# WOMEN EDUCATORS IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

## The Women behind Dewey's Laboratory School

ANNE DURST

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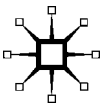



First published in 2010 by PALGRAVE MACMILLAN® in the United States - a division of St. Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

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ISBN: 978–0–230–61073–6

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Durst, Anne.
Women educators in the progressive era : the women behind Dewey's Laboratory School / Anne Durst.
p. cm.
ISBN 978–0–230–61073–6 (hardback)
1. University of Chicago. University Elementary School.
2. Women educators—United States—History. 3. Education—United States—Experimental methods. I. Title.
LD7501.C4C58 2010
371.10082′0977311—dc22 2009050859

Design by Integra Software Services

First edition: July 2010

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America.

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# Acknowledgments

I have been working happily on my study of the Laboratory School teachers for close to a decade. My first debt of gratitude, among many, is to the original Laboratory School community for their willingness to chart new educational territory, and for their assiduous recordkeeping of this pioneering work. Not only did they write reports and publish articles, they also wrote delightful letters. One of my greatest pleasures in this project has been meeting several of the teachers' relatives. I met William Bardeen, grandson of Althea Harmer Bardeen, and Mary Hill Swope, Rachel Abbott, and the Abbott children, descendents of Mary Hill Swope. Kevin Swope kindly shared his knowledge of the Swope family in phone conversations, and David Swope communicated with me by email. These family members gave generously of their time and memories and provided me with a living link to these remarkable teachers. William Bardeen showed me the beautiful album of photographs of the Bardeen family taken by the photographer Eva Watson Schutze, a friend of Althea Harmer Bardeen. Kevin Swope sent me wonderful Hill and Swope family photographs. And Mary Hill Swope informed me of a recent donation she made of her grandmother's letters—which turned out to be a crucial addition to my research.

My study of the Laboratory School community has taken me to various national archives. Remarkably, the family of Katherine and Anna Camp saved decades of their letters, and Cornell University's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections has three of the family's collections of papers. Mary Hill Swope's letters are held in Special Collections at the University of Illinois at Chicago Library and in the Institute Archives and Special Collections at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library. A small number of the letters of Althea Harmer Bardeen, from a later period, are held at the University of Wisconsin's Steenbock Library in the Charles R. Bardeen Papers. The Southern Illinois University at Carbondale holds the John Dewey Papers, and its Center for Dewey Studies has painstakingly edited the philosopher's letters, which are available in digital form. The official records of the Laboratory School, including the teachers' reports, are

held in the Special Collections Research Center, at the University of Chicago Library. I have also visited the archives at Bentley Library of the University of Michigan, Bryn Mawr College Library, Drexel University Library, Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study, and Swarthmore College Library. I am grateful to the librarians at all of these institutions, as their gracious help made my visits to their libraries both pleasant and productive. These librarians always answered my email inquiries in a timely and careful manner, as have the librarians at the archives I was unable to visit: the Case Western Reserve University Archives, the Chautauqua Institution, Pratt Institute, and the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratories.

Archival collections are essential to the scholar of history; as important, to scholars in any field, is time to devote single-mindedly to writing. I am very grateful to the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater for granting me a semester of research leave. My deep thanks go to Chancellor Richard Telfer, Provost Christine Clements, Deans Jeffrey Barnett and Katharina Heyning, and Department Chairs Anthony Truog and Anne Zarinnia. The entire Department of Educational Foundations has been consistently supportive of my research, collaborating with Dean Barnett to offer me half-time research releases for two semesters prior to my full time leave. Our departmental assistant, Alicia Stone-Jackson, has helped me out in a number of ways, as have many at the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater's Anderson Library, especially Branden McCreedy and Peg Murray. On all sorts of technological matters, Stanley Smoniewski offered patient assistance. Denise Ehlen, the director of the university's Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, assisted me as I applied for research funds; I am grateful to the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater for the funding I received in support of my work on this project.

As I worked on my manuscript, I benefitted enormously from the helpful comments of several readers. David Durst, David Groth, Christopher Knief, and Amy Shuffelton read parts or all of the manuscript with careful attention, and offered constructive comments that improved my work and deepened my thinking. As a (then) anonymous reviewer, Robert Westbrook read my initial book proposal and offered a detailed and helpful response. I am grateful to all of these readers. I also want to thank my friend and graduate school adviser Carl Kaestle, who has long been an enthusiastic supporter of my work.

My original editor at Palgrave Macmillan, Julia Cohen, noticed my proposal and ushered it through the beginning of the publishing process. After she moved on from the company, Editor Burke Gerstenschlager and Assistant Samantha Hasey gracefully brought

the manuscript through the next steps. At the copyediting stage, Afrin Kabir and Kristy Lilas completed the project with efficiency and professionalism. I am grateful for the attentiveness of everyone at Palgrave Macmillan whenever I needed questions answered.

In addition to all the above, an author needs a place to write. For me, this was my favorite Madison café—EVP. I was a regular there for many months, and I could always count on the right atmosphere in which to lose myself in my project.

Finally, I'm grateful to my brother David, my sisters Susu, Elizabeth, Kowkie, and Ellen, and their families for all their support, and I'm happy that we all live in the same country again. My husband, Chris, has long believed in my project, even when it meant he had to take up the slack in our home when my work kept me from it. My deep thanks go to him. And my two most lovely sources of inspiration are my daughters, Rosa and Lucia. I thank them both for being such delightful individuals.

My longest and deepest debts of gratitude are to my mother, Elizabeth Coughlin Durst, and my father, David Phelan Durst. This book is dedicated to their memories.

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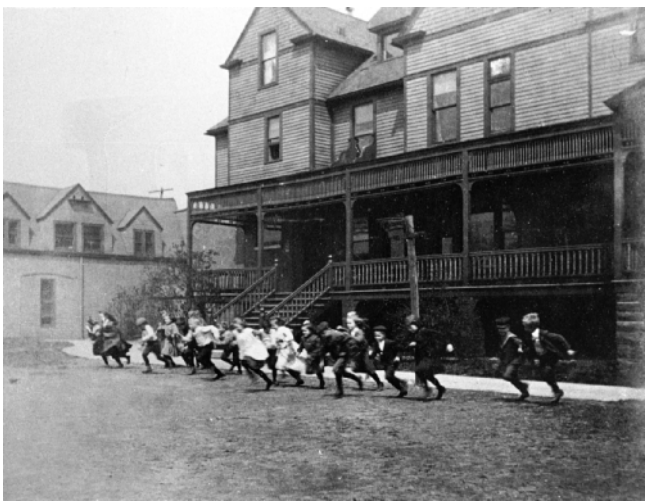
# Introduction

## The Laboratory School Community



Children running in front of the Laboratory School, circa 1900. Courtesy of the Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

> The school occupied a large city lot covered with a sparse and tawny grass, worn bare in spots by the running back and forth of many, busy, happy feet. The lot was cut across diagonally by a gray, dusty path leading to the school-house. That brown house with its good-sized veranda and passageway to the gym and shop held for the children a living world.[1]
>
> Former student Helen Greeley on the Laboratory School.

In 1896, John Dewey opened the University of Chicago's Laboratory School, an experimental school that he directed until 1904. This was a remarkable time for Dewey, and for the city that caused the young philosopher to "appreciate at every turn the absolute opportunity which chaos affords."[2] The Progressive Era United States was a country in search of novel ideas to solve the daunting problems of the new age: the rapid growth of cities, the steady increase in immigration, and the shifting nature of work. Some Americans, such as Dewey and his friend Jane Addams, responded to this transformative era by creating institutions where people could try out new ways to live and learn together. Through their ideas and actions, they contributed to what historian Jackson Lears calls a "mood of experiment" that was accompanied by "the conviction that life contained more surprise and possibility than previously imagined."[3]

At the same time that Dewey directed the Laboratory School, he was also centrally involved in the formulation of what fellow philosopher William James called "a *real school,* and *real Thought*"—the emerging philosophy of pragmatism.[4] According to pragmatism, truth is not given but rather worked out in "communities of inquiry."[5] Such communities were essential to the realization of a democracy that, for Dewey, had expanded to mean more than a form of government. He saw that solving the modern problems Addams addressed in her Chicago settlement house, Hull House, would require a democracy that permeated social relations. In Chicago and at Hull House, as Dewey's daughter would write years later, the philosopher understood that democracy was a "way of life."[6] As Louis Menand argues in his historical study of pragmatism, Dewey's "strategy was to promote, in every area of life, including industrial life, democracy, which he interpreted as the practice of 'associated living'—cooperation with others on the basis of tolerance and equality."[7]

While Dewey was observing the complexities of democracy at Hull House, he was also raising questions about how children learn. Memorization and recitation were the accepted instructional methods of his time, but he thought that real learning involved more than these cerebral exercises. His theory, which he called the "organic circuit," was that humans learned through "doing and undergoing," or acting and considering the results. This theory was, of course, related to the pragmatic understanding of knowledge as something that humans find together, through collective action. His ideas about democracy and about how children learn found a testing ground in the Laboratory School. As Dewey and his colleagues discovered, this collective

experimentation required an original kind of school organization—one that was shaped by Dewey's strong adherence to democratic working conditions for teachers.[8]

In his 1903 article "Democracy in Education," Dewey criticized public schools that were undemocratic workplaces for teachers: "The system which makes no great demands upon originality, upon invention, upon the continuous expression of individuality, works automatically to put and to keep the more incompetent teachers in the school." This was because "the best minds are drawn to the places where they can work most effectively," not to workplaces "where there is danger that they may have to submit to conditions which no self-respecting intelligence likes to put up with; and where their time and energy are likely to be so occupied with details of external conformity that they have no opportunity for free and full play of their own vigor."[9] In order to attract and retain the most competent teachers, all schools had to replace expectations of conformity with demands upon invention. This was particularly important at the Laboratory School, where teachers were the "competent inquirers"[10] crucial to pragmatism and central to the school's experimental purposes. The teachers made the Laboratory School a "living world."[11]

In this book, I explore the Laboratory School from the perspective of the teachers; my focus is on four young women—Anna Camp, Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill—whose experiences and writings put them at the center of the school community.[12] These women worked closely with John Dewey and the "circle of friends" involved with the school, including the philosopher's wife, Alice Chipman Dewey, his friend and colleague George Herbert Mead, Chicago educator Ella Flagg Young, and Jane Addams.[13] While the Laboratory School, like Hull House, brought men and women together, working with shared purposes, both communities were predominantly female groups.[14] Many of these teachers and settlement workers were what novelists and others called the "New Women" of the late nineteenth century—well-educated and independent women who sought a place for themselves in the modernizing cities.[15]

Nothing more vividly evokes this time than images of Americans caught up in what the Hull House resident Alice Hamilton called "wheeling fever"—the bicycle craze that hit Chicago particularly hard in the late nineteenth century. Hamilton and her Hull House roommate Mary Hill could often be found riding their "wheels" together on Chicago's streets and lakefront, "spinning around with the air fresh on our faces."[16] In addition to riding bicycles, the "New Women"

played tennis and went ice-skating, pastimes they enjoyed when they were not busy with reform and professional work. They dared to hope that women might find lasting opportunities for freedom of action in their public and professional lives.[17] Anna and Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill came of age during this time of possibility; they completed higher education and moved to Chicago in search of fulfilling work and an independent income, and they found both at the Laboratory School. As the Camp sisters described the typical Laboratory School teacher, in a phrase that also captures the essence of the "New Woman," she had "the fertile life experience that is the result of experimental living guided by intelligent thinking."[18]

The teachers' daily lives in the school took shape as a result of the Laboratory School community's efforts to address what John Dewey called the "problem" of schools—"the relation between individual freedom and collective well-being."[19] This relation was the basis of what Robert Westbrook calls Dewey's "ethical argument," emerging during the Laboratory School years. According to Westbrook, this argument "was that the good of the individual lies in the happiness that comes with the full development of his capacities and powers, and the good of society lies in the promotion of this self-realization for every individual."[20] Many schools of this time, with their increasingly centralized organization and uniformity of methods, posed challenges to the achievement of these aims for both teachers and students. As Dewey was setting up the experimental school as an alternative to traditional schools, he sought to reconcile the needs of the individual and those of the group by paying attention to two practical "factors."

