Wenger's work on communities of practice has also been adapted by the corporate world from its original education setting. In addition, the world of the university and school partnerships has begun to document the process by which they collaborate, using some of the research into collaboration coming from outside the world of education (Patterson, et al., 1999). This qualitative case study research builds on theory from these worlds and frames them in the language of and examples from the world of education in the K-12 classroom and cultural settings.

The findings of this study confirm and stretch the findings of the organizational researchers examining collaboration in the realms of business and government and the knowledge put forth by those examining school and university partnerships. This research teases out the essential elements of collaboration and provides examples that resonate for a wider audience. Specifically, the case study suggests that there are clear guidelines for creating a successful collaborative partnership that are applicable in the field of teacher professional development. Further, the case study upheld Huxham's theory that there is a collaborative advantage even when the collaboration involves several organizations and a variety of types (1993). It was also evident that it was possible to sow the seeds for a sustainable community of practice through the deliberate planning of a collaboration, as opposed to waiting for one to emerge organically.

*Relevance for the Larger Education Community: Having a Route to Follow*

Though there have been partnerships between cultural institutions and K-12 school settings for the last century, and the last several decades have seen an increasing movement towards partnerships between universities and public schools, there has not been an agreement on the definition of "partnering" or "collaboration." Borrowing from the work of organizational theorists, this research puts forth a definition that pushes potential partners to reach beyond the simple offering of existing services to one another and promotes the idea of "synergy" articulated by Huxham and others. The study confirms the definition articulated by Huxham, who describes the collaborative advantage as being achieved when, "something unusually creative is produced – perhaps an objective is met – that no one organization could have produced on its own and when each organization, through the collaboration, is able to achieve its own objectives better than it could alone" (Huxham, 1993, p. 603).

Collaborative partnership in this case is defined as being a situation when staff from separate entities join together to achieve something they cannot achieve on their own and develop a new entity with a shared culture. This synergistic creation of something new is what takes collaboration beyond simple cooperation. Looking at collaborative partnerships through this lens requires potential partners to consider whether or not they need to collaborate in order to achieve their goals. It also will remind those considering collaboration to put careful consideration into choosing partners who will truly bring resources to complement their own and open themselves to the other elements that will help create a new entity – that of the collaborative partnership – with its own culture.

*Road Signs*

As outlined in the last chapter there are several elements that the corporate literature showed, and this research confirmed, should be present for a collaboration to be successful. Using our metaphor of the map, these can be thought of as road signs that partners can follow as their collaboration develops. The careful choosing of partners was the first road sign that emerged from the case study. Partners were chosen because of the complementary resources that made sense for the goals of the project but also because there were in most cases previous, positive experiences together that had built an introductory relationship. This "introduction" is essential because the other elements that need to be present for a collaborative partnership require a level of trust and respect normally not easy to achieve. Negotiations around a shared vision for the collaboration as well as other markers that one is on the right road – explicit roles and responsibilities, flexibility around points of power, good relationships between the individuals, good communication and shared practices – all require the presence of trust. The development of a shared vision also includes the willingness to share power.

The missions of the institutions in some sense dictate what sorts of collaborative partnerships they can comfortably undertake and how much of a shared vision can emerge (Gold & Charner, 1992). We can see from this case study that there was some negotiation around and somewhat of a lack of consensus on the approach to history teaching between the partners. The University-Based History Center's mission is focused on social history. They were willing and able to fit their focus into the wider needs of the public school social studies and history teachers but the case would have been different if the Region Supervisor had not allowed the inclusion of labor history into the traditional

study of the Gilded Era and instead limited the content to Rockefeller, J.P. Morgan and the like. In that case the University-Based History Center would have had to withdraw their participation if they were to remain true to their mission. Conversely, if the content deviated too much from what the Region Supervisor felt his teachers needed to know in order to effectively teach their students, the collaboration will have failed and the partnership would have been dissolved. The same problem applies to pedagogical approaches. As outlined earlier, educators in cultural institutions have pedagogical approaches similar too, yet different from their classroom counterparts. These approaches, coupled with the change in modality of the cultural institution setting, are what makes education in these places such a re-invigorating experience for teachers and enlivening one for students. After decades of discussion within the field of museum education about the need to tie into and support K-12 schools, in recent years a counter-discussion centered on the avoidance of becoming too much like traditional school settings and the need to remain true to their own educational missions and approaches, has emerged (Korn, 2004).

