Participatory Learning Through Social Media: How and Why Social Studies Educators Use Twitter

Daniel G. Krutka
Texas Woman's University

Jeffrey P. Carpenter
Elon University

Abstract

The microblogging service Twitter offers a platform that social studies educators increasingly use for professional development, communication, and class activities, but to what ends? The authors drew on Deweyan conceptions of participatory learning and citizenship aims of the field as lenses through which to consider social media activities. To determine how and why social studies educators use Twitter, 303 K-16 self-identified social studies educators were surveyed in this study. Results from respondents suggested that they valued the professional development experiences afforded by the platform, but were less likely to utilize Twitter for communication or class activities. Themes and examples that point to ways social studies educators use Twitter are described to provide insights for educators aiming to use social media professionally. Questions are also raised concerning whether social studies educators have missed opportunities to use social media to connect across racial and cultural boundaries and for civic purposes.

Scholars have long bemoaned the failure of educational institutions to transform pedagogy through the use of new technologies (Cuban, 1986, 2001; Oppenheimer, 1997), and the field of social studies has not escaped such scrutiny (Berson, Lee, & Stuckart, 2001; Diem, 2008; Stoddard, 2010; Swan & Hofer, 2008). Seventeen years ago, Martorella (1997) called technology the "sleeping giant" of the social studies because "technology issues appear to have a low priority for social studies educators" who must help students deliberate upon the social upshots of technological trends (p. 512).

Citing an increasingly complex and ubiquitous media environment, the National Council for the Social Studies (2009) more recently called for media literacy education that encourages students to reconsider which texts are legitimate while also helping "students deepen their questioning of the relationships between information, knowledge, and power" (p. 188). Evoking Martorella's metaphor, Manfra (2014) argued that researchers still agree there is "an undeterred reticence in the social studies away from technology rich approaches to instruction in favor of more traditional approaches" (n.p.). That a field grounded in citizenship education seems continually to lag behind during an age of historically unprecedented technological change is particularly problematic, because citizens have less time to adjust, reflect, and react to the processes and outcomes of technological changes than ever before (Thomas & Brown, 2011). However, budding uses of social media—and Twitter, in particular—by social studies educators might offer a technological muse to consider or reconsider what might be possible in schools and society.

Social Media, the Social Studies, and Citizenship

The rise of Web 2.0 sites and the subsequent advent of social media platforms has brought forth a shift toward more participatory and interactive media experiences (Jenkins, Purushotma, Weigel, Clinton, & Robison, 2009; Rheingold, 2012). The Internet once offered the masses information consumption via static sites created by the few, but Web 2.0 tools such as blogs and video-sharing sites lowered participation costs, thus making it easier for more people to produce their own media content. Social media services like Facebook, Google+, Edmodo, and Twitter afford platforms even more conducive to participation and interaction. Some distinctions (i.e., teacher/learner dichotomy) and limitations (i.e., time and space) of traditional education can wane in online spaces, where participatory cultures grow through informal learning (e.g., Ebner, Lienhardt, Rohs, & Meyer, 2010).

The platform that is the focus of this study—Twitter—is a social networking and microblogging service that has been repurposed by many educators for various activities (Carpenter & Krutka, 2014a; Visser, Evering, & Barrett, 2014). The site was created in 2006 and allows users to easily post and read messages, dubbed "tweets," of 140 characters or less to a newsfeed.

Tweets can include text, images, video, and hyperlinks to other content. The common use of hashtags (#) serves to cross-reference tweets so that they are grouped by similar metadata tags, permitting users to connect around topics of interest (e.g., #sschat, #blacklivesmatter) even if they do not otherwise "follow" or know each other in person. Social media services like Twitter have been credited with providing a means by which people can coalesce around issues, interests, and events in ways that can impact both the social studies and even democratic activities. As Howard Rheingold (2008) put it, "When you speak in a public voice—as a citizen appealing to other citizens as part of the serious business of self-governance—you are undertaking the cocreation of democracy" (p. 109).

Social studies educators can utilize Twitter in at least three general ways: professional development (PD), communication, and class activities (Krutka, 2014). Social studies teachers use the #sschat hashtag to share and acquire resources and ideas 24/7, and several hundred social studies educators regularly participate in weekly moderated chats (see Carpenter & Krutka, 2014b) on Mondays at 7 p.m. EST (see www.sschat.org for more information).

Social studies educators have organically started using numerous other hashtags, such as #hsgovchat, #econchat, #worldgeochat, and #WRLDchat, to coalesce around the

teaching of specific subjects. Furthermore, many social studies teachers and teachers, in general, have used class Twitter accounts to share information and interact with parents, students, school communities, and outside groups (Carpenter & Krutka, 2014a).

Of course, use of social media platforms does little to guarantee high-quality educational experiences or democratic activities, and these new media can even present novel threats to democratic life (Carpenter & Krutka, 2015; Morozov, 2009; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012). For example, participation without an eye toward social justice can fail to address core causes of social problems (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Even though young people may believe they utilize platforms to interact across racial and socioeconomic lines, social media activities can often maintain status quo divisions (boyd, 2014). Moreover, online spaces can be easily used in devious, superficial, or unintended ways like cyberbullying, political intolerance, or even violent threats (e.g., Greenhouse, 2013). Social studies educators, in particular, should consider how citizens can grow in their dispositions, practices, and reflections if they are to use social media toward educational and democratic ends.

While competing visions about what types of citizens are needed in a democracy (Dewey, 1916; Houser, 2006; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) can make determining a way forward difficult, we are interested in whether uses of social media by social studies educators might promote some form of participatory learning, along with common citizenship aims like deliberation, participation, and pluralism (Barton & Levstik, 2013). Social media has emerged as part of civic and social landscapes through political campaigns, revolutions (Ghonim, 2012), social movements (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012), local governance (Newsome, 2013), and many other activities central to democratic life.

When used toward educational purposes, Cunningham (2009) contended that these new technologies might make "it not only possible but practicable for Dewey's educational vision to be realized on a mass scale" (p. 51). The ways that social media are already being leveraged by social studies educators might provide fertile ground for consideration of what is possible.

This paper presents findings from a survey of 303 K-16 social studies educators regarding why and how they utilized the social media platform Twitter. By considering why and how many social studies educators have already used social media, we can begin to evaluate whether educators' uses of social media meet aims of the field.