The first factor that Dewey considered was the organization of the school as a community.[21] At the Laboratory School, the teachers conducted the research that marked the school as a laboratory and shared the results of their classroom practice in weekly reports that were discussed in the regular teachers' meetings. Such collaborative discussions—formal and informal—enabled them to evaluate and improve their work. The teachers' letters, published writings, and lectures attest to their engagement with the school's experimental purposes. As Katherine Camp Mayhew argued, before Dewey began the school "there had been no one daring enough to suggest that a school should be a laboratory where ideas could be tested out, and new things tried."[22]

At the Laboratory School, the testing of ideas happened through the collaborative efforts of the teachers. While writing the manuscript of what would become their 1936 book on the school, Katherine

Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards outlined the teachers' work on a course exploring why early humans created "permanent domiciles near good hunting grounds." As Mayhew and Edwards explained, "This course was first developed by Katherine Camp Mayhew, in collaboration with Althea Harmer Bardeen, Katharine Andrews Healy, and later Mary Hill Swope, who all actively cooperated, each from the approach of her specialty—science, the textile industry, the natural environment (science), and sociology." An additional teacher, Frank Ball, "was an indispensible member of this closely knit team with his direction of the construction in the shop of the necessary equipment and appliances."[23] This was in keeping with Dewey's understanding of the task confronting citizens in a democracy: "We face our problems in detail one by one as they arise, with all the resources provided by collective intelligence operating in co-operative action."[24]

The second factor that Dewey took into account as he set up the school was what he called the "course of study," or the curriculum.[25] At the Laboratory School the "common center" of the curriculum was located in the study of the "social occupations"—cooking, textile work, and shopwork. In his 1900 article "Psychology of Occupations," Dewey defined an occupation as "a mode of activity on the part of the child which reproduces, or runs parallel to, some form of work carried on in social life." The significance of the occupation for education was that "its end is in itself; in the growth that comes from the continual interplay of ideas and their embodiment in action."[26] In pragmatic fashion, knowledge was related to its application in the world. What children learned through cooking, for instance, was what Mayhew and Edwards called the appreciation of a "heritage of finesse in the science and art of cooking": the chemistry of combining ingredients, the social skills of making and serving a meal, the history of food traditions over the ages, and the mathematics required to figure out correct proportions.[27] Children learned through their growing understanding of the history of human ingenuity, employed over time to meet the basic needs of social life. And through the study of occupations, teachers at the Laboratory School provided children with concrete reasons to learn the content that comprised the traditional curriculum—reading, writing, and mathematics, along with history, science, languages, and the arts.

While Alice and John Dewey maintained that children could master this essential content more effectively through the social occupations, the collaborative testing of school practices resulted in modifications that were designed to improve instruction.[28] Some of the changes included supplementing the problem-solving curriculum with drills in

mathematics and reading; for instance, teachers found that one group needed remedial work in reading: "Most of the children entered into this arrangement with whole-hearted acceptance of its being the best way out of a bad situation," and the only way they could proceed with their studies of the American colonies.[29] Through their inquiry into their teaching successes and failures, recorded in the teachers' reports and in their published writings, the Laboratory School community fashioned its work on the model of scientific communities. As Mayhew and Edwards maintained of the use of the scientific method at the school, "By common consent it was the method at all times and in all situations where processes and activities were such that active investigation, testing out of guesses or theories, imagining possible results of this or that physical or social relation could be carried on."[30]

Working in an experimental school required an openness to change, for, as John Dewey argued in *Experience and Nature,* "surrender of what is possessed, disowning of what supports one in secure ease, is involved in all inquiry and discovery . . . For to arrive at new truth and vision is to alter. The old self is put off and the new self is only forming, and the form it finally takes will depend upon the unforeseeable result of an adventure."[31] The Laboratory School teachers came to the school, as Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards asserted, "with a feeling of joy in its adventure."[32] This spirit led the teachers to participate in other efforts that embodied the Progressive Era's experimental approach to social reform.[33] Most vital to the Laboratory School community was its connection to Hull House, which was forged by the friendship between John Dewey and Jane Addams. As a Hull House resident, Mary Hill worked with Dewey and Addams to create the settlement house's Labor Museum, which showcased immigrant traditions and taught adults in a fashion that resembled the Laboratory School with its focus on occupations.[34] Informing both institutions was an understanding of what the teachers called social history—a study of the contributions of men and women to the problems at the heart of communal life across time.

The Laboratory School experiment, the object of curiosity for many Americans, did not even survive a decade. Due mostly to long-standing misunderstandings with William Rainey Harper, the University of Chicago's president, John and Alice Dewey left Chicago and the school in 1904. A 1963 article in *Newsweek* declared that "more than an experiment," the Laboratory School "was a revolution." The newsmagazine reported that by the time of Dewey's departure, "the Lab School had become the most exciting educational enterprise in America."[35] One Chicago principal called the departure

of Dewey from the school a "major tragedy";[36] it meant the end of an original effort to collectively apply what Althea Harmer and others called "the constructive imagination" to teaching and learning in a democracy.[37] This short-lived experiment contains historical lessons for current education reformers as they address the many perplexing problems that plague American public schools.

Contemporary schools exist in an educational reality increasingly shaped by state and federal mandates concerning standardized testing, most prominently the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2002. In response, districts across the country have turned to prescriptive curricular programs, especially in the high-stakes areas of reading and mathematics instruction.[38] In the late 1990s, I was a teacher in a northern California charter school; during my first year there, I taught reading to my third graders using the Open Court program, a highly scripted curriculum in cartons that was popular in many of the state's districts.[39] On the basis of my assessment of the varied needs of the class, whose reading abilities ranged from pre-primer to grade level, the curriculum seemed a bad fit for most of my students; as I would discover later, Susan Ohanian calls this a problem of "one size fitting few."[40] During my next year at this large and diverse public school, I joined a group of teachers bent upon starting a school-within-a-school. This was a multi-age program with teachers as leaders, and while exciting at the outset, it proved in my view to be lacking in the support and structure necessary for successful teaching.

In my two years of teaching I experienced the extremes of too much prescription and too little guidance on curricular matters. The proliferation of scripted, publisher-driven curriculums poses challenges to the preservation of what the Laboratory School community called intellectual freedom in the teaching profession. In addition, unarticulated, nonsequential curriculums developed helter-skelter by individual teachers can also serve to reduce intellectual rigor in the profession and may contribute to the perception that "teacher-proof" curriculums are needed.[41] Dewey was aware of these problems; as he noted in 1936, "In an experimental school it is more difficult than elsewhere to avoid extremes. One of them results in a continual improvisation that is destructive of continuity and in the end of steady development of power. The other relies upon definite presentation of ends and methods for reaching them to which teachers are expected to conform."[42] John Dewey wanted to avoid both the bland uniformity of traditional school systems and the chaos of isolated teachers left to improvise on their own. The "community of inquiry" so central to Dewey's pragmatism, and to the school, represents a way to avoid

both extremes: at the Laboratory School, the very structures that were in place to assure teachers' intellectual freedom, such as teachers' reports and meetings, served also to offer teachers the guidance they needed to grow in effectiveness as professionals.[43]

Thirty years after they taught at the Laboratory School alongside John Dewey, Anna Camp Edwards and Katherine Camp Mayhew sat down with the school's founder to discuss the manuscript that eventually became *The Dewey School,* the sisters' book on the school during the Dewey years. In their conversation, which they recorded and transcribed, Dewey asked the sisters about their purpose in writing the book: "It is the same old question whether this is primarily historical, or commemorative or whether you are trying to bring out something that would be significant and bear on present problems." Edwards replied, "I should say the latter," and, ever the optimist, Dewey declared, "Your conscience will keep you from idealizing it too much."[44] While my purposes with my study are "primarily historical," I also consider how this school from the past might "bear on present problems." The most important lesson we can take from the Laboratory School, I argue, is that teachers, in communities of "competent inquirers," must be central figures in any successful school reform movement. John Dewey was clear in his belief in this necessity, both in his writings and in the kind of school that he and his colleagues brought to life. As Dewey asked in his essay "Democracy in Education," "What does democracy mean save that the individual is to have a share in determining the conditions and the aims of his own work; and that, upon the whole, through the free and mutual harmonizing of different individuals, the work of the world is better done than when planned, arranged, and directed by a few, no matter how wise or of how good intent that few?"[45]

# Chapter 1

# John Dewey and the Beginnings of the Laboratory School

In 1896, John Dewey started an experimental school at the University of Chicago to test ideas and teach children. He was aware from the beginning that this public act would call for abilities that he thought important, but had not yet mastered. During the Laboratory School's early years, the philosopher wrote that "the kind of studies I have pursued, and my natural bent of mind have tended to give me a habit of isolation in work." These interests and tendencies, he felt, had caused him "serious difficulty . . . in getting into cooperative relations with people—my theories to the contrary notwithstanding."[1] Yet in spite of his inclination to solitude, Dewey sought out such cooperative relations in deliberately created communities dedicated to change, experimentation, and social reform.[2] His ground-breaking philosophical work on pragmatism was brought to life in the Laboratory School, where Dewey and others created a "community of inquiry" in which, as one teacher wrote, they "were all on a piece of research together."[3] Dewey figured centrally in other such collective ventures at the turn of the century, including his friend Jane Addams's Chicago settlement house, Hull House, and philosopher Thomas Davidson's Glenmore Summer School for the Culture Sciences in New York's Adirondack Mountains.[4]

In an echo of his own attempt to reconcile his "habit of isolation" with his belief in cooperative social action, Dewey's aim in his educational work was to find an outlook that would permit the individual to flourish within a community. As Dewey wrote in 1936, the Laboratory School was "animated by a desire to discover . . . how a school could

become a cooperative community while developing in individuals their own capacities and satisfying their own needs."[5] Phrased differently, this is a central question for a democracy, and one of Dewey's abiding concerns. Such questions came to life in the school, carried out in daily classroom practice by the teachers who took the chance to work in an experimental school headed by a young professor at a newly established university. The focus of this book will be on how the Laboratory School teachers understood and carried out this renowned innovation in education. Before turning to the teachers, however, it is first necessary to establish how Dewey mapped out and then brought about this pedagogical experiment. How did his early life and career prepare him for his educational work? What led him to Chicago, where he would combine an adventure in practical pedagogy with one in ideas?

## John Dewey's early years

In 1939, John Dewey's youngest child, Jane Mary, collaborated with her sister Evelyn to write a biographical essay on their father. As she added in a note, "this biography was written by the daughters of its subject from materials which he furnished."[6] That essay, an autobiographical article written in 1930, and his collected letters offer glimpses of John Dewey's reflections on his life and influences.[7] Numerous scholars have contributed biographical studies of the philosopher, including early works by George Dykuizen and Neil Coughlan, and more recent biographies by Jay Martin, Alan Ryan, and Robert Westbrook.[8] During Dewey's long life, his activities and writings reflected his involvement in virtually all the interests of modern society—art, politics, law, and education. My purpose here is not to summarize such a rich and complex life, or the nuanced views of his biographers, but rather to focus on those life events and choices that led to his founding of the experimental school in late-nineteenth-century Chicago.[9]

More so than many of those whose ideas would influence his, John Dewey the philosopher was a self-made man.[10] The "natural bent of mind" of which he wrote inclined him toward the study of ideas before he quite knew that it could provide him with a livelihood and a life's focus. Born in 1859, he grew up in Burlington, Vermont, with his religious-minded mother, Lucina Rich Dewey, and his autodidactic, language-loving father, Archibald Dewey. The future philosopher and his two brothers attended public school, as did most of Burlington's young of the post–Civil War era. Of his early exposure to public education, what is perhaps most notable was that Dewey found school

to be steadfastly boring. In spite of this, he succeeded academically, and after entering college early, he completed his university degree at the University of Vermont in 1879, his twentieth year. The studies most compelling to him were his philosophical courses of his last undergraduate year, so he was unsure of what to do next, not knowing yet how to pursue this interest. He decided to try his hand at public school teaching, and secured a high school teaching post in Oil City, Pennsylvania. Accounts of his success there varied, but he returned to Vermont in short order, to another high school teaching position—by reports a challenging one. At the same time, he continued his philosophical studies in an informal fashion with Professor Henry A. P. Torrey of his alma mater, in companionable walks, discussing the classics of philosophy.[11]

While studying with Torrey he began to realize that he could pursue the questions that intrigued him through more formal channels, and he left Vermont for good when he entered the newly founded Johns Hopkins University in 1882 as a graduate student in philosophy. For someone like Dewey, with no intention of following a religious calling, this was a risky move; at that point, in the 1880s, most professors of philosophy doubled as members of the clergy.[12] As Max Eastman explained it, "Professors of philosophy were ministers of the gospel who for some reason, located as often in their vocal organs as their brains, had found it easier to teach than preach. They were a sort of plain-clothes chaplain employed by the colleges to see that science did not run away with the pupils' minds."[13] So John Dewey, having borrowed money from an aunt to begin his studies in Baltimore, was not setting out on a well-charted path. It is important, then, to contemplate the inner forces and questions that compelled him to fashion this kind of life.

The philosophical searching that drove Dewey's early life choices had much to do with his desire to reconcile the "material and moral sciences."[14] He sought a philosophical structure for his world—a world that, with the advent of Darwinism, had become infused with the inevitability of evolutionary change.[15] During his years as a student, Dewey was searching for an outlook that would enable him to apply the methodology of the sciences to questions of a moral nature.[16] At Johns Hopkins, the pioneer American research university, graduate students in the 1880s found an exhilarating atmosphere in which to engage in such pursuits. As Jane Dewey described it, "The very possibility of students' doing anything new, anything original, was a novel and exciting idea to most of these young men. They must have been aware that there were people in the world doing intellectual

things which had never been done before, but their previous education had never suggested to them that they might be of this happy band."[17] Driven by his own philosophical questions, Dewey found himself in an environment where he was encouraged, even expected, to forge new thought. While at Johns Hopkins, John Dewey studied with the philosophers George Sylvester Morris (who was also a faculty member at the University of Michigan) and Charles Sanders Peirce, as well as the psychologist Granville Stanley Hall. It was the Hegelian Morris, his strongest influence at this time, who would help Dewey secure his first academic position, after completing his Ph.D. in 1884, as instructor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Michigan.[18]

## University of Michigan (1884–1894)

As Jane Dewey reported in her biographical essay, John Dewey maintained that the "forces" that influenced him came from "persons and from situations more than from books" (though in some cases, of course, such people also wrote significant books, such as William James and his *Principles of Psychology* of 1890). It was in Ann Arbor that Dewey would come into contact with many of the influences that led him to create the Laboratory School a decade later in Chicago.[19] During his years at the University of Michigan, John Dewey and his close colleagues were compelled by what the sociologist Lewis Feuer called a "desire to make philosophy practical."[20]

For Dewey, this move toward practicality was, at least in part, borne of a felicitous event. During his first year in Ann Arbor, he met and fell in love with Alice Chipman, a fellow boarding house resident who was unlike anyone the shy scholar had previously known; they married in 1886. Alice Chipman was a student of philosophy at the University of Michigan, where she was active in campus groups such as the Samovar Club, whose members read and discussed Russian novelists, and Sorosis, a women's club dedicated to intellectual pursuits.[21] Alice Chipman and her sister had been orphaned as children, and they grew up with their grandparents, Fred and Evalina Riggs, in a household where, Jane Dewey wrote, "the spirit of adventure was a living force."[22] Alice Chipman Dewey was described by many who knew her as a woman with a fierce and independent intelligence who was deeply concerned with matters of justice and equality.[23] Her daughter asserted that "she was undoubtedly largely responsible for the early widening of Dewey's philosophic interests from the commentative and classical to the field of contemporary life. Above all, things which had

previously been matters of theory acquired through his contact with her a vital and direct human significance."[24] Indeed, as Dewey's former student Max Eastman wrote, "Mrs. Dewey would grab Dewey's ideas—and grab him—and insist that something be done."[25]

While in Ann Arbor, Dewey also met the colleague who would become an instrumental professional influence and his closest friend: George Herbert Mead. Mead and his wife, Helen Castle Mead, were neighbors of the Deweys in Ann Arbor; their children were contemporaries, and the couples would remain close throughout their lives.[26] George Herbert Mead hailed from a religious and academic New England family, and he suffered more than Dewey for their mutual forsaking of the certainties of religious tradition.[27] Mead's search for a system to explain the world as he saw it brought him to Harvard, where he studied with Josiah Royce and William James, and to Germany, where, it seems, all but Dewey went to become philosophers. Mead's contribution to pragmatic thought would be significant, in spite of his insecurity regarding his writing abilities and the subsequently small number of works published during his lifetime. Mead drew upon his knowledge of the natural sciences to forge a theory of the social underpinnings of individuality; his ideas were widely shared with colleagues and students in conversations and lectures.[28]

Even before Mead arrived at the University of Michigan in 1891, Dewey had begun to build a department supportive of his efforts to reshape philosophy; several members of this group would later form the core of the famed "Chicago school" for which William James expressed admiration. After arriving in Ann Arbor in 1884, the young instructor worked alongside his mentor, G. S. Morris, until Dewey announced his departure in the spring of 1888 to become chair of the philosophy department at the University of Minnesota. His time there was short-lived, as Morris died suddenly in 1889, and Dewey was called upon to replace him as head of the Michigan department. Dewey then hired Yale Divinity School graduate James Hayden Tufts to join him in 1889 as an instructor; Tufts left in 1891 to study for his Ph.D. in Freiburg, and Mead was hired to replace him. (Tufts, hired a year later by President William Rainey Harper at the new University of Chicago, successfully urged Harper to offer positions to both Dewey and Mead.) James Rowland Angell, son of the University of Michigan's president, studied under Dewey in Ann Arbor, and then headed to Harvard to study with Royce and James before embarking for Germany; Angell would begin his long association with the University of Chicago in 1894, at Dewey's invitation. As Dewey's

biographer Jay Martin asserts of these men, "All were on paths similar to Dewey's, from absolutism to experimentalism. In a natural, almost unnoticed way, Dewey was creating the first philosophic school in America from this gathering of like-minded thinkers."[29] When members of this group reunited in Chicago, they would continue to contribute to this new school of thought, grounded in the testing of ideas in real life, while at the same time helping out with the Laboratory School.

As faculty members at the University of Michigan, Dewey and his colleagues worked for President James B. Angell, beloved by many for his democratic ways. Under Angell's administration, faculty members at the university taught in an atmosphere of academic freedom unusual for its time. The philosophy department was independent of religious influence, leaving Dewey free to shape it in keeping with his new ideas; this was still an uncommon practice in late-nineteenth-century higher education. In addition, the Ann Arbor campus was one of the first state universities to embrace coeducation.[30] The significance of the institution's decision to accept women was profound for Dewey, of course, as it was here that he met Alice Chipman. In addition, Dewey met two other co-eds—the sisters Katherine and Elizabeth (Bess) Camp of Sandusky, Ohio. For the Camp family, the University of Michigan's policy of coeducation shaped the course of their lives, for it was in Ann Arbor that they first encountered the dynamic nucleus of what would become the Laboratory School community. Katherine Camp, one of the four teachers at the center of this book, became the longest-serving teacher at the Laboratory School; along with her younger sister Anna, and with the cooperation of John Dewey, she wrote a 1936 volume on what they called *The Dewey School*. The Camp and Dewey families remained close from their Ann Arbor days on, throughout Dewey's life.[31]

During his years in Michigan, Dewey began his efforts to bring his philosophical ideas to bear on practical life. One of these early experiments was what Alan Ryan calls the "tragicomedy" of Dewey's ill-fated collaboration with the journalist (Ryan says "first-class crank") Franklin Ford to produce a newspaper they planned to call *Thought News*. Although unsuccessful, it was an early example of what would be a long-standing aim of the philosopher: to put philosophy in the service of (and to the test of) public affairs.[32] More congenial to Dewey, he would find, was the enterprise of education. Dewey's involvement in school reform, surely stimulated by Alice Dewey's interest in such matters, was promoted during these years by the close contact between Michigan public schools and the university. Along with other University of Michigan professors, Dewey investigated

some of the state's schools, and found them to be structured without regard for then-current psychological theories of how children learned. Dewey was also a founding member of the Michigan Schoolmasters Club, an organization that linked college instructors and high school teachers in the state and gave the philosopher an opportunity to satisfy his growing interest in questions of education.[33]

Dewey's work with Michigan public schools was one way that he came into contact with the "real life" for which his philosophy was reaching. Another such connection that began during his Ann Arbor years was his friendship with Jane Addams and his enduring relationship with Hull House, the Chicago settlement house she and Ellen Gates Starr founded in 1889. In his early explorations of public schools, and even in the fruitless *Thought News* endeavor, Dewey encountered the challenges and rewards of collective efforts to connect ideas with the world outside the university. In Jane Addams and the community she gathered at Hull House, he saw individuals taking action in a cooperative and democratic fashion.

John Dewey visited Hull House as early as 1892, and in January of that year he wrote Addams a letter thanking her for her hospitality and glowing with approval of her work: "While I did not see much of any particular thing, I think I got a pretty good idea of the general spirit & methods. Every day I stayed there only added to my conviction that you had taken the right way. I am confident that 25 years from now the forces now turned in upon themselves in various church & c agencies will be finding outlet very largely through just such channels as you have opened."[34] As Jane Dewey concluded in her biographical essay, "Dewey's faith in democracy as a guiding force in education took on both a sharper and a deeper meaning because of Hull House and Jane Addams." It was here that Dewey saw "that democracy is a way of life, the truly moral and human way of life, not a political institutional device."[35]

Hull House was not the only cooperative experiment that Dewey took part in during the Ann Arbor years; he also participated in a loose network of so-called summer schools located in the Northeast, designed to "carry out the idea of summer study—in philosophy, literature, sociology, and religion—away from the turmoil and distractions of city life."[36] Dewey first got involved in this movement in 1890 at the Farmington School of Ethics in Connecticut, a summer school of philosophy started by the Scottish philosopher Thomas Davidson. (Dewey and Addams may have become acquainted with each other through this involvement, as Dewey was joined at Farmington that summer by Chicago reformer Henry Demarest Lloyd, a close friend of Jane Addams.) [37]

While the Farmington school was short-lived, Davidson and his colleagues started a more successful venture in 1891—the Glenmore Summer School of Culture Studies—located in Keene Valley in New York's Adirondack Mountains. This remote wilderness was the site of the original Philosophers' Camp that began in 1858—a summer gathering of Boston scholars that included Ralph Waldo Emerson. Perhaps in recognition of this hallowed legacy (along with the availability of land), Davidson re-located his summer school nearby. At Glenmore, Dewey argued with Davidson, its founder, about how best to structure the learning experiences at his summer school (Dewey seemed to prefer the atmosphere of a camp); Davidson joked that the Deweys, who built a cottage across the stream from Glenmore, "had chosen to live 'across the gulf,' a recognition on his part that they did not agree wholly with his ideas of devoting the summer school to inculcating moral discipline in those who attended it."[38] (Mary Foster, a participant at the summer school, seemed to agree with Dewey; recollecting her four summers at Glenmore, she wrote tactfully that for Davidson, "all free enjoyment was to be rational. It was not easy to get together many people who were able to live up to this ideal."[39]) In addition to Glenmore, this valley was the location of several similar communities during Dewey's time, including the Ausable Club at Saint Huberts, associated with Felix Adler of the Ethical Culture Society; Summerbrook, Prestonia Mann Martin's literary cooperative visited by, among others, Jane Addams and Charlotte Perkins Gilman; and Putnam Camp, once co-owned by Harvard's William James.[40]

By all accounts, the atmosphere evoked deep thought—visitors found a marvelous landscape, interesting people, and the chance to stretch body and mind in fireside debates and mountain tramps. One of the key figures in the Keene Valley orbit for Dewey's intellectual life was William James. Dewey had been deeply affected by James's *Principles of Psychology* of 1890, and particularly by James's argument regarding the biological basis of modern psychological theory—the idea that thought is a function of humans adjusting to their environment; of this Dewey wrote, "It worked its way more and more into all my ideas and acted as a ferment to transform old beliefs."[41] Dewey struck up what might be called a professional friendship with the engaging and iconic James during these summers spent in the shadow of Mount Hurricane. Glenmore, then, should not be overlooked as one of the locations of Dewey's shift from "absolutism to experimentalism," for it was here that Dewey had the experience of living amid a collective (loose as it was) of thinkers whose ranks included some of the most innovative philosophers and reformers of the age.

Thus during his decade in Ann Arbor, Dewey came into contact with "persons and events," and also books and collectives, that influenced him as he began to grapple with the questions that would lay the groundwork for a new school and a new school of thought: How might the methods of philosophical inquiry be brought to bear on practical matters like education? How can scientists, philosophers, and likewise, educators, establish truth in their disciplines through testing ideas in action—through democratic inquiry?[42] Dewey had begun to think of democracy in broad terms—as a "way of life," and not just a form of government. For Dewey, as for Addams, it was essential that all citizens enter fully into the social decisions that affect their lives, including such determinations made at their places of work.[43] Dewey's philosophical development mirrored his social and personal development; the founding ideas of the Laboratory School and of his pragmatism were grounded in his work and life during these important years in Ann Arbor. Dewey would turn his mind to the service of the new philosophy of pragmatism, maintaining that through democratic inquiry in communities we can establish truths, however contingent, by testing ideas in the laboratory of everyday life. Dewey had developed a devotion to experimentation that would remain with him throughout his long life.[44]

## University of Chicago (1894–1904)

At the University of Chicago, newly reopened and endowed by the Rockefeller fortune, President William Rainey Harper was looking for a philosopher. While John Dewey was not his first choice, James Tufts, recently hired by Harper, praised his former Michigan colleague as "an original and acute observer as well as an able thinker."[45] Dewey was appointed as the head of a joint department that included philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy in 1894, and he began to contemplate starting an experimental school soon after his arrival in Chicago.[46] The Laboratory School, first known officially as the University Elementary School and popularly referred to as the Dewey School, opened in January of 1896 in the Hyde Park neighborhood surrounding the University of Chicago.[47] Beginning with 16 students and 2 teachers, the school would grow to include 140 students, 23 teachers, and 10 assistants.[48] Dewey wanted a new kind of school, and a laboratory for his philosophical ideas. In a letter to Alice Dewey in 1894, Dewey articulated his aims: "The school is the one form of social life which is abstracted & under control—which is directly experimental, and

if philosophy is ever to be an experimental science, the construction of a school is its starting point."[49]

Added to these professional concerns was his desire that his own children be educated in a school free from the boredom that plagued him in his own public school years. While in Europe with their mother in 1894 and 1895, Fred and Evelyn, the couple's older children, were not attending school regularly; Dewey was not too worried—on the contrary, he wrote, "partly I am glad that the children have escaped as much of the school as they have." As he went on: "I realize what you say about the evils of their life, & think they need the routine of a school now, but at least they are still themselves with their own intelligence & their own responses."[50] While devising his plans for a new school that would enable his children to be "still themselves," he seems also to have been attracted to the possibilities of an education for his family that was subsidized by the university and its wealthy benefactor, John D. Rockefeller. He told his wife that "if the Univ. can be utilized as a means of educating Fred & Evelyn Mr. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Co would have some justification finally."[51]

Dewey was also concerned for the children of Chicago, lamenting that "when you think of the thousands & thousands of young 'uns who are practically being ruined negatively if not positively in the Chicago schools every year, it is enough to make you go out & howl on the street corners like the Salvation Army."[52] Hard as it is to imagine the scholarly Dewey howling on the street corners, his assessment of the city's schools was accurate, as indicated by Joseph Mayer Rice's muckraking investigations of Chicago schools.[53] Dewey contemplated a school on the west side of Chicago, near Hull House (a similar idea came up again several years later), for, as he wrote to Alice Dewey, he "had no desire to have an aristocratic school or to help train the children of the higher classes." President Harper, however, wanted a school closer to the university, and Dewey gave in easily, admitting that "I can't quite get over the argument of convenience of access myself."[54]

As John Dewey set out to create his experimental school, which he directed until he left for New York City in 1904, he was accompanied by a number of colleagues and friends, including the school's teachers—what Ellen Condliffe Lagemann calls the "creative community" encircling Dewey in Chicago.[55] Among those supporting him, in addition to Alice Dewey, were the Meads, who moved to Chicago at this time, and the settlement leader Jane Addams, whose friendship with Dewey was deepened by their new proximity.[56] Chicago at this time was, depending on one's viewpoint, either teeming with chaos

and trouble or filled with the excitement and possibilities of a new era.[57] In a fashion typical of the philosopher, whose Hegelian studies had put him permanently in search of dualisms to unite, Dewey brought these views together, writing to his wife that "Chicago is the place to make you appreciate at every turn the absolute opportunity which chaos affords."[58]

Dewey's outlook on his new home was shaped by his close connection to Hull House, where he served as a trustee during these years. During his first months in Chicago, alone with his youngest child, Morris, Dewey wrote many letters to his wife and older children in Europe, regaling them with tales of his encounters with Jane Addams.[59] Listening to a talk she gave during this time on settlement house work, he was struck by her "absolute organic directness & sincerity" and by her outlook on the purpose of a settlement house. As Dewey reported to his wife, Addams hoped that settlements would not originate "from ambition or the desire to have a settlement, or from a desire to do good. Philanthropy had been identified with helping instead of with interpretation. The only way they could take their learning to anyone was by turning it into action so that it could be seen—people were already talked to death & written to death."[60]

Dewey's letters from this time are filled with the enthusiasm of a man embarking on a new life, and Hull House was his portal.[61] Interpretation, or an active process of learning, would figure prominently in the educational practices pioneered at the Laboratory School. According to George Herbert Mead, quoting Dewey in a 1910 article, "Instruction should be an interchange of experience in which the child brings his experience to be interpreted by the experience of the parent or teacher. This recognizes that education is interchange of ideas, is conversation—belongs to a universe of discourse."[62] This kind of learning was not without its frustrations, of course. As Dewey wrote to his family, after a Sunday class and lecture at Hull House that left him "rather dissipated," he seemed to agree with Addams that "people had got to the point of where they 'can feel together, & act together & yet but can't think together.' "[63] Both Addams and Dewey would devote considerable energies to this effort to get people to "think together." Their shared concerns led to relations between Hull House and the Laboratory School that were close and fruitful.

The Laboratory School, with its founding aim as a laboratory for the testing of philosophical ideas, embodied the pragmatism that John Dewey and others were working out at this time.[64] Although the ideas that came to be known as pragmatism had been coalescing in several minds for a number of years, as Louis Menand argues, it was in

1898 that William James "introduced the philosophy known as pragmatism to the world."[65] Dewey's pragmatism was not exactly James's, or Charles Sanders Peirce's (Peirce, credited with the original use of the term in the 1870s, took to calling it "pragmaticism," which was "a word he said he thought too ugly to be kidnapped."[66]) What these thinkers had in common, however, was an approach to ideas that featured humans in active search of knowledge and truth; James referred to this as the "strenuous mood."[67] This was a philosophy that fit its time, as the pragmatists applied the methods of science to the philosophical search for meaning that had previously been dominated by religion and metaphysics. Ideas, for the pragmatists, were tools to be used to understand the world, and particularly for Dewey, to be worked out in democratic communities.

An instrumental community for Dewey was the one surrounding the experimental school; his pragmatism, as Louis Menand argues in *The Metaphysical Club,* "was a consequence of the success of the Laboratory School."[68] Dewey attested to this in a letter he wrote to a French professor in 1911, tracing his efforts to "develop a theory of a more organic connection between thought and action." As he reflected, "I have no doubt also that I was much influenced in my philosophical theory [b]y my practical concern with education. Having to teach the subject of pedagogy and also being in charge of an experimental school, I felt the inadequacy of existing theories of knowledge for educational purpose[s]."[69] Dewey's theory of knowledge—his pragmatism—and his experimental school were both shaped by his efforts to connect thought and action through collective inquiry.[70]

Dewey was clear about the implications of pragmatic thought for schools. As he wrote in 1908 in "The Bearings of Pragmatism upon Education," "An education based upon the pragmatic conception would inevitably turn out persons who were alive to the necessity of continually testing their ideas and beliefs by putting them into practical application, and of revising their beliefs on the basis of the results of such application."[71] Five years earlier, in "Democracy in Education," Dewey wrote similarly about democracy: "The ethical principle upon which [democracy] rests" is "the responsibility and freedom of mind in discovery and proof."[72] In a pragmatic educational experiment, teachers needed to be both responsible and free, so that they could test, apply, and revise their ideas. As Robert Westbrook maintains, the pragmatists relied on a "community of competent inquirers" to "fix a belief."[73] This was in sharp contrast to the emerging organization of Progressive Era public schools, where teachers were increasingly

marginalized as enactors of the decisions of others. The "truths" of pedagogy, in most public schools, were not determined collectively, but rather were passed down to teachers by administrators.[74] A school based on a model of pragmatic inquiry involved a radical experiment in educational organization.[75]

Thus that Dewey began his experimental school at the same time that he was working out the outlines of this new philosophy was no coincidence. The school served as a community in which to test philosophical ideas, and these ideas, in turn, shaped the experimental and democratic structure of the school. Both ventures were rooted in Dewey's desire to replace tradition with a new system of thought and practice; as he wrote of the school, he wanted to "break out of the treadmill."[76] But the development of the school of thought so admired by William James went along swimmingly compared with the messy work of starting and maintaining a real school.

The University of Chicago's president, William Rainey Harper, both supported and thwarted Dewey's efforts to begin the actual school. Harper enjoyed the fame the philosopher and his experimental school brought to the university (as Dewey wrote, Harper "wants something as new as when the word kindergarten was first used"[77]), but from the beginning, he and Dewey did not agree on the financial arrangements that, after all, were necessary to get the school under way and keep it going. Early in their relationship, Dewey expressed doubts about Harper's priorities. As he wrote to Alice, "There is no doubt Harper is afraid of hurting the feelings of the Capitalists, and sees the external, money side of the Univ & is relatively purblind to the real advance of life."[78] These long-standing disputes with Harper over the school's finances would provide the backdrop for the eventual end of this educational experiment.

In the beginning, however, in spite of his doubts about the depth of Harper's support, Dewey threw himself into the arrangements for the school, concerning himself with matters as down-to-earth as easels, window gardens, and maps.[79] His letters to the school's first teacher, Clara Mitchell, and to an early assistant, Frank Manny, are valuable sources in any effort to understand the establishment of the school. As Dewey wrote in his introductory letter to Mitchell, in November of 1895, "The dept expects to have a school, ultimately from kindergarten through academy, in connection with it. This school will be primarily a school of methods, only secondarily a school of practice—That is, its primary intention is to attempt a systematic organization of the school curriculum, testing & developing methods both from the psychological & the practical sides."[80]

In fitting pragmatic fashion, this was to be a school in which participants would experiment with educational methods to come up with a way to organize and understand the curriculum. Six days later (Mitchell must have written to him expressing her interest), Dewey provided details ("25 children between the ages of 6 & 9; & the University will pay you $800 for the remainder of the year") and also indicated that a teacher in the school would need to see her job with fresh eyes. He explained that while instruction would happen in the mornings, she would need to devote "some afternoons a week to be given to going to see the country round about, visit the Museum &c." And, illustrating the spirit of experimentation with which he approached this school, he added, "I do not see just how to tell in advance just how much of this will be profitable."[81] This was a man unafraid of uncertainty—indeed, one who was willing to embrace doubt.[82]

In a subsequent letter to Clara Mitchell, written just over a month before they would open the school, Dewey outlined his aims for this educational experiment. While what he prepared was "not a rigid scheme to be 'taught,'" he allowed that "anticipation of contingencies is more than half the battle. . . . I think it will be found that the development of the children's interests will follow very closely a truly scientific development of the subject."[83] In a later letter to Mitchell—perhaps she had misgivings—Dewey assured her that "if it binds you—seems to give a set scheme to which to conform, please throw it away." While it is unlikely that he would have agreed to discard everything that he had worked out, this letter is a testament to his regard for teachers and to his sense that they were integral to the theory and practice of the school. In this letter, he went on to avow the "need of slowness & growth." As he wrote, "I believe the one thing [this] Laboratory of Education ought to stand for is sufficient slowness of operation to secure maturity through growth."[84]

From the start, then, Dewey saw his school as a "laboratory," and he was as concerned with the academic content as he was with the children's interests and with the teachers' involvement. Dewey was never just child-centered, or teacher-centered, or even content-centered;[85] as C. Wright Mills argued, "Dewey takes a point of sight and builds upon a conceptual structure with which he can grasp both the points which were being argued over; this structure is different from either of the conflicting or isolated doctrines which it 'combines.' It is Deweyan."[86] In his early deliberations over the school, he revealed his intention to bring together the children and the curriculum through the agency of talented teachers.

In letters to Mitchell and Manny during the months before and after opening the school, Dewey provided his "philosophical outline" for the school and assessed their preliminary efforts to carry out this philosophy in the real life of the classroom. In a letter to Clara Mitchell, he shared some "remarks on the philosophy of education." He warned her that "they are highly general, as you will see, & yet it seems to me they give the outlines & limits of any specific, detailed practical work."[87] He explained that the school would operate in recognition of the scientific (psychological) understandings of individual children's interests and behavior ("based in Nature"), as children are brought into connection with others ("giving to Society"). As I have argued, Dewey himself found it challenging, but vital, to reconcile individuals with their community in ways that permitted all to thrive. The way to do this, he wrote to Mitchell, was to "hit upon a genuine spontaneous activity & interest" and to "so utilize it that it becomes an effective habit (character) instead of a more or less temporary impulse." For this to happen, the teacher would need to "give [the interest] an end or object. This must be social, because only a social end can focus & direct the impulse." So for a child interested in food, the social end might be the preparation of a luncheon. It was also necessary, according to Dewey, to "give [the interest] material, a sphere of operations, something to do with." To continue the example of food and cooking, teachers would provide materials with which to cook—vegetables from a garden, for instance, and the means by which to transform the vegetables into a meal. Finally, utilizing a student's interest "means, in due time, to have such a consciousness of the technique of the process, as to be [*sic*] enable him to free that technique—ie., direct the habit to new ends, and enable it to work with different principles when necessary." Techniques were made free, in this theory, through active inquiry. In cooking, when a student understands why ingredients react the way they do, she is able to direct her learning to new ends—to combine ingredients in new ways, observe the results, and understand the science behind the cooking.[88]

In May 1896, after the school had been operating for several months, John Dewey wrote to Frank Manny that "one of the most experienced" of the Cook County Normal School instructors had visited the school, and remarked that "it was the first time in her experience she had ever seen children working entirely from immediate interest and not for 'results.' This has come about solely by throwing the emphasis upon opportunities for and instruments of expression and allowing the children to do the rest."[89] Several weeks later, Dewey was characteristically optimistic about the first semester of his school.

Again to Manny, he wrote, "About the school; we have demonstrated one thing this year: there are no limits to the hold on children's attention when subjects of instruction are presented to them first in terms of their own life experience; as cooking, carpentry; also that such a beginning removes practically completely the school atmosphere, and puts in its place a free social environment."

Dewey went on to outline the challenges for the future—largely to fall upon the teachers, under study in this book—to, as he put it, "take advantage of the opportunity we have created." He was "more and more convinced that given our free conditions, the only limit to the range and quality of knowledge that can be got in the first three years is the teacher's ability to organize the subject matter."[90] Clara Mitchell, a generalist teacher, did not remain for long at the Laboratory School; Dewey would hereafter seek teachers with specialized knowledge, and the school was organized according to departments. Early on, then, it was clear to Dewey that finding qualified teachers was essential to the successful operation of his "Laboratory of Education." Indeed, in a letter that spring to Frank Manny, Dewey wrote that

> I am getting anxious about finding some good teachers for our school next year: I want to find a union of three things if possible: 1st a good thorough education, especially on the scientific sides so as to be able to face the problem of the adjustment of the scientific material to primary grades; 2nd some experience with little children enough at least to demonstrate naturalness, ease & sympathy in relations to them; 3rd some amount of practical & executive ability. I might add a fourth point, [sufficient] mental scope to be able to relate [the] special and technical acquirements to a general plan and [aim].[91]

And it is to these teachers that I shall now turn—to those whose experience and energy made the school what it was.

# Chapter 2

# "Venturing in Education": Four Laboratory School Teachers

In 1936, Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards published *The Dewey School,* the study of the Laboratory School that was the result of their long association with John Dewey, his family, and his pedagogical ideas and projects. The sisters worked closely with Dewey and his daughter Evelyn Dewey Smith to complete the book, the kernel of which had started with his wife, Alice Chipman Dewey. They solicited remembrances from fellow teachers and from former students and their parents and included these remarks alongside selections from the teachers' weekly reports and articles that were written during the school's Dewey years. The book, then, reflects the collaborative nature of the school and its community and attempts to convey what Anna Camp Edwards called the school's "adventurous atmosphere."[1]

Along with *The Dewey School,* the teachers' letters and writings document the role of the teachers at the Laboratory School and their contributions to this "important and epoch-making school."[2] In an experimental school following what Edwards called "the pragmatic method with its 'test and prove,' "[3] the teachers involved in this daily inquiry were central to the experiment. It is important, then, to know who the teachers were and to understand how their experiences prepared them for this venture; as the Camp sisters put it, the Laboratory School teacher, "whatever her specialty, should have had the fertile

life experience that is the result of experimental living guided by intelligent thinking."[4]

After just a few months of directing the Laboratory School, John Dewey was excited about the prospects for the school, but realized that in order to "take advantage of the opportunity we have created," he needed teachers who were up to the challenge—who were well educated, especially in scientific fields; experienced with children; capable in "practical and executive" matters; and equipped with the "mental scope" to bring together "general aims" and daily practice. The only limit to the "range and quality of knowledge that can be got," he wrote, was the "teachers' ability to organize the subject matter."[5] Finding the right teachers, he understood, was essential to the success of the school. Years later, the teacher Laura Runyon would exclaim, "I sometimes wonder if Dr. Dewey appreciates the fact that the work of individual teachers in that school, and the personality of those there, had much to do with his own fame! We contributed something, but the fame and fortune have been his alone!"[6] While, as I shall discuss, Dewey did seem to appreciate their importance, the teachers whose daily work brought the school to life have not received their share of the scholarly "fame and fortune."[7] This study addresses this historical neglect by examining the contributions of four Laboratory School teachers—Anna Camp, Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill—a core group of young women who established close ties to the Dewey and Mead families and the school's "circle of friends."[8]

Katherine Camp taught science and history at the Laboratory School from 1896 to 1904, and directed the science department after the school adopted its departmental organization. Her younger sister Anna was a history teacher at the school from 1897 to 1898, and a substitute and private tutor in subsequent years. Fortunately for historians, the Camp family saved their voluminous correspondence, and their letters and papers vividly describe their Laboratory School years. Althea Harmer, who worked at the school for almost as long as Katherine Camp, taught domestic arts and sciences from 1897 to 1904, and also served as director of that department. The only letters remaining from Althea Harmer are from a period after she left Chicago, and they document her continued ties to some members of the Laboratory School community. Mary Hill, a resident of Jane Addams' Hull House, taught science, history, and textiles at the school from 1898 to 1901. Hill's family saved a collection of her letters from this period, and these letters are full of detail, and wittily engaging.[9] By using additional sources such as the women's college records and biographies of male relatives, it is possible to piece together biographical sketches of these four teachers, who, in addition to being colleagues

at the Laboratory School, were friends and frequent flatmates in the school's Hyde Park neighborhood.[10]

An examination of the work and thoughts of these Laboratory School teachers enables us to consider how these women shaped, and were shaped by, the educational and social experiment that was the Laboratory School.[11] "Experimental living" for these teachers extended out to the wider world of Chicago and the nation, as they pursued their intellectual interests at some of the most innovative social institutions of their time. By "venturing in education"[12] at the Laboratory School, these teachers joined a community of Americans dedicated to creatively making sense of a changing world. Central to these larger reform efforts were the growing numbers of professional women who, like the teachers under study here, took advantage of increasing opportunities for higher education for women, and who were intent upon putting their minds and abilities to use in the public sphere. This chapter introduces these four teachers and places their biographies in the context of the changing lives of the "New Women" of the late nineteenth century.

## The "New Women" of the 1890s

Middle-class women born in the 1870s, such as Anna and Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill, came of age in a time when, as the historian Kathy Peiss argues, an "emergent sensibility" among women of their class led to a "new scale of participation in public life." Novelists on both sides of the Atlantic came up with a term to describe such an individual—the "New Woman"—who, according to Peiss, "relished personal autonomy and activity in the public arena" and owed her emerging place in public life to decades of agitation for women's political and educational rights.[13] Thus by 1896, when the Laboratory School opened, it was possible to find women, mostly from the middle classes, who had obtained the "good, thorough education" that Dewey required of his teachers.

Women's rights activists had long been fighting for expanded educational opportunities for girls and women. As Sally G. McMillen argues in her study of the Seneca Falls Convention, those gathered in upstate New York in 1848 demanded educational rights for women alongside political rights.[14] Women's rights activist and abolitionist Lucy Stone, for instance, was an advocate of coeducation and higher education for women, arguing that "for herself alone, woman should receive the highest mental cultivation of which she is capable."[15] In the late nineteenth century, these aspirations were increasingly realized,

particularly for women of what the historian Ruth Bordin calls the "professional, financially insecure middle class." The evolving values of the middle class fostered a sense of receptivity to women's higher education. As Margaret Nash argues in her study *Women's Education in the United States, 1780–1840,* American middle class identity was formed around values such as "a work ethic and a sense of personal responsibility," as well as "self-improvement, appropriate use of leisure time, and ideas about what it meant to be cultured." Nash's research indicates that such values provided a foundation of support for the education of females from the middle classes, and thus for the development of new expectations regarding the role of women in the public sphere.[16]

A number of late-nineteenth-century developments further encouraged the participation of women in institutions of higher education. Colleges and universities were undergoing a period of expansion during these decades, and increasing numbers of them, particularly in the Midwest, embraced (or gave in to) coeducation, including two that are central to this study—the University of Michigan and the University of Chicago. The fact that women were included in some institutions for reasons of financial viability and not equality did not, at least in the early decades of coeducation, limit the riches this represented for the female coeds. Additionally, employment opportunities for women were increasing in some occupations, and while women entering domestic service and factory work did not seek higher education, those seeking entrance into the teaching profession did so in increasing numbers.[17]

As Ruth Bordin argues in her biography of pioneer female educator Alice Freeman Palmer, by the 1890s higher education was unusual, but not a "radical choice," for women who wished to "prepare for a profession as well as to indulge their desire for knowledge."[18] While college and university attendance for women was rare throughout this period in the United States, the proportion of women in higher education rose significantly during the latter part of the nineteenth century. In 1870, 0.7 percent of all American women eighteen to twenty-one years of age attended college or university, representing 21 percent of all students; by 1900 this percentage had increased to 2.8 percent of college-aged women, with female students comprising 36.8 percent of all those attending institutions of higher education.[19]

Thus the latter part of the nineteenth century, when the Camp sisters, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill grew into adulthood, was a period of promising opportunities for middle class women with a spirit of

adventure, a quest for knowledge, and the need (or desire) to earn a living. They found growing acceptance of public roles for women, and a sense of possibility as these new roles were being defined. The teachers' years in higher education and at the Laboratory School, from about 1890 to 1904, occurred during a window of time filled with hope that women would achieve lasting equality in universities—as students, faculty members, and researchers. The first generation of college women had assuaged some of the fears engendered by such skeptics as Edward Clarke who in 1873 published his influential study *Sex in Education,* in which he argued that strenuous mental exertion would render young women unfit for their future childbearing roles. Others of his time had argued that women were intellectually incapable of higher learning. By the early 1900s, these doubts had been replaced by a sense of threat and a narrowing of possibilities, as women's increasing presence was seen to be "feminizing" universities.[20]

As the writer and reformer Charlotte Perkins Gilman characterized these decades in her autobiography, "It was a period of large beginnings in many lines. 'Strong-minded' girls were going to college under criticism and ridicule, the usual curriculum in those days held quite beyond 'the feminine mind.' Some thirty years later, an editor, sadly impressed by the majority of prize-takers being girls, protested that these same curricula were 'evidently too feminine.' "[21] Fortunately for the four young women at the center of this study, their timing was right—they entered higher education at a time of promise for women, and then chose to work as teachers in an experimental school aligned with the University of Chicago, the American university perhaps most encouraging to female undergraduate and graduate students of that era.[22]

Thus, the lives of the "New Women" of the late nineteenth century were shaped by a confluence of forces that propelled women into higher education and into the changing environment of American cities.[23] The seemingly staid middle-class values of "self-improvement" and "personal responsibility," alongside women's rights activists' steady support for expanded educational rights for women, led to the bicycle-riding, shirtwaist-wearing, adventure-seeking "New Woman" of the 1890s, personified by the four Laboratory School teachers at the center of this book.[24] The Camp sisters and their fellow teachers seemed to be driven, in a manner quite unselfconscious and matter-of-fact, by the desire for self-development, the pleasures of gaining knowledge, and the rewards of bringing about social improvement through experimentation.

## Four laboratory school teachers

### Katherine and Anna Camp

Katherine and Anna Camp grew up in a middle-class family in and around Sandusky, Ohio, in the 1870s and 1880s. The family was well connected, but not well-to-do. Their father, Jacob Andrus Camp, was a Harvard-educated attorney who held various governmental posts in Republican administrations. In a family biography, Anna Camp Edwards wrote that her father "had an essentially inventive and creative mind which had never been content in the routine procedures of military, legal, or government activities." Instead, she remembered, he "was primarily interested in natural life and the processes of nature, in experimental living, in scientific discovery, and the education of his children along these lines." Their mother, Elizabeth Francis Camp, "was a spirited, liberal minded, wiry little woman, an idealist, New England born and bred. She was a 'high brow' if there ever was one but always ready to match her life to father's problems with rare inventiveness, practicality, and devotion." In 1876, Jacob and Elizabeth Camp made the decision to move their family, which included Elizabeth (Bess) (b. 1868), Katherine (b. 1870), Frank (b. 1872), and Anna (b. 1876), from the city of Sandusky to a fifteen-acre farm a few miles outside of town, for what their youngest daughter described as "a radical experiment in family living." (She wrote that John Dewey "once said he had been greatly influenced by what they did."[25])

Ordinarily, Sandusky children of this era and social milieu "were dressed up every afternoon and taken out for a walk by a maid or an older member of the family and always cautioned 'not to get dirty.' Little freedom was allowed them and there was an almost total lack of spontaneous play. Against that whole conventional order of society, both father and mother rebelled." Elizabeth and Jacob Camp "dared to act on their convictions, turned their backs on the conventional social life of Sandusky, and, to the consternation of relatives and friends," moved to a farm so that "their children should have first hand contact with nature and plenty of space for creative play."[26] In addition to enjoying the outdoors, the Camp family delighted in reading. For instance, as a ten-year-old, Anna Camp asked her much older half-brother, "Have you read the sequel to little men by Miss Alcott?"[27] Several years later, she informed her traveling father of the family's reading pleasures: "Mamma is reading a book called Natural Law in the Spiritual World by Drummond. Katie is reading about Aleuts, Bessie about Alaska, Frank is reading a Littell, & I am writing to you."[28]

After this upbringing, seen by the family as unconventional for their class, all three Camp daughters went on to study at institutions of higher education, pursuing their studies and professional careers with strong support from their parents.[29] In 1889, while the eldest sister, Elizabeth (Bess), was teaching in a local Ohio school, Katherine Camp was the first of the sisters to enroll at the University of Michigan, her fees paid by a legacy from her mother's wealthy uncle. Bess Camp followed her to Ann Arbor a year later. The sisters kept in close touch with their family through frequent letters, and thus they have left a lively account of the University of Michigan of the early 1890s. As outlined in the first chapter, John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, and James Tufts were on the faculty in Ann Arbor during this time, and it was here that the Camp family became acquainted with these professors and their families.

Historians of the University of Michigan describe a supportive network in place for female students, fostered in large part by the wives of faculty members.[30] The Camp sisters attended teas sponsored by Alice Chipman Dewey—Russian samovar tea seemed particularly popular at this time. Bess Camp wrote that one such occasion was "going to be a good deal of fun and work too."[31] Adding to this female network was the Ann Arbor branch of the New York women's club, Sorosis, to which Alice Dewey had belonged as a student. In a letter to Elizabeth Camp, Katherine Camp asked "What do you think about societies?" She seemed hopeful that her mother would approve of the organization, writing that "if they do the honor of asking me I should like to join."[32] Sorosis records indicate that both Camp sisters joined the society and that they were active and involved members.[33]

Katherine Camp pursued studies in the sciences, and many of her letters describe the difficulties she faced, as well as the high standards to which she held herself. As she wrote during her first semester, in the fall of 1889, "German is a terror to me. Psychology makes me shake." Later that semester she added, "I am getting deeper and deeper in Psychology and don't know whether I'll come out the other side or not."[34] (Psychology seemed to have been especially challenging for the sisters—Bess Camp wrote the next year that "Psychology is the worst study I have. Mr. Tufts is very good at explaining though and I hope it will gradually clear itself up."[35]) By the next academic year, Katherine Camp seemed a bit more relaxed about her work, which continued to be challenging. As she wrote in 1891, "The chemistry laboratory work is very interesting but quite hard [—] everything is so new." She had perhaps some leisure time to read, for she asked,

"What are you and Papa reading now[?]"[36] She also took time to play tennis, a favorite pastime of the "New Women." Throughout her years in Ann Arbor, the fellowship she found with her fellow students and the faculty wives seemed to have sustained her. As she wrote to her mother, "My lessons are hard," and without her friends, "I should think the world was hollow and stuffed with sawdust."[37]

Katherine Camp received her B.S. in 1894 from the University of Michigan, and the record indicates that in the spring of that year (perhaps having completed her graduation requirements early) she attended Wesleyan University for a semester, possibly to assess her desire and willingness to pursue graduate work. As she wrote to her mother, the university fell short of her expectations: "It makes me very blue indeed to think of all I had hoped and really expected from coming here, and while the practical work is what I wanted I don't feel I have gained a bit of knowledge[—]theoretical that is." She felt "helpless as a fish out of water about teaching."[38] Her father thought it "strange" that in a "special school" such as hers the "apparatus should not be of the highest standing." Demonstrating his interest in her education, he added, "I would be glad to hear something of your class work and the method used for teaching." He went on to urge her to "go ahead and get all out of it you can—Are you perfectly sure yourself that you want to take the long course if so, you have the right to look for it."[39] It seems likely that the "long course" to which he referred was graduate work; in any case, she did not stay at Wesleyan, instead opting to pursue what would be her lifelong profession: teaching. (As her biographical materials for *The Dewey School* indicate, however, she did not give up on graduate studies; by the end of her time in Chicago, she had completed all work but her thesis for her doctoral degree.[40])

In the fall of 1894, Katherine Camp took a position teaching domestic science at Brooklyn's Pratt Institute, which was established seven years earlier as a coeducational institute for the skilled trades. While there, she was an instructor in chemistry and physics in the Institute's Normal Course in Domestic Science, a teacher preparation program, and instructor in household art and in household science and dietaries at the Pratt High School.[41] After she taught her first class, in September 1894, she wrote her brother Frank that she felt "like a cat in a strange garret, trying to conceal my qualms from my pupils, which is trying work."[42] One of the difficulties she faced in this first teaching position at Pratt was that her students, in her view, were not properly prepared for the content in her courses. As she wrote

of her experience, "It goes quite smoothly now except that it takes a lot of study and the girls don't or can't study as they ought to." The reason, she thought, was that the students were not academically prepared: "Some of them can't even extract the square root without help, as all except one have had what I should call a ragged education—so irregular and no exact work of any kind."[43] Of the schools of the time, she wrote, "My latest convictions are that the Public School system is bad i.e. not good—how to reform not yet decided."[44]

Camp's letters from this period reveal a young woman with a quick wit who was determined to fashion an independent life for herself, much in the spirit of the "New Women" of this time. She was willing to challenge convention; during her time at Wesleyan she wrote to her sister Anna: "I get tired of being proper sometimes and break out occasionally to the edification generally of my chums—Friday night however I regret to state I danced in the study—until I was tired out & shocked some of the girls I guess."[45] She was eager for new ideas, and for a broadened outlook. She wrote home of a talk in New York City on Buddhism in India, calling the lecture "amusing and interesting." The lecturer, Swami Vivekananda, "does not hesitate to let you see yourselves as others see you and it gives a funny feeling of being turned wrong side out."[46]

Katherine Camp had high ambitions for herself and gave great thought to her chosen profession; she wondered if the field of domestic sciences was right for her. In a letter to her mother, she wrote that a conversation with the chemistry professor Wilbur Atwater of Wesleyan University "braced me up greatly with regard to going on with Domestic Science, for many have been the waverings of this individual as to whether she was a round peg in a square hole or vice versa."[47] Her interests lay clearly in the sciences, and even while at Pratt she was informed of the national opportunities for further scientific education, such as the courses for teachers offered at the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratories.[48] As she informed her mother, "If I am told that I shall have biology with the kindergarten classes next year I shall want to go to Woods Hole for the six week course."[49]

After just a few years in Brooklyn, and in the midst of her deliberations over her future, Katherine Camp was faced with a decision that would shape her life, and that of her family. In May 1896, John Dewey told his assistant, Frank Manny, "I expect we will have one additional teacher next year, besides the help we can get from the students. This will probably be Miss Kath. Camp whom you may or may

not have known at Mich[igan]. She has done a great deal of work in science and domestic science, and has good executive ability."[50] Dewey subsequently offered the position to Camp, and although the Laboratory School had only been open for several months, she decided to make what many likely considered a risky move. Her father, for one, was skeptical. After Katherine Camp accepted Dewey's offer, she attempted to address her father's misgivings about her decision to leave her job at Pratt Institute, writing from Brooklyn: "I must confess I was a good deal disturbed by your letter giving the permanency value of Pratt and the substantial recognition of a 'raise' so much importance. As to the permanency here there is not doubt of that but also the permanency in Chicago is almost as great, of the school I mean, and of course my success will ensure my permanency." She went on to argue that "the possibilities are you must acknowledge great—also the training mental and social possible much greater in C. [Chicago] than here."[51] She no doubt anticipated that a school affiliated with the Deweys and Meads would be a place where her considerable desire for intellectual self-improvement could be satisfied.

In June 1896 Katherine Camp received her official appointment letter; she was to be a teacher in the "Practice School of the Pedagogical Department" of the University of Chicago, for which she would be paid the sum of $1,200 a year.[52] Before leaving for Chicago, Camp joined Alice Dewey in Keene Valley, in New York's Adirondack Mountains, for part of the summer of 1896, in order to work on "school plans." It is likely that she was also there to help more generally; she wrote her mother that "Dr. D. [is] in Chautauqua. Mrs. D. has no girl—[with a] baby coming." The Deweys had a summer cottage in Keene Valley—a remote location that was nonetheless teeming with intellectual life. Katherine Camp told her father that she "went over to the communistic settlement across the valley, [Summerbrook] a settlement where Miss Mann, a rich woman from New York, has furnished the land, the houses, (one said to be the most artistic in the Adirondacks), the other a Swiss chalet-sort of a house, and then invited people to come join the community . . . A little to the East of us is the feeble child of the Concord School of Philosophy headed by Mr. Thos. Davidson—there are twenty-three people over there now. There are a number of cottages and a few tents, and they have lectures and some classes."[53] It is not clear why Camp was dismissive of Davidson and his school at Glenmore, but this was a quality that Katherine Camp would display often—she was not afraid to be critical if someone, or something, offended her sensibilities or her beliefs. As her mother wrote of her a few years later, "I have been stirred up

by Kate's lofty deliverances on the state of the country—fortunately it won't go to pieces because she condemns it."[54]

In spite of the self-confidence she often conveyed, she was anxious about assuming her new position in Chicago. As she confessed to her mother that summer, "[I] am a little troubled over next year, but hope Dr. Dewey will help me lots—haven't any brains at all and have the 'scares' but if I mention them to CBW [Caroline Weeks, a colleague at Pratt] she laughs them out of me—only hope my courage will come up to the scratch next fall."[55] Her arrival in Chicago, at the end of September, only heightened her anxiety. As she told her family, "Mr. Manny, the man (U of M.) who has been running the school on its business side this summer seems very pleasant, also very pleasantly sceptical [*sic*] over my work—I tell you there's a nice lookout for me ahead." She wrote of her meetings with two other teachers—Frederick Smedley, the manual training teacher (who didn't like the house in which the school was located), and Clara Mitchell, the school's original teacher. (Apparently the Dewey children were as unafraid to criticize as was Katherine Camp herself. She wrote that Mitchell "assured me that the critical attitude of the Dewey children was not general which was a relief to me, for the idea of the children as well as the graduate students sitting in judgment of every move was more than I could bear.") About the upcoming opening of the school, she exclaimed, "School opens a week from Monday—Oct. 5. There are to be thirty children perhaps forty—ah me! the task grows—They have many more applications than there is room for."[56]

The first week was all that Katherine Camp had feared—"the worst week I ever spent in my life. I hope that isn't exaggerated—the last two days have not been so very bad—but the children and parents and visitors just flocked in at first and nothing was ready and such work trying to live up to plans (my own) and falling so miserably short that I was ready to walk back to B. [Brooklyn] Monday night, but a bycycle [*sic*] ride on Mrs. Meade's [*sic*] wheel and a good dinner made things look better." After another ride, and another dinner, and "a cheerful and cheering evening," she "survived the next day." "A two hour seminar at the University and dinner and all night at the Deweys" in the middle of the week, followed by yet another night at the Deweys, helped her to make it through the first week.[57] (The Meads and Deweys would continue to provide this kind of encouragement and friendship to the young teachers at the Laboratory School. As Jacob Camp would later write to his "dear daughters twain" of the two families, "Their kindly companionship is [a] great thing in your Chicago life. It gives your life there a sort of an imbus [a nimbus] of home."[58])

Just why, exactly, was this first week so difficult? As she explained to her older sister Bess, "Now for the school—the house I won't spend ink in describing as we may move—Except to say it is too small—The children number thirty-two—instead of sixteen—They are divided in about five sections." In a sign that she understood Dewey's aims for the school in this first week, she found that "the little children are the hardest for me to manage, not manage for it is easy enough to interest them but to select proper material and really teach not amuse them. You would laugh if you could come in and see me trying to teach them the different ways seeds are distributed and see the big men and women from the pedagogical dept.—sitting around note-book in hand 'making observations' to discuss in seminar. 'Horrors.' "[59] By the next month things had calmed down; as she informed her mother, "School is being continually changed and we hope to get into more comfortable quarters soon. It has been running more smoothly these last few weeks—and everyone thinks so."[60]

Katherine Camp quickly settled in to her work at the Laboratory School, assuming what would be a central role in the school, and by 1897, her sister Anna was ready to join her. While her older sister was away in Ann Arbor, Brooklyn, and then Chicago, Anna Camp was finishing high school and college. In her account of the family's history, Anna Camp Edwards recounted that the Camps had moved to Cleveland from Sandusky in the early 1890s, following what she called a "lean period" of four years, which coincided with a national economic depression—the "Panic of 1893." In these difficult times, Jacob Camp had trouble finding work, and the family received another gift from the same relative who had paid for the higher education of Katherine and Bess, and used the new funds to buy a house in Cleveland.[61] Anna Camp attended Cleveland's Central High School and then was admitted to the College for Women at Western Reserve University in 1893, where she earned a Ph.B. in 1897. The college was established in 1888 as an early example of a "coordinate college" for women; it was affiliated with the men's Western Reserve University.[62]

In the fall of 1897, Anna Camp moved to Chicago to teach at the Laboratory School.[63] She taught history there for a half-year, and then became an occasional substitute, as well as the private tutor of Josephine Crane, a hearing-impaired student and daughter of school supporters Charles and Cornelia Crane.[64] Thus, Anna Camp experienced the school and life in Chicago with a perspective different from her sister's. She spent a great deal of time at the school, where she was able to observe it closely, but was not (for long) responsible for teaching groups of students. Anna Camp moved in and out of the

flats that her sister (and later, their widowed mother) shared with various other teachers from the Laboratory School, as she tried to fashion her work with Josephine Crane and the school into a profession that brought her satisfaction. She characterized her position in the Crane household, where she resided part of the time, as "teacher and playmate"; this proved to be both rewarding (she accompanied the family to Europe, where, she wrote, "Paris is 'my pet'"[65]) and frustrating (she found that "my work is bringing me no intellectual benefit."[66]) In a letter to her eldest daughter, Elizabeth Camp expressed concern that Anna "was not much more than sort of a nursery governess—and she is not getting out of life what she might. Bessie I had rather teach in a school and have my hours—and vacations—than live so in a rich family—enervated by too much luxury it must warp her feelings."[67]

In spite of Anna Camp's professional struggles, her letters reveal a merry and social young woman who seemed determined to gain knowledge and experiences. The family often discussed articles they'd read in the *Outlook,* a favorite magazine, or the *Atlantic Monthly,* and Anna Camp, after receiving and reading three *Outlook*s on a Saturday in 1898, determined that she was "up to date on the Eastern, Cuban, and Hawaiian Questions—I feel so proud. It's a long time since I knew so much about what is going on, and I enjoy it so much."[68] Her accounts of the comings and goings of the "flat girls" were always lively and detailed. As Anna continued in her 1898 letter to her father, "Katherine and I got dressed and went down to Dr. Holmes where we had been invited for five o'clock tea. Found there a gathering of people, almost all of them socialistic in their tendencies, and after the tea for which Kate and I were too late, there followed a very hot but intensely interesting argument on the social questions of the day." As she went on, these teas were a regular occurrence, and "Kate and I enjoy them because it takes us away from the little circle of friends with whom we are continually and we meet new and different kinds of people."[69]

## Althea Harmer

One of the central figures in the "little circle of friends" was Althea Harmer, who taught domestic arts and sciences at the school from 1897 until Dewey left for New York in 1904. Harmer became almost like a fourth Camp sister during these years; she was the only teacher the family referred to by first name in their many letters. Althea Harmer's story is different from that of the Camp sisters, for as her

son's biographers indicate, she did not have the support of her family when she left her Pennsylvania home to pursue higher education and a profession.[70] Born in 1872, Harmer was a young child when her mother died of tuberculosis. She had two brothers, and after her father remarried, five more siblings followed; several died before reaching adulthood. According to her family, her father, Albanus Harmer, did not approve of her desire to pursue a career.[71]

In spite of the lack of family support, Althea Harmer studied for one year each at Drexel Institute and Pratt Institute. Like Pratt, Drexel Institute (now Drexel University) began as a technical institute for men and women. As a 1890 public announcement stated, "The work the Institute is expected to accomplish is the practical education of youths of both sexes in those elemental studies and arts which will be of greatest use to them in learning trades or in the ordinary course of life."[72] Harmer graduated in 1896 from Pratt Institute's Normal Course in Domestic Science, where the curriculum included courses such as Sewing, Design and Drawing, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Katherine Camp served in Pratt's Department of Domestic Science as an instructor of chemistry and physics during Harmer's year there, so it is likely that she taught Harmer in the chemistry courses, and thus facilitated her connection to the Laboratory School.[73]

Althea Harmer taught at the Laboratory School for almost as long as Katherine Camp did and, as a specialist in textiles, she directed the domestic arts and sciences department. As a graduate of Pratt, with a two-year degree in domestic sciences, Harmer came to the Laboratory School with less formal education than many of the other teachers. That she eventually assumed such a central role, writing several research articles on her work at the school, is a testament to the determination and ingenuity of this young Pennsylvanian. In an 1897 assessment of Harmer's abilities, Pratt Institute Registrar Caroline Weeks (a friend of Camp's) wrote, "She is growing. Needs to have more plan and order about the details of her work, needs, also, training in English, so that she can express herself in a simple way. She uses too large words." As Weeks continued, "I wrote Dr. Dewey that she had no money and if she came to you she would have to have money in advance for the tuition;—Enough to live on and to get out to Chicago." (Weeks added, out of concern for Camp's own well-being, "I hope your [wheel] will make you better. I feel so worried about you, when I stop to think.")[74] Thus, Harmer struggled financially and perhaps otherwise as a single woman without family support, but she benefited from the female networks that proliferated during this time of transition and redefinition of women's public roles. During her

years in Chicago she also became particularly close to Helen Mead and to the photographer Eva Watson-Schutze; these relationships would persist until Althea Harmer Bardeen's early death, in 1920, of breast cancer.[75]

## Mary Hill

In 1899, Anna Camp remarked to her father that "a Miss Hill from Hull House now occupies one of the front rooms of the flat and I the other. She is a very pleasant girl, teaching at the school, and restful, which is a great thing."[76] Mary Dayton Hill was born in 1871 in New Jersey and graduated in 1896 with a B.A. from Bryn Mawr College, where she studied chemistry and biology during the tenure of Bryn Mawr President M. Carey Thomas.[77] Hill was the third of four sisters, and the only one of the four to attend college. It is not clear what motivated her to go away to college, or why her sisters did not pursue higher education. In a 1900 letter to her future husband and fellow Hull House resident, Gerard Swope, she wrote of a visit that their friend, Jane Addams, paid to the Hill sisters, possibly to break the news of Hill's engagement to Swope. One sister told Addams that Mary Hill "had always been the black sheep." As Hill told Swope, Addams "thinks they are quite upset over my behaviour. They don't really trust my judgement an atom."[78] Although the sisters were a close-knit group, this story illustrates Hill's spirit of independence, which she seems to have developed early in her life.[79]

At Bryn Mawr and then at Hull House, Mary Hill met and befriended women who would become leaders in the social reform movements of her age. One of her classmates at Bryn Mawr was the social reformer Pauline Goldmark, who wrote in Mary Hill Swope's obituary in the college's *Alumnae Bulletin,* "In the early days, soon after our graduation, Mary went to Chicago to teach in a new adventure in education—John Dewey's school."[80] According to the *Bryn Mawr Program* for the years following her graduation, Hill first taught at the Sieboth-Kennedy School in Chicago, from 1896 to 1898, before moving on to the Laboratory School.[81] During most of her years in Chicago, she was a resident at Hull House and a member of a close circle of friends that included Jane Addams, Mary Rozet Smith, Alice Hamilton, Florence Kelley, and Julia Lathrop. Hill's closest friend at Hull House was her roommate, the pioneering reformer in industrial medicine, Dr. Alice Hamilton.[82] In an 1898 letter to her cousin Agnes Hamilton, Alice Hamilton wrote that Mary Hill was

"working very hard at the University—with Mr. Dewey, besides her teaching at the Dewey School."[83]

Mary Hill taught science, history, and textiles at the Laboratory School from 1898 to 1901 and was briefly a flatmate of the Camp sisters and Althea Harmer. As Pauline Goldmark wrote, "She lived at Hull House and there organized an Industrial Museum where immigrant women could show their handicraft skills and she herself taught weaving."[84] Hill worked with John Dewey and Jane Addams to establish the Labor Museum, a result of the ties between these two experimental institutions. Hill's letters reveal an intelligent, thoughtful, and deeply-feeling woman, who seemed to feel more at home at Hull House than on the South Side as a "flat girl," or at the Laboratory School as a teacher. She was unafraid to question convention. In 1900, for example, in a letter to Gerard Swope, she wondered "whether all the ties and responsibilities and duties that come with family life are entirely beneficial to anybody and on the whole whether many of them aren't altogether fictitious." Yet, she went on, "All this is more or less speculation as customs, tradition and convention has [*sic*] such an iron grasp upon us."[85]

Perhaps because of her experiences at Hull House, Mary Hill gave much thought to social class, and more generally, to human nature. In a letter about a business deal Gerard Swope was involved in, and seemed to be questioning, Hill wrote, "Of course you think it would be nothing but a series of compromises—But that is only what the whole thing must be. The whole world isn't the working class—nor any other—and I'm not enough of a socialist to espouse exclusively the interests of just one class." She wondered why one should be more critical of the wealthy than of the working class, as she found both to be "a set of erring mortals (with the rest of us) and swayed by forces which neither properly understand."[86] Her quest for understanding was far-reaching. As she wrote to her future husband, who would eventually become the president of General Electric, "I really do want to understand everything you tell me—or hint at—How otherwise can we be intellectual equals?"[87]

Her questioning was often turned on herself. In 1901, she confessed to Swope that "the hours I spent at school confirmed me in all that I said about my lack of teaching ability and I've no doubt that my unwholesome lack of self confidence comes largely from keeping on at something I can't do."[88] Perhaps these were fleeting doubts, brought about by challenging days; it is also possible that she felt she was better suited to other work. When asked to list her occupation in 1901, she wrote, "My occupation: curator—(if you prefer you may

say teacher.)"[89] She was exacting in her expectations of herself; she wrote, "It is a fatal thing to be short of perfect. I have made so many mistakes."[90] In any case, Mary Hill was perfectly positioned by her residence in Hull House and friendship with Jane Addams, by her studies and teaching with John Dewey, and by her reflective and incisive intelligence, to offer us valuable perspectives on this experimental public work in the Chicago of a century ago. As she wrote to Swope, yet seemed also to be telling herself, "One has to learn to live on motives other than just personal ones."[91]

## Social life for "New Women" in Chicago

The Laboratory School teachers, in their willingness to engage in an experiment in education, learned as they taught. This engagement did not stop when the school day ended, as their private and public lives were intertwined; they attended Hull House lectures together, talked about school matters after hours, and, having caught "wheel fever," biked together around the city. They frequented a favorite restaurant, the Noon-Day Rest, which was established in 1894 by the Klio Asssociation to provide meals for working women, and where, as Anna Camp wrote to her mother, "you pay for what you pickout [*sic*] yourself."[92] During a brief time in 1899, some of the teachers shared their flat with a school family; the Meads' sister-in-law Mabel Wing Castle and her young daughter Elinor (a Laboratory School student) boarded in the Hyde Park flat of Katherine Camp and Althea Harmer—a flat Castle described as a "charming scientifically conducted home."[93]

The Camp family's letters are full of stories of collective pastimes enjoyed by what Anna Camp called the "Camp-Dewey-Mead crowd."[94] For example, in a 1899 letter from Anna Camp to her sister Bess, she described several of the group's activities and entertainments. "The flat girls were all here to dinner today, and have just gone home, after electric samovar tea." She mentioned "two very interesting series of articles in the Atlantic monthly," including William James's "Psychological Talks to Teachers" and Peter Kropotkin's "Autobiography of a Revolutionist."[95] "On Saturday mornings now," she wrote, "we meet at Mr. Mead's to read Dr. Dewey's 'Philosophy of Education.'" Also, "Katherine and Althea have wild schemes and aspirations now-a-days to go to Professor Geddes' summer school in Edinburg. I have some articles on Prof. Geddes in the Ethical Science paper which I am going to read and digest, as the air is full of him and one has to absorb some of it."[96] She recounted that "Mr. and

Mrs. Mead were here to dinner last night," and ended her letter with the news that the "Castle Square Opera Company is playing here, and this week they play 'The Mikado'—which we all want to see."[97]

In their life choices and in their activities, this group of teachers was typical of the "New Women" of their time—participating in athletic activities such as biking, tennis, and ice skating, exploring the rich offerings of the city, and striving for careers that gave them satisfaction, independence, and a livelihood. Their independence had both ideological and practical roots; as the widowed Elizabeth Camp wrote to Bess Camp in 1901, "[I] don't think the girls are very flush of money and am sure I am not and know you can't be."[98] Mary Hill's friend Alice Hamilton was in similar straits; her biographer Madeline Grant argues that Hamilton both wanted and needed to be self-supporting.[99] But their lack of financial resources, while sometimes a worry (particularly for Mrs. Camp), was also a cause for resourcefulness. As Katherine Camp wrote to her mother in 1898, "We have been so very busy both at school and at home," since they were settling into a new flat. "Miss Zabriskie has come into the large front room with Althea . . . Then Miss Roby from Detroit HS comes tomorrow to take the little front room." They were filling the flat "so we can meet expenses as we are dreadfully calculating and with five in the flat can make the summer rent—and we hope although that's sanguine to cut our own expenses way down. Althea and I are housekeepers—others are 'boarders.' Althea is singing 'Do they miss me at home?' [a Civil War song]." Camp repeated that she had much to do: "I've been so busy 'flatting' but chiefly school," and added that "if the Mead's hadn't carried Althea and I off out of the rush & disorder of the flat to dinner three times last week we would have been in frazzles."[100] With her description of Althea singing, and their dinner with the Meads, Katherine Camp conveyed a sense of important activity (school and "flatting"), interrupted by welcomed bursts of gaiety and companionship—the "nimbus of home" that her father described so well.

As independent women, and teachers at the Laboratory School, they were conscious that they occupied a status someplace in between that of insiders and outsiders in the larger community of the University of Chicago. Several stories from the Camp family's letters reveal this self-awareness of their place, based as it was on their class and gender identities. In a letter to her mother likely written in her early years at the Laboratory School, Katherine Camp described a reception for graduate students in philosophy and pedagogy that was to be held at the Mead home. Lest her mother be impressed with this,

she added, "I've been to one at Mrs. D's—it's a bore I'm afraid—I pour coffee—in my new gown—I hope not on it."[101] And some years later, likely in 1902, Anna Camp remarked to her sister Bess that they were "holding a council of war in the parlor, trying to decide whether Katherine and I should spend $5.00 and attend a 'Love Feast' given by the university to all graduates and persons connected to the University in any way, shape, or manner. My shape or manner of connection with the aforesaid U. of C. being that I am a Substitute in the School." Their mother's position was clear. "Mother said she wouldn't have anything to do with such a snobbish U. Just like its president. 'Better take your money and go to the Theatre etc., etc."' Their oft-expressed interest and delight in fashion factored into the decision. As she continued, "You see, I would have a chance to wear my lace dress and K. her pongee, which we have been looking for all winter. On the other hand we might have to sit next to some old graduate from Indiana, and even the consciousness of good clothes might not save us from terrible boredom especially if we were bores ourselves."[102] In their wry way, the sisters poked fun at some of the pomp and posturing they found at the University of Chicago; they also conveyed their understanding that their place was somewhat peripheral.

In the smaller community of the Laboratory School and Hull House, however, these four teachers were connected to the Deweys, the Meads, and Jane Addams in a familiar, and almost familial, way. (Indeed, as Katherine Camp's description of her coffee-pouring duties attests, these teachers seem to have been treated by their elder colleagues almost like younger members in a family business.) The Deweys and Meads offered much support and encouragement to the teachers who were part of this core group, inviting them for dinners, bike rides, and holidays at the same time that they included them in the details and deliberations over the Laboratory School. For instance, Anna Camp described a Chicago excursion with the Dewey family: "Gordon [Dewey] asks innumerable questions, & unanswerable ones. The other day just after they had gotten home he was eating his first ice-cream in Chicago. He has a very shrill penetrating little voice. As he was eating with evident relish, he looked up at his father and said in a tone that could be heard all over the crowded dining room 'Papa I didn't know they raised ice-cream in Chicago.' "[103] (Gordon Dewey was beloved by many in Chicago, including the Camp sisters. Tragically, he died in Europe in 1904, the second of the Dewey children to die while the family was abroad: young Morris had died there in 1895.[104])

The teachers also helped the families out when they could. As Anna Camp informed their family in 1899, "As for Kate she has her hands full. The Mead family are in tribulations. All Mrs. Mead's nieces, about four in number have and are having the measles." To help out, Katherine Camp took Henry, the Meads' son, into the flat for a short stay, where Dewey children visited him. The result was that "Katherine I am sorry to say had to resort to the very 'unnew educational like' method of bribes to accomplish some of her ends with the children."[105] This was an intimate circle, mutually helpful to each other in their private lives as they developed the very public, and new, educational methods of the Laboratory School and participated in the experimental impulses of the age.

As the Camp sisters wrote in *The Dewey School,* the teachers "came, for the most part, naturally into the school with a feeling of joy in its adventure."[106] Given the experimental focus of the school and its founder, these teachers had elected to do much more than teach. They had embarked on a short-lived adventure with long-lasting consequences for themselves, and for all those interested in educational innovation. During their years working with John Dewey in the reform-minded city of Chicago, they would help him to build what would become one of the most talked-about educational experiments in the United States. The chapters that follow will outline the organizational structure that enabled teachers to exercise the "intellectual freedom" central to the school, and the daily classroom practices that engaged teachers and students alike in the "testing and proving" central to the pragmatic experiment.

# Chapter 3

# The "Union of Intellectual Freedom and Cooperation": Organizing the Laboratory School Community

John Dewey's educational theories have long been widely and sometimes wildly misconstrued.[1] Dewey is referred to as the "father of progressive education," but his educational ideas differ in many ways from those called "progressive" in his time and since.[2] In *Experience and Education,* Dewey made the case that his ideas belonged in a domain that was neither "traditional" nor "progressive."[3] Likewise, while the Laboratory School is often referred to as a "progressive" school, Dewey was careful to distinguish it from such schools in light of its focus on "the social phase of education," which was "put first" at the school. Contrary to progressive schools that "exist in order to give complete liberty to individuals" and that are " 'child-centered' in a way which ignores, or at least makes little of social relationships and responsibilities," the Laboratory School was, according to Dewey, "community-centered."[4] And while a common criticism of the philosopher is that his work on education ignores the importance of academic content, at the Laboratory School, teachers' "subject-matter" expertise was central to the school's organization.[5]

As an innovation that was hard to classify, the Laboratory School was misunderstood and sometimes mocked, even as it attracted widespread interest and acclaim. Alice Dewey wrote that in the school's early years, "people announced that the University was running a school for teaching children to sew and bake in order that

their mothers might teach them to read at home."[6] John Dewey's educational theories, as carried out in the Laboratory School, defied ordinary labels; the experimental school offered not just original ways to think about curriculum and instruction, but also a distinct approach to organizing a school so that the ideas and decisions of teachers mattered.[7]

In his important 1936 essay on the Laboratory School, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," Dewey outlined the "philosophy of the school's existence"—its "underlying theory." As he explained, "The feeling that the philosophy of knowledge and conduct which [I] entertained should find a test through practical application in experience was a strong influence in starting the work of the school. Moreover, it was a consequence of the very philosophy which was held." This was the philosophy of pragmatism, which Dewey and others were working out while he was also busy starting the Laboratory School. In this school, which "by intention was an experimental school," the aim was "to test certain ideas which were used as working hypotheses," chief among them Dewey's ideas about how children learn, or the "organic circuit" theory of learning. While setting up this experimental school, it was necessary also to consider the "*problem* of education," which for Dewey was "the harmonizing of individual traits with social ends and values." In order to test his "working hypotheses" while coordinating individual and social needs, Dewey argued that two factors must be considered: "In the theory of the school, the first factor in bringing about the desired coordination was the establishment of the school as a form of community life." The second was "working out a definite body of subject-matter, the material of a 'course of study.' "[8]

To test the validity of his hypotheses about knowledge and learning, Dewey worked with his Laboratory School colleagues to establish a community and devise a curriculum capable of reconciling "individual freedom and collective well-being."[9] This chapter will consider the organization of the school community, and the following chapter will focus on how the teachers worked out a curriculum based on what they called "social occupations," which did indeed include sewing and baking. The organization of the Laboratory School community reflected Dewey's abiding concern with what he called the "intellectual freedom" of teachers and ran counter to the growing (and ultimately successful) centralization of public school administration.[10]

During the Progressive Era, American public schools were increasingly organized for efficiency, particularly in the fast-growing cities. The sense of urgency brought on by expanding school rosters, many

bolstered by children from immigrant families, led to a strenuous campaign to centralize the administration of schools and to institutionalize hierarchical decision making in districts throughout the country.[11] At the same time, as historians of the teaching profession have shown, this expansion of public schooling in the second half of the nineteenth century brought many women into the nation's classrooms, particularly in cities; by 1900, roughly 80 percent of urban teachers were women.[12] Teaching was increasingly seen as "women's work," and given the gender inequalities of the era, this outlook ensured its diminished stature as a profession.

While the rapid growth of urban schooling in the new century demanded new organizational solutions, the female teachers were not in a strong position to determine the course of that restructuring. Instead, the growing numbers of educational managers, almost all of them men, stepped in to organize the growing urban districts. Some women resisted such moves, most prominently Margaret Haley, founder of the country's first teachers' union. During the early part of the twentieth century, Haley organized her fellow Chicago teachers to fight centralization, arguing that the "factoryizing" of the schools diminished not just female teachers, but American democracy; she cited John Dewey in her arguments for the democratic organization of public schools.[13] In spite of such efforts, while the profession remained one in which many women achieved economic independence and found the satisfaction of a job well done, most female teachers did not enjoy the power to shape the course of their profession or to determine the policies that affected their schools.[14]

Dewey was blunt in his assessment of the undemocratic nature of public school organization; as he wrote in his 1903 article "Democracy in Education," "If there is a single public-school system in the United States where there is official and constitutional provision made for submitting questions of methods of discipline and teaching, and the questions of the curriculum, text-books, etc., to the discussion and decision of those actually engaged in the work of teaching, that fact has escaped my notice. Indeed, the opposite situation is so common that it seems, as a rule to be absolutely taken for granted as the normal and final condition of affairs." While some administrators "wink at departures from the printed manual of study," such advances, Dewey argued, were "personal and informal" and depended upon "the wisdom and tact of the individual supervisory official," who might, after all, change his mind or be replaced.[15]

In contrast, the Laboratory School teachers were centrally involved in developing the school's experimental practices *and* ideas.[16] In his

1899 essay "Three