If the right partners come together with resources and missions that allow for synergy and shared vision, the rest of the elements could and should flow "naturally". Indeed the elements are so tied together it is hard to see how one could exist without the other. Initial roles and responsibilities are derived from the obvious resources the partners bring to the collaboration. The Region Supervisor, for example, is directly connected to the public school system so it makes sense that he would take charge of the recruitment of teachers. The Media Museum, archiving a collection of 20th century broadcast media, is the obvious choice to take charge of the professional development retreat on Vietnam,

the first televised war. Over time, as the less obvious resources of the institutions emerge (an exceptionally organized staff member, for example) or situations change (as in the re-organization of the New York City Department of Education Regions back into Community School Districts), roles and responsibilities may shift. The power or authority inherent in certain roles and responsibilities is shared and flexible in recognition that at different times the resources of the different partners may be more or less suited to the tasks at hand. To be flexible around points of power requires relationships built on respect and trust, relationships that acknowledge the expertise and resources each partner brings as being essential to the success of the shared purpose. Communication in all its guises (discourse and practices, implicit and explicit) is fostered through the genuine wish to connect, listen and share ideas with each other and both develops from and is necessary to the development of the shared vision, the evolution of roles and responsibilities and the development of relationships. Throughout the process a shared culture arises around the need to communicate and the desire to reach the shared goal. New terms and meanings emerge, artifacts are generated and practices engaged in which are the basis of a new entity – the collaborative partnership.

As was evident in this case study, taking the time to plan the outline of the collaboration from the beginning contributed to its long term success. Taking time to meet and taking time to reflect also fed into its development and allowed the partners to grow together into a collaborative community. As previously stated, garnering the initial funding was important, but having an understanding of mutual benefit that extends beyond monetary compensation is essential for both institutional and individual buy-in. This "camaraderie" also contributes greatly to the sustainability of the community of

practice after the funding has ended. The cultural institutions in this case, for example, were able to use the expertise of the teachers participating in the project to strengthen their educational offerings. Once the project had ended, they were reluctant to go without that feedback and, as noted by Donna at the Historical Society, they continued to call upon the teachers for focus groups or program testing. The individuals also needed to feel that they were growing as professionals through their work with each other. Discussion around strategies and resource sharing among individuals as well as exposure to different views of history and the pedagogy of history and social studies as it plays out in different settings expanded their own thinking and flexibility as history education professionals.

*Theoretical and Methodological Implications*

In the previous chapter the implications for further research as well as the implications for policy were outlined. This study also offers implications for theory in that it supports the findings of those who have identified the elements of successful collaborations in the worlds of inter-organizational corporate partnership and school/university collaborations. When research is undertaken into projects that include a wider group of educational organizations with diverse institutional cultures as participants it is not enough for the evaluation to focus on outcomes. Simply documenting the outcomes- whether they are successful or unsuccessful – denies the field the information that can explain the outcome. Whether the collaboration contains the key elements described here would be a contributing factor to the meeting of, or the failure to meet, outcome goals. Evaluative research should look for ways to examine and document

the process partners undertake to reach their goals, contributing to an increase in successful collaborations by illustrating what can support and what can derail a project.

*Implications for Educators in an Urban Setting*

Whether one is a teacher in a K-12 classroom, a university professor, or an educator in a cultural setting, this research offers guidance for reaching out past the limitations of one's own field. By reaching out to create a collaboration one is also forced to look for goodness within one's own field – to acknowledge the resources you and your institution bring to the collaborative table. The elements of successful collaboration highlighted here provide a map for the development of collaborations that make use of all of the educational resources in the urban setting. Viewing the City as full of resources for the development of quality teachers – in any subject – no longer allows us to sit back and say that we cannot achieve our educational goals because we are "under resourced". Instead we must decide what it is we need to reach our goals and identify partners who can help us reach them. This does not mean letting go of an institutional mission or compromising it past recognition. True collaboration comes when each partner balances out the others.