We frame Twitter as a platform that can afford transactional experiences that align with Deweyan understandings of participatory learning (Cunningham, 2009). We then highlight pertinent literature, describe the methods by which we constructed and distributed our survey, explain how we analyzed data, and report the findings of our study. We conclude with implications and recommendations that draw on our research, the literature, and our shared experiences with Twitter to consider how social media has and can be used to foster participatory learning in the social studies.

Theoretical Lens

Since the rise of formalized, compulsory education over a century ago, continuous debate has ensued about how educators might best proceed. To the ire of educational philosopher John Dewey, these conversations have long been predicated upon faulty dualisms, such as the student and the curriculum, the individual and society, the school and the real world (Simpson, 2006). Traditional models of education tend to privilege

academic aims that are predetermined and often disconnected from the experiences of students.

Dewey and Dewey (1915) countered that "we exaggerate school learning compared with what is gained in the ordinary course of living..." and educators should look to "the ordinary course of events for light upon the best ways of teaching within school walls" (p. 2). Dewey conceived of learning as an active, fluid, and cumulative process where teachers cultivate educational experiences by giving direction to activities with which students are already engaged (Simpson, 2006).

Cunningham (2009) contended that, while "schools have for the most part rejected Dewey's participatory approach to learning, preferring the decontextualized, nonexperiential, generalized knowledge found in textbooks," modern technologies like social networking might offer a return to Deweyan ideas (p. 48). Cunningham called the type of learning for which Dewey advocated "participatory learning," which could be considered as

> ...the most effective means of fostering intrinsic motivation, intelligence, the disposition for social cooperation, and an appreciation of aesthetic experience, and for helping students develop the habits of mind necessary to continually reconstruct their understanding and to direct the course of subsequent experience. (p. 50)

In this type of learning, students directly participate in solving authentic problems together. Experiences are transactional, as learners and their environment affect each other. With social media, users can consider how the Twitter platform influences messages, affects attention, and is repurposed to engage with others for class uses. Such experiences help students develop dispositions for the type of social participation required for democratic living.

Dewey initially conceived of students engaging in historically situated experiences pertinent to an industrial era, but the rise of new technologies has made it "possible for young people to participate in a wide variety of socially mediated learning activities that could never be imagined in Dewey's day" (Cunningham, 2009, p. 51).

Furthermore, Dewey (1916) believed that participatory learning experiences in school should be interconnected with democratic experiences. In discussing the importance of individuals' reconciling their interests with others in a pluralistic society, Dewey wrote, "Democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience" (p. 83).

Pragmatically, Dewey (1938) championed democratic arrangements because "democratic social arrangements promote a better quality of human experience, one which is more widely accessible and enjoyed, than do non-democratic and anti-democratic forms of social life" (p. 34). Can social media allow citizens to connect around social issues in their local, national, and global communities?

Like Barton and Levstik (2013), Dewey viewed processes like deliberation, pluralism, and participation as integral to citizenship. Dewey's interrelated ideas about participatory learning and democratic living offer a broad theoretical lens through which social media activities within the social studies might be considered. Might social media, with its purportedly informal and participatory ethos, offer a means to foster more educational and democratic experiences for teachers and their students?

Review of Literature

Because empirical social media research particular to the social studies is scant and limited in nature, we examined the larger literature base concerning Twitter and other social media services utilized similarly as microblogging platforms. Drawing lines in the sand between literature by subject areas or mediums can be a haphazard means for exclusion when purposes for using a social networking site can often be a better means for discrimination. Furthermore, social media platforms are not fixed but change frequently as users employ platforms in unintended ways that can influence the evolution of those mediums.

The ways educators use social media can be unpredictable and, like other areas of education, highly dependent on how educators structure and frame activities (e.g., Callaghan & Bowers, 2012). Twitter was not originally designed as a platform for educators but has been increasingly used for educational purposes (Van Dijck, 2012). To date, more research on educational uses of Twitter has been completed in higher education than at the K-12 level. We highlight a broad array of studies before moving to literature specific to social media uses in the social studies.

Not surprisingly, researchers have indicated that studies of social networking sites, including Twitter, used in different contexts offer differing results. Social media activities have encouraged collaboration and communication (Ferriter, Ramsden, & Sheninger, 2012; Vavasseur & MacGregor, 2008; Wesely, 2013), community (Clarke & Kinne, 2012), reflection (Krutka, Bergman, Flores, Mason, & Jack, 2014), participation by introverted students (Voorn & Kommers, 2013), higher grades (Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011), increases in students' class engagement (Elavsky, Mislan, & Elavsky, 2011), and engagement with experts and professionals (Carpenter, 2015a), among other benefits.

Research findings also indicate that Twitter can help connect educators to resources (Brown, 2012), support early career teachers (Risser, 2013), and facilitate "sustained and significant teacher learning" (Wesely, 2013, p. 305). While some scholars have credited social media use with supporting learning, others have lamented that many educators struggle "to unleash the power of social media to support learning" (Lewis, Pea, & Rosen, 2010, p. 354). Researchers have also noted that social media use in education can be characterized by an absence of self-directed learning (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012), educational purpose (West, Wright, Gabbatis, & Graham, 2006), instructor experience (Bull et al., 2008), parallel aims for teachers and students (Nowell, 2014), and even digital professionalism (Russo, Squelch, & Varnham, 2010).

New Media Literacy theorists have contended that the social networking activities of young people could allow for informal learning in diverse and geographically dispersed communities, which in turn, could cultivate more participatory democracy. Specifically, Henry Jenkins (2009) asked, "What if we could create points of entry where young people saw the affairs of government as vitally linked to the practices of their everyday lives?" (para. 11). He envisioned that youth might be empowered by "geeking out" for democracy as they do around interests like gaming and popular culture and suggested that online activities might lead to thinking "about civic engagement as a life style rather than as a special event" (para. 12).

In contrast, Mason and Metzger (2012) asserted that these notions of technology-facilitated democratic and participatory cultures are "grounded more in hope than actual evidence" (p. 440). They questioned whether the autonomy and mobility afforded by online spaces result in deeply rooted communal and civic engagement or simply encourage atomized individualism that eschews deeper commitments.

While the extant literature points to some encouraging possibilities for social media uses, many studies, lessons, and ideas have been limited in scope. Two higher education studies with preservice social studies teachers indicated successes for in-class uses, but provided little indication as to how or whether these activities might change dispositions or actions later. A study of a social studies methods class with 20 preservice social studies teachers indicated that the students and instructor benefited from stronger relationships and increased engagement in collaborative activities via Twitter and other platforms (Krutka, 2014).

Reich, Levinson, and Johnston (2011) suggested that preservice social studies teachers benefited from conducting class dialog in the open social networking platform Ning, where in-service and preservice social studies teachers from around the nation could engage. Despite generally positive in-class results, participants in both studies were unsure whether or how they might utilize social media after the end of the courses.

Twitter has been used to help students participate in civic dialog in various formats. Journell, Ayers, and Beeson (2013) analyzed the tweets of high school government students ($N = 6$) as they engaged with classmates and others during the 2012 U.S. presidential and vice presidential debates. The researchers found that the study was limited in administrative support. Yet, the structure of the assignment and attention to issues of political tolerance, the students' political engagement, and their exposure to diverse perspectives indicated that Twitter holds potential as a pedagogical platform for civic education.

Maguth and Yamaguchi (2013) considered how Twitter can help foster global understandings and encourage social engagement in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. They described ways that Twitter and other platforms can afford young citizens exposure to both the firsthand accounts of victims and the actions of governmental and nongovernmental organizations. They said that social media networks might empower students to advocate for global change to authentic audiences.

Twitter has also been used as a platform for both historical perspective-taking and reenactment. Krutka and Milton (2013) described the use of Twitter to encourage high school world history students to take the historical perspectives of Enlightenment-era philosophers like John Locke and Mary Wollstonecraft. Students wrote blog posts from the viewpoints of their philosophers and shared them via Twitter accounts. They were able to display an understanding of their philosopher as they answered questions from an authentic audience of social studies educators from around the United States and world.

Similarly, Lee, Shelton, Walker, Caswell, and Jensen (2012) detailed the generally successful efforts of a high school U.S. history teacher to engage students in historical reenactment of the Cuban Missile Crisis via Twitter. Roles were assigned (e.g., John F. Kennedy and Fidel Castro), tweets were written and placed in chronological order, and then tweets were deployed. While the assignment was time consuming, students analyzed primary documents, considered historical perspectives, and showed historical thinking skills to the satisfaction of their teacher.

The results of social media research and lessons particular to the social studies have generally been positive and promising, but the scope of these endeavors have been limited. A survey of a broader assortment of social studies educators can fill a gap in the literature concerning what is happening beyond a few intentional studies and lessons. Moreover, Cunningham (2009) asserted that "Deweyan educators should acquaint themselves with [social media's] possibilities, if only to see what might be learned from them about the prospects of participatory learning for the twenty-first century" (p. 51).

We were particularly interested in understanding how social studies educators are using social media as a means to consider how they *should* and *could* use it both themselves and with students. This study thus aimed to answer the question, how and why have social studies educators utilized Twitter?

Methods

Social studies educators are increasingly utilizing Twitter for various educational purposes (i.e., PD and communication class activities), and we aimed to consider the strengths and shortcomings of such activities for the field. We both use Twitter and other social media platforms throughout our lives—personally, with the students in our classes, with the colleagues in our professional learning networks, as a topic to be researched, and more. One of us even serves as a coleader in organizing moderated Monday night #sschat chats, among other activities. Along with Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1991), we believe our day-to-day experiences as educators using Twitter offer a rich source of knowledge and wisdom that helps us understand the "discrepancies between what is intended and what occurs" (p. 14).

This study is part of a larger research project in which we surveyed 755 K-16 educators about how and why they used Twitter for professional purposes (see Carpenter & Krutka, 2014a), but we have isolated the data from 303 self-identified social studies educators for all aspects of this manuscript.

We originally developed the survey by carefully investigating the literature to identify how and why educators have utilized social media. For instance, Hur and Brush (2009) suggested that teachers engage in online communities to communicate emotions, resist teacher isolation, feel camaraderie, seek out ideas, and benefit from the affordances of online environments, and we thus included these topics within our survey (however, reliability and validity of the survey was not established). The survey included an informed consent, a demographics section, and closed and open-ended questions concerning uses of Twitter (see Carpenter & Krutka, 2014a, for survey and additional information regarding methods). The link to the survey was tweeted out systematically over 40 days in the spring of 2013 using various hashtags that targeted a wide variety of subject areas, grade levels, and so forth, in an effort to garner responses from as wide a variety of educators as possible (see Figure 1).

While we include data from various closed questions, the primary focus of this manuscript is to report findings of the analysis of social studies educator' open-ended responses to the following item: "Please explain what aspects of Twitter you find most valuable, and why." Although 303 participants were social studies educators, only 151 social studies educators responded to this question. Relying on the constant comparative method, we were able to identify various themes from the open-ended question responses that provided the structure for the narrative. Through several rounds of coding, memo writing, and discussion we established salient codes (as in Charmaz, 2006). Given the interpretive character of the qualitative coding we conducted, we opted to rely on intensive discussion to find agreement upon codes, rather than relying on an interrater reliability statistic (Saldaña, 2012; Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007). Once we agreed upon a final coding structure, we coded the entirety of our data again. We identified a number of themes that are presented in the findings section.

Figure 1. *Sample survey invitation tweet sent at the beginning of an educator Twitter chat.*

This study is limited by nonrandom sampling and dependence upon self-reports. Our respondents may not be representative of either educators who use Twitter or educators, in general. The Twitter platform is likely to change as social media services offer a moving target, where "it sometimes feels as if the social media landscape changes too quickly to fully grasp and leaves scholars permanently lagging behind" (Hogan & Quan-Haase, 2010, p. 309). Despite these limitations, our large sample and the unique contributions of participants offer valuable insights about how and why social studies educators utilize Twitter that will help teachers, researchers, and other educators consider implications for the field.

Table 1
Participant Demographics (*N* = 303)

Gender	61% female; 39% males
Area of schools	36% suburban (*n* = 110); 27% rural (*n* = 82); 22% urban (*n* = 67)
Position	60% teacher; 10% teacher educator; 8% school-level administrator; 7% district-level administrator; 5% librarian/media specialist; 2% preservice teacher; 8% other

Findings

Social studies educators' uses of Twitter (*N = 303*) were characterized by intense professional development engagement with colleagues. Eighty percent of social studies educators' reported using Twitter multiple times per day. Many participants reported

valuing the personalization and immediacy of the platform. Numerous respondents described their Twitter activities in terms of feeling connected with new colleagues and feeling like they were members of a community. Respondents also described Twitter as user friendly, efficient, and accessible. Social studies participants tended to use Twitter more for PD than for communication or class activities.

Qualitative comments by social studies educators spoke specifically to both social studies teaching and learning. In many instances we inferred significance in what social studies teachers left unsaid in our data, and we identified numerous missed opportunities where educators might have taken advantage of Twitter's affordances. This section will detail findings from each of the primary uses of Twitter—PD, communication, and class activities—with consideration of how social studies educators may use social media to move toward aims of the field. We conclude our findings by discussing demographic information that raises questions about the role of cultural pluralism in the digital realm.

Professional Development

PD was the most common use of Twitter by social studies educators who participated in this study, an unsurprising finding considering that the survey was shared using hashtags commonly used to connect teachers with peers for PD purposes. The hashtags #edchat ($n = 138$) and #sschat ($n = 99$) were by far most often cited as being regularly used by the 151 social studies educators who answered the question. A wide variety of hashtags related to other disciplines (e.g., #engchat), grade levels (e.g., elemchat), states (e.g., #moedchat), pedagogical approaches (#pblchat), contemporary or technology issues (e.g., #21stedchat, #edtech), and policy (#edreform) were also cited, however. That so many hashtags were utilized indicates that our sample of social studies educators was not delimited by subject area, but seemed to pursue interests in numerous directions.

A large number of participants praised Twitter as a medium that empowered them to grow in their craft. Participants also praised Twitter as the "best professional development," and "free and better than most paid workshops." To this latter point, a veteran teacher from Wisconsin elaborated that "it is free, and available when you want it."

Social studies educators identified using Twitter for PD far more frequently than using it for communication or class activities (see Table 2). More specifically, almost all respondents reported using Twitter to share and acquire resources from colleagues, and they reported taking advantage of the social components of Twitter to engage with colleagues to collaborate, network, and participate in chats.

Many veteran social studies educators indicated that Twitter PD served to connect them with other positive and creative educators, reinvigorate their teaching, and diminish feelings of isolation. Twenty-nine educators explicitly referenced how Twitter contributed to collaboration. A teacher educator from Oklahoma wrote that "networking and collaboration with other educators" was particularly valuable. Educators referred to Twitter as "my 24/7 professional development & teacher's lounge" and cited Twitter as a space where

> I get ideas, resources and articles from other educators through their tweets and conversations on Twitter - both on the fly and organized chats. I also use Twitter to share articles, resources that might help others and to share some of the best work done by my students.

Table 2
Percentages of Respondents' Professional Uses of Twitter (*N* = 303)

Resource sharing/acquiring	96%
Collaboration	84%
Networking	77%
Twitter chats	74%
Backchanneling	26%
Communication with students	24%
Emotional support	22%
In-class activities	20%
Out-of-class activities	18%
Communication with parents	16%

In particular, moderated Twitter chats were regularly praised. An educator from Illinois stated, "The chats that are held weekly have revolutionized my teaching." A veteran teacher from Connecticut valued using Twitter as a backchannel, explaining, "I use Twitter when participating in Webinars to follow what others are thinking/saying when in a meeting that does not have a discussion component built in."

Numerous educators referenced how Twitter helped them overcome various forms of isolation. One teacher from Massachusetts said, "I am the ONLY Social Studies teacher in my middle school. Twitter IS my entire professional development. I have found an outstanding, passionate group of educators who inspires me and provides me with amazing resources." Other comments regarding isolation included the following:

- "I work at a small school, so I like having colleagues that actually teach the same subjects and levels I do."
- "Support and ideas from other educators. This does not exist in my school, so if I don't find a PLN [professional learning network] on my own, I am isolated."
- "The best value is being able to share with an audience of similarly passionate teachers—you do not always get that from the local connections."

These findings are especially notable, as burnout has long been cited as a problem in the teaching profession (Farber, 1991; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

Multiple participants noted that fellow teachers on Twitter served as a means to information found elsewhere on the Internet. A number of respondents communicated how they valued the way fellow educators on Twitter provided a means of filtering or vetting web content. A teacher said Twitter was "better than Google for finding material and resources relevant to my needs." A teacher from Ireland said, "This is an economic use of my time." A high school social studies educator from Texas remarked, "Twitter gives me quick access to resources that would take me hours to find and analyze." A teacher in a rural school said, "I can get answers to questions, advice on issues, assistance with lesson plans in a matter of moments from anywhere in the world," and "I use Twitter when I run out of ideas for finding a resource."

While teachers have long been deskilled within the field (Apple & Teitelbaum, 1985), that social studies educators are using Twitter to turn to each other as experts seems a more

democratic approach to PD. Rather than being merely the passive recipients of knowledge generated by others, tweeting educators can participate more actively in their PD and even in the growth of their profession.

Furthermore, respondents valued Twitter as a source of the latest pedagogical information, particularly regarding educational technology. One middle school educator said, "I benefit most when I learn about various tech resources available and suggestions on how to use them in class." A veteran teacher from Ohio said that Twitter helped her to "receive information about topics, resources or technology that I was unaware of."

Questions regarding how the social studies can encourage global citizenship have long been of concern to the field (Myers, 2006), and Twitter offers a potential platform that might facilitate more international interactions. Thirteen social studies educators explicitly cited ways Twitter afforded experiences to learn from and with educators from around the world. "I am able to collaborate with educators from across the world, learning from their ideas, their questions, and their classroom practices," one teacher said. "My thinking is challenged on a regular basis and I can find resources to aid my colleagues." Another teacher stated that she meets, "incredible, passionate educators from around the world!" An Australian educator said, "I have found it inspiring to hear what other teachers are doing around the world." Of course, the quality, nature, and results of such interactions must be further investigated to understand to what degree they might contribute to teaching and learning.

Communication

While Twitter served as a source of PD experiences for social studies educators, respondents indicated that it was utilized less frequently with students and their families. The low percentage of social studies educators who used Twitter for communication and class activities might be partially explained by school policies or cultures that discouraged or prohibited social media use. Use of social media with parents or students requires more school support than digital PD, which teachers easily engage in at home and on mobile devices, and poses little legal risk to a school or district.

Only 39% of social studies teachers reported that their schools allowed social media for students and teachers. In 29% of schools only teachers were permitted to utilize social media, and 15% of schools blocked use for both students and teachers. Official school policies and school views toward social media seem likely to discourage use of platforms like Twitter for communication and class activities.

Several social studies teachers indicated that Twitter allowed them to enhance communication with students. In some cases teachers used Twitter for one-way announcements, while others made themselves available to student for questions well beyond typical school hours. A teacher from Kansas explained that Twitter is "a great tool to use to get information out to parents and students," and a Massachusetts educator said, "The communication with students, parents and peers is incredibly valuable." An educator from California valued having "another outlet to connect with my students," specifically saying that "students can tweet me if they have questions."

Students posing questions to teachers when working on assignments at home or watching news stories about civic events with their families resulted in interactions that might not have otherwise occurred. A young and novice teacher from Rhode Island said that students, "open up more on Twitter which allows me to make better connections leading to more engagement in the classroom." Educators provided little information concerning

the methods and their effectiveness in communicating via Twitter, but many educators indicated at least some success in this area.

Class Activities

While respondents did not use Twitter for class activities at high rates, 25 social studies educators provided specific examples of uses with students. Teachers offered several cases where students used Twitter for formative assessment or to encourage mediated dialog. Teachers described class activities from gathering "a quick snapshot of how my students are doing with the material" to offering an "opportunity for students to engage in discussion in a non-verbal format." Teachers also "conducted review sessions via Twitter" or used the medium "with students as a summarizing/publishing tool."

One Canadian teacher used Twitter to connect with "other classes," and she also mentioned sharing resources with classes or using videos or posts she found as "topics for assignments, discussions." This same teacher had a goal "to teach responsible digital citizenship and improve writing [with] authentic audiences."

Many social studies educators saw Twitter as a means by which they could add content or extend class activities beyond the participants in their physical classroom. One teacher shared that tweeting became a way to extend class curriculum informally to resources or ideas that might be "useful, but peripheral, to our unit of study." One educator from Kansas said, "Even if [students] don't respond, I know they are reading and gathering information."

Teachers not only used social media as a way to complete activities, but also to share projects or ideas. A teacher from Utah used Twitter to "connect with other teachers to create international connections and allow students to work with a world wide audience." Finally, a veteran teacher created a Twitter "account that I use to take on the persona of a historical figure we are studying."

Demographics

Our sample was not random, and demographic data, in particular, does not permit generalization, but at least two findings merit further consideration. Our survey, which drew many of our respondents from the most popular social studies hashtags, identified as 94% White ($n = 285$), 2% Black ($n = 5$), 1% Hispanic ($n = 4$), and 3% two or more races ($n = 9$). Moreover, no respondents credited Twitter with learning about or connecting with people or groups, particularly those which can be most often marginalized, from different racial, cultural, or socioeconomic experiences. A pluralistic society thrives when cosmopolitan citizens are able to interact with various groups (Banks, 2004), and the overwhelming whiteness of our respondents raises red flags.

If an affordance of Twitter is that it can transcend spatial bounds, then social studies educators should aim for people of various racial and ethnic communities to learn from and with each other via the medium. However, educators' uses of Twitter might simply reinforce privilege, segregation, or social inequity. Platforms should not be assumed to be value neutral, but as spaces where educators and students further identities and understandings in complex and important ways (e.g., Stewart, 2013). It was beyond the scope of our data to determine what role Twitter plays in encouraging cultural pluralism, but research should consider to what degree and why Twitter may simply reinforce segregation.

The lack of racial diversity among respondents begs larger questions about whether affinity spaces—similar to general clustering patterns in society (Bishop, 2009)—suffer from homophily, or the tendency to seek out colleagues who are like minded or culturally similar (Thelwall, 2009). Like-mindedness was explicitly referenced by six respondents as a reason for interacting via Twitter. For example, one teacher said, "Chats are a great chance to talk to other active, like-minded professionals about areas of teaching/education that I have less experience with." Another teacher utilized Twitter "for networking with other creative thinkers and for pushing my thinking." Almost all comments mentioned like-mindedness in terms of educational beliefs. While like-mindedness does not necessarily indicate a closed-mindedness to those with different opinions or backgrounds, more research is needed to determine to what degree and effects groupthink and cultural norms might shade experiences.

Conversely, other educators indicated that Twitter allowed them to connect with people who might challenge their beliefs or perspectives. One educator stated, "Twitter broadens not only my PLC [professional learning communities], but also my thinking. It allows me to connect with educators who not only value education and think like I do, but who also challenge my thinking." A teacher from Pennsylvania said, "My thinking is challenged on a regular basis." Another educator stated, "The idea is that you're collecting feeds from a very diverse group." While educators highlighted increased access to international colleagues, no comments explicitly cited understanding of different cultures or peoples.

Second, belying myths about digital natives, respondents tended not to be the youngest and most inexperienced social studies teachers, but middle-aged teachers with at least several years of experience (see Tables 3 and 4). According to Duggan and Smith (2013), the largest group of Twitter users in the general population is 18-30 years old, but our respondents were older. Furthermore, younger educators also seemed to use Twitter in fewer ways than more experienced colleagues. Some research (e.g., Carpenter, 2015a) has indicated that young teachers are often so inundated with new and time-consuming requirements of the profession early in their careers that engaging in digital PD can seem out of reach. Teacher educators and veteran social studies teachers should, therefore, not be surprised if young teachers do not immediately take to Twitter or other social media for PD, but there is likely still merit in introducing young educators to professional social media use (e.g., Krutka, 2014).

Table 3
Percentages of Respondents' Ages (*N* = 303)

18-22	1%
23-30	17%
31-40	36%
41-50	32%
51-60	12%
61 or above	3%

Table 4
Percentages of Years of Experience as Educators (*N* = 303)

Preservice	2%
0-3 years	7%
4-9 years	22%
10-14 years	29%
15-19 years	20%
20-24 years	12%
25-29 years	3%
30 or more years	6%

Discussion

Consistent with previous studies concerning educational uses of social media, our participants were positive about their digital experiences and identified tangible benefits from using Twitter. Teachers' intrinsic motivations and social cooperation thrived in the more informal learning spaces afforded by the medium, but these same benefits were not extended to the students of many social studies educators. Social studies educators also seem to be missing numerous chances to connect with people of diverse backgrounds or use social media as a means to advocate for civic or social changes.

Successes

The responses of social studies educators concerning the educational value of Twitter offer glimpses of successes. First and foremost, the PD in which social studies educators engaged via Twitter successfully met many of the characteristics of a Deweyan approach to participatory learning. Instead of PD being another thing done to teachers (e.g., standards, testing), many participants described Twitter as a positive, creative, and emancipating space for professionals.

Using informal digital spaces like Twitter can potentially help develop habits to seek out different ideas and opinions. Learning in affinity spaces afforded by hashtags like #sschat is often contextual and voluntary, and topics of study appear to derive from authentic experiences and vary to meet the needs, interests, or questions of educators. A social studies teacher may participate in a moderated #sschat on historical thinking, use the #FergusonSyllabus hashtag to research how to talk with students about systemic race issues, exchange ideas with digital colleagues, challenge local or federal policy by contacting legislators or informing the public, or organize a face-to-face Edcamp unconference in the community (see Swanson, et al., 2014, and Carpenter, 2015b, for more).

Furthermore, the potential for media like Twitter to encourage collaboration and sharing of teacher-tested practices, as well as stave off isolation, is encouraging. However, this type of practical PD could also be deepened by multicultural or global interactions that address issues of power and inequity within society and schools, as such activities were completely absent from comments.

This study should only encourage social studies teacher educators to continue to introduce and utilize social media services appropriate to their situations. Previous

studies have indicated that social studies preservice teachers and professors have rated class uses of social media positively overall (Krutka, 2014; Reich et al., 2011). Of course, simply using social media services like Twitter will not succeed unless activities are well conceived and appropriate.

Teachers in our study, almost without exception, were positive about their social media experiences, possibly because they participated in Twitter activities voluntarily. Teacher educators should be thoughtful about the ways in which they require students to engage, as the informal and voluntary nature of teacher Twitter seems to allow educators to benefit in ways that they need. Social media spaces appear unlikely to disappear from the professional landscape any time soon, and sharing possibilities with future educators can give them the option to access online affinity spaces like #sschat as they see fit. Such affinity spaces can offer opportunities for novice educators to receive support and encouragement in the early stages of their careers, which should be of interest to teacher educators concerned with their preservice teachers' success postgraduation.

Limitations and Future Research

Although this study offers insights into ways social studies educators experience Twitter, many limitations and questions remain. First, there has been no empirical research of how Twitter actually affects teaching and learning. Further research should pursue questions like, "In what ways are teachers and students influenced by PD via social media?" Not all experiences in education should, or can, be easily measured, but serious reflection and analysis might yield ways that educators can get more out of their Twitter experiences.

Second, the lack of use of Twitter to enhance various forms of communication and class activities should be researched. Rheingold (2010) contended that 21st-century students require social media literacies that both align with and add to primary citizenship aims, like deliberation, pluralism, and participation (Barton & Levstik, 2013). Rheingold (2010) contended that students should learn to be metacognitive about how and why they focus their attention, understand how to participate as active citizens who produce and share meaningful content, collaborate around important civic or educational problems, develop awareness about how networks can be leveraged, and hone an ability to consume online content critically and determine source trustworthiness.

Evidence suggests that students and teachers are spending considerable time and energy using social media. If social media is part of the world then digital citizens must learn to navigate it in ways that are democratic and participatory. No educators in our sample mentioned using social media critically, questioning how Twitter as a medium influenced communication compared to other means of communication (i.e., orality, print, or television), or reflected with students or colleagues about the social implications of media like Twitter.

Finally, numerous ways of using social media particular to the social studies were glaringly absent from the data. This absence could be partially because our key qualitative question in the survey did not specifically query respondents on social studies applications. Nonetheless, social media offers new possibilities for connecting with people and organizations for democratic purposes. While Twitter could be used to connect with museums, historians, or community members or organizations, the platform could also be used to engage in civic dialog, advocate for political or community change, or engage in ongoing public dialog. In short, a medium like Twitter that can facilitate connections that might otherwise be difficult could foster the types of democratic dispositions to which Dewey spoke and the social studies aim. Could social media practices be leveraged toward

social and civic aims to "geek out" for democracy, as Jenkins (2009) and others have advocated? Numerous untapped possibilities exist that could help foster participatory experiences and collapse traditional educational boundaries.

Conclusions

Social media platforms like Twitter offer potential to foster participatory learning centered around authentic problems, but recognizing this potential will require intentional and mindful work by educators. Many social studies educators seem to be benefitting from the ongoing conversations via #sschat and other hashtags that afford experiences that transcend spatial and temporal bounds. Many of these educators prefer pursuing their professional interests and problems via Twitter instead of the topdown and often maligned PD offered by schools (Hawley & Valli, 2007; Sprinthall, Reiman, & Thies-Sprinthall, 1996).

Yet, educators and researchers have many questions to answer: What effects do PD via media like Twitter have on teaching and learning in classrooms? What needs to happen for social studies educators to leverage social media for class activities and democratic purposes? How can social studies educators use social media to encourage cross-cultural interactions and participate in civic activities? Evoking Martorella (1997), our study seems to suggest that the "sleeping giant" of technology might at least be awakening, but we should strive for more comprehensive engagement with social media in education. Social media and, in particular, a platform like Twitter should offer opportunities for social studies educators to consider opportunities to extend participatory networks toward democratic citizenship aims.

Whether participating in civic dialog, deliberating upon contemporary or historical sources online, or growing as a pluralistic citizen through online interactions with peers half the world away, social media can be leveraged. Educators should also critique social media as a way toward understanding how new technologies affect individual lives, institutions, and social movements.

Unfortunately, efforts seem to be limited to use the platform for reducing distinctions among groups like administrators and teachers, parents and educators, and students and teachers, among other groups. Minimal evidence exists that social media has transcended national, racial, or class lines to bring people of different experiences together for the common good. Might students learn to engage in democratic school governance dialog with teachers and administrators using a school hashtag, or could parents engage in class content discussions with students and teachers? Could social media allow students to engage with digital pen pals to grow as cosmopolitan global citizens? Could they engage in social activism? Might they contact local community members to address social ills? Hitherto, new media seem to have made participatory learning possible, but intentionality, ingenuity, and resolution are needed by educators if social media is to foster democracy in ways that reach closer to Deweyan visions for the field.

References

Apple, M. W., & Teitelbaum, K. (1985). Are teachers losing control of their jobs? *Social Education, 49*(5), 372-75.

Banks, J. A. (2004). Teaching for social justice, diversity, and citizenship in a global world.*The Educational Forum 68*(4), 296-305.

Barton, K. C., & Levstik, L. S. (2013). *Teaching history for the common good.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Berson, M.J., Lee, J.K., & Stuckart, D.W. (2001). Promise and practice of computer technologies in the social studies: A critical analysis. In W. Stanley (Ed.), *Critical issues in social studies research for the 21st century* (pp. 209-229). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Bishop, B. (2009). *The big sort: Why the clustering of like-minded America is tearing us apart.* New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

boyd, d. (2014). *It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Brown, E. (2012, January 21). Teachers take to Twitter to connect and improve craft.*Washington Post.* Retrieved from: http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/teachers-take-to-twitter-to-improve-craft-and-commiserate/2012/01/19/gIQAGv8UGQ_story.html

Bull, G., Thompson, A., Searson, M., Garofalo, J., Park, J., Young, C., & Lee, J. (2008). Connecting informal and formal learning: Experiences in the age of participatory media.*Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 8*(2), 100-107. Retrieved from http://www.citejournal.org/vol8/iss2/editorial/article1.cfm

Callaghan, N., & Bower, M. (2012). Learning through social networking sites—The critical role of the teacher. *Educational Media International, 49*(1), 1-17.

Carpenter, J. P. (2015a). Preservice teachers' microblogging: Professional development via Twitter. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 15*(2), 209-234. Retrieved from http://www.citejournal.org/vol15/iss2/general/article1.cfm

Carpenter, J. P. (2015b). Unconference professional development: Edcamp participant perceptions and motivations for attendance (advanced online publication). *Professional Development in Education*, 1-22. doi: 10.1080/19415257.2015.1036303

Carpenter, J. P., & Krutka, D. G. (2014a)**.** How and why educators use Twitter: A survey of the field. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education, 46*(4), 414-434.

Carpenter, J. P., & Krutka, D. G. (2014b). Chat it up: Everything you wanted to know about Twitter chats but were afraid to ask. *Learning and Leading with Technology, 41*(5), 10-15.

Carpenter, J. P. & Krutka, D. G. (2015). Social media in teacher education. In M. L. Niess & H. Gillow-Wiles (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education in the digital age* (pp. 28-54). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Clarke, L. W., & Kinne, L. (2012). More than words: Investigating the format of asynchronous discussions as threaded discussions or blogs. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education, 29*(1), 4-13.

Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. L. (1993). *Inside/outside: Teacher research and knowledge.* New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Cuban, L. (1986). *Teachers and machines: The classroom use of technology since 1920.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Cuban, L. (2001). *Oversold and underused: Computers in the classroom.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cunningham, C. A. (2009). Transforming schooling through technology: Twenty-first century approaches to participatory learning. *Education and Culture 25*(2), 46-61.

Dabbagh, N., & Kitsantas, A. (2012). Personal learning environments, social media, and self-regulated learning: A natural formula for connecting formal and informal learning. *Internet & Higher Education, 15*(1), 3-8.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education.* New York, NY: Macmillan.

Dewey, J. (1938). Experience and education. New York, NY: Collier.

Dewey, J., & Dewey, E. (1915). *Schools of To-morrow.* New York, NY: E.P. Dutton & Company.

Diem, R. (2008). "Shoulda," "coulda," "woulda" technology and citizenship education. In P.J. VanFossen & M.J. Berson (Eds.), *The Electronic Republic?: The impact of technology on education for citizenship* (pp. xi-xxii). West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.

Duggan, M., & Smith, A. (2013, December 30). *Social media update 2013.* Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project. Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/12/30/social-media-update-2013/

Ebner, M., Lienhardt, C., Rohs, M., & Meyer, I. (2010). Microblogs in higher education–A chance to facilitate informal and process-oriented learning. *Computers & Education, 55*(1), 92–100.

Elavsky, C. M., Mislan, C., & Elavsky, S. (2011). When talking less is more: Exploring outcomes of Twitter usage in the large-lecture hall. *Learning, Media and Technology, 36*(3), 215-233.

Farber, B. A. (1991). *Crisis in education: Stress and burnout in the American teacher.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Ferriter, W. M., Ramsden, J. T., & Sheninger, E. C. (2012). Building social media connections. *Principal, 91*(3), 18-19.

Ghonim, W. (2012). *Revolution 2.0: The power of the people is greater than the people in power.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Greenhouse, E. (2013, August 1). Twitter's free speech problem. *The New Yorker.* Retrieved from http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/twitters-free-speech-problem

Hawley, W. D., & Valli, L. (2007). Design principles for learner-centered professional development. In W. D. Hawley & D. L. Rollie (Eds.), *The keys to effective schools: Educational reform as continuous improvement* (pp. 117-137). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Haydn, T. (Ed.) (2013). *Using new technologies to enhance teaching and learning in history.* Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Hogan, B., & Quan-Haase, A. (2010). Persistence and change in social media. *Bulletin of Science Technology & Society, 30*(5), 309-315.

Houser, N. O. (2006). Worldviews and learning theories: A transactional reconsideration of teaching and learning. *Curriculum and Teaching, 21*(1), 5-31.

Jenkins, H. (2009, May 1). "Geeking out" for democracy (Part One) [weblog]. Retrieved from http://henryjenkins.org/2009/05/geeking_out_for_democracy_part.html

Jenkins, H., Purushotma, R., Weigel, M., Clinton, K., & Robison, A.J. (2009). *Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Journell, W., Ayers, C. A., & Beeson, M.W. (2013) Joining the conversation: Twitter as a tool for student political engagement. *The Educational Forum, 77*(4), 466-480.

Junco, R., Heiberger, G., & Loken, E. (2011). The effect of Twitter on college student engagement and grades. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 27*(2), 119-32.

Krutka, D. G. (2014). Social media as a catalyst for convergence culture: Immersing pre-service social studies teachers in the social media terrain. In W.B. Russell (Ed.), Digital social studies (pp. 271-302). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Krutka, D. G., Bergman, D. J., Flores, R., Mason, K., & Jack, A. R. (2014). Microblogging about teaching: Nurturing participatory cultures through collaborative online reflection with pre-service teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 40*, 83-93.

Krutka, D. G., & Milton, M. K. (2013). The Enlightenment meets Twitter: Using social media in the social studies classroom. *Ohio Social Studies Review, 50*(2), 22-29.

Lee, V.R., Shelton, B.R., Walker, A., Caswell, T., & Jensen, M. (2012). Retweeting history: Exploring the intersection of microblogging and problem-based learning for historical reenactments. In K.K. Seo & D.A. Pellegrino (Eds.), *Designing problem-driven instruction with online social media,* (pp. 23-40). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Lewis, S., Pea, R., & Rosen, J. (2010). Beyond participation to co-creation of meaning: Mobile social media in generative learning communities. *Social Science Information, 49*(3), 351-396.

Manfra, M.M. (2014). Editorial: 15 Years after Martorella's sleeping giant: A year of special themed issues. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 14*(1). Retrieved from http://www.citejournal.org/vol14/iss1/socialstudies/article1.cfm

Maguth, B. M., & Yamaguchi, M. (2013). The use of social networks in the social studies for global citizenship education: Reflecting on the March 11, 2011 disaster in Japan. *The Georgia Social Studies Journal*, 3(2), 80-93.

Martorella, P.H. (1997). Technology and the social studies–or: Which way to the sleeping giant? *Theory and Research in Social Education, 25*(4), 511-514.

Mason, L., & Metzger, S.A. (2012). Reconceptualizing media literacy in the social studies: A pragmatist critique of the NCSS position statement on media literacy. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 40*(4), 436-455.

Morozov, E. (2009, May 19). The brave new world of slacktivism (Commentary). Retrieved from the National Public Radio website: http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=104302141

Myers, J. P. (2006). Rethinking the social studies curriculum in the context of globalization: Education for global citizenship in the US. *Theory & Research in Social Education, 34*(3), 370-394.

National Council for the Social Studies. (2009). Media literacy: A position statement of the National Council for the Social Studies. *Social Education, 73*(4), 187-189.

Newsom, G. (2013). *Citizenville: How to take the town square digital and reinvent government.* New York, NY: Penguin.

Nowell, S. D. (2014). Using disruptive technologies to make digital connections: Stories of media use and digital literacy in secondary classrooms. *Educational Media International, 51*(2), 109-123.

Oppenheimer, T. (1997). The computer decision. *The Atlantic Monthly, 280*(1), 45-62.

Reich, J., Levinson, M., & Johnston, W. (2011). Using online social networks to foster preservice teachers' membership in a networked community of praxis. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 11*(4), 382-397. Retrieved from http://www.citejournal.org/vol11/iss4/socialstudies/article1.cfm

Rheingold, H. (2008). Using participatory media and public voice to encourage civic engagement. In W. L. Bennett (Ed.), *Civic life online: Learning how digital media can engage youth* (pp. 97-118). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008.

Rheingold, H. (2010). Attention, and other 21st-century social media literacies. *Educause Review, 45*(5), 14-24.

Rheingold, H. (2012). *Net smart: How to thrive online.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Risser, H. S. (2013). Virtual induction: A novice teacher's use of Twitter to form an informal mentoring network. *Teaching & Teacher Education, 35,*25-33.

Russo, C. J., Squelch, J., & Varnham, S. (2010). Teachers and social networking sites: Think before you post. *Public Space: The Journal of Law and Social Justice, 5*(5), 1-15.

Saldaña, J. (2012). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* London, UK: Sage.

Sandelowski, M., & Barroso, J. (2007). *Handbook for synthesizing qualitative research.* New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Schlozman, K. A., Verba, S., & Brady, H. E. (2012). *The unheavenly chorus: Unequal political voice and the broken promise of American democracy.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Simpson, D. J. (2006). *John Dewey.* New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2010). Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(4), 1059-1069.

Sprinthall, N. A., Reiman, A. J., & Thies-Sprinthall, L. (1996). Teacher professional development. In J. P. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds), *Handbook of research on teacher education.* (2nd ed.; pp. 666-703). New York, NY: Macmillian.

Stewart, M. A. (2013). "What up" and "TQM": English learners writing on Facebook to acquire English and express their Latina/o identities. In K. E. Pytash & R. E. Ferdig (Eds.),*Exploring technology for writing and writing instruction* (pp. 328-344). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Stoddard, J. (2010). Media convergence and the social studies. In R. Diem & M.J. Berson (Eds.), *Technology in retrospect: Social studies in the information age 1984-2009* (pp. 261-284). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Swan, K.O., & Hofer, M. (2008). Technology and social studies. *Handbook of research in social studies education.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Swanson, K., Jarrett, K., Callahan, D., Ferguson, H. J., Sivik, K., Miles, C., ... Hertz, M. B. (2014). *The Edcamp model: Powering up professional learning.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Thelwall, M. (2009). Homophily in MySpace. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 60*(2), 219–231.

Thomas, D., & Brown, J. S. (2011). *A new culture of learning: Cultivating the imagination for a world of constant change.* Lexington, KY: CreateSpace.

Tufekci, Z., & Wilson, C. (2012). Social media and the decision to participate in political protest: Observations from Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communication, 62*(2), 363-379.

Van Dijck, J. (2011). Tracing Twitter: The rise of a microblogging platform. *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics, 7*(3), 333-348. doi: 10.1386/macp.7.3.333_1

Vavasseur, C., & MacGregor, S. (2008). Extending content-focused professional development through online communities of practice. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education, 40*(4), 517-536.

Visser, R. D., Evering, L. C., & Barrett, D. E. (2014)**.** #TwitterforTeachers: The implications of Twitter as a self-directed professional development tool. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education, 46*(4), 396-413.

Voorn, R. J. J., & Kommers, P. A. M. (2013). Social media and higher education: Introversion and collaborative learning from the student's perspective. *International Journal of Social Media and Interactive Learning Environments, 1*(1), 59-73.

Wesely, P. M. (2013). Investigating the community of practice of world language educators on Twitter. *Journal of Teacher Education, 64*(4), 305-318.

West, R. E., Wright, G., Gabbitas, B., & Graham, C. (2006). Reflections from the introductions of blogs and RSS feeds into a preservice instructional technology course.*TechTrends, 50*(4), 54-60.

Westheimer, J., & Kahne, J. (2004). What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy. *American Educational Research Journal, 41*(2), 237-269.

Author Notes

Daniel G. Krutka
Texas Woman's University
Email: dankrutka@gmail.com

Jeffrey P. Carpenter
Elon University
Email: jcarpenter13@elon.edu