Viewing the urban setting as rich with resources or looking for goodness also does not mean we need to take a Pollyannaish view of the challenges inherent in the urban settings of the 21st century United States. Jean Anyon (2005) accurately outlines the relationship between wider public policies, the changing economy and the challenges of the urban classroom that no one simple education initiative can alleviate. Jonathon Kozol's work has also consistently reminded us of the injustice inherent in the public

education system in the United States, particularly for the urban poor. Creating communities of practice around education and the training of teachers has the potential to increase equitable access to a quality education for children attending urban schools in high poverty areas.

A social studies or history teacher who knows how to access free curricula resources or use the free primary source material of the cultural institutions in his city can make the lack of an up-to-date text book a non-issue rather than an excuse for failure. A teacher who is collaborating on a project that allows for educators from cultural institutions or academics from a university to come into her classroom – or that allows her to take her students to those institutions – is exposing the students to professionals they would never have met, and experiences they would never have had, otherwise. These are experiences the children in middle and upper class schools take for granted, either through their schools or through their families. Teachers who view themselves as supported and having access to a resource rich environment in which to teach are less likely to flee to the better funded suburban schools and experienced teachers are more likely to be retained in the schools where the students need them most.

As has been shown, collaborations that can foster the communities of practice that can lead to all of this are not easy. They take time, they take a willingness to listen to others and be open to change. And, they take money. However, as has also been shown, they are possible, they are effective, and, most of all, they are needed. It will be a long journey until all of the institutions dedicated to education break out of their silos and pool their resources towards the shared goal of providing a quality education for all. But as the saying goes, a journey of 1,000 miles begins with one step.

# APPENDIX

| Question | Data Source | Methods | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| How did participants from these differing institutions work to create a shared vision for the partnership with shared goals and objectives? | • Grant proposals<br>• Planning documents<br>• Project reports<br>• Participants | • Document analysis<br>• Interviews | • Original vision, goals, timeline for the partnership<br>• Adjustments and changes to the goals, roles, etc. made over time<br>• Individual understandings of the goals and objectives |
| How did participants from these differing institutions share administrative and conceptual responsibilities? | • Planning meeting observations<br>• PD workshop observations<br>• Minutes from planning meetings<br>• PD[3] workshop outlines<br>• Participants | • Observations<br>• Document analysis<br>• Interviews | • Description of the process of setting tasks, goals and objectives for PD experiences<br>• Roles and responsibilities of the partners as outlined during planning meetings and in planning documents<br>• Observations of roles during PD events |
| How did participants from these differing institutions learn to communicate with each other? | • Participants<br>• Email Correspondence examples<br>• Planning meetings<br>• Planning documents | • Observations<br>• Document analysis<br>• Interviews | • Examples of verbal and written communication between partners<br>• Examples of a "shared language' development or inter-textuality between different participants from different institutions |
| What kinds of shared practices and understandings developed over the course of the partnership? | • Handouts, outlines, transcripts and materials developed for PD experiences.<br>• PD events<br>• Teacher created work in response to PD experiences<br>• Evaluations of PD experiences<br>• Independent evaluation research reports | • Observations<br>• Document analysis<br>• Interviews | • Examples of classroom teachers incorporating pedagogical practice regularly used in cultural institutions<br>• Observations of PD day 'flow' and examples of observable shared routines and practices<br>• Detailed description of the PD experiences as implemented, the teacher's evaluations and the outside evaluator's findings on actual usage of methods, strategies and content in the classroom |
| How did individuals from these institutions experience the partnership? | • Educators/administrators from cultural institutions<br>• DOE staff members | • Interviews | • A narrative of the roles institutions and individuals play in the development of the programming<br>• Individual responses to the process of working together, learning to communicate, learning new practices, etc, the building of relationships |

**CHART A: DATA SOURCES**

[3] PD = Professional Development

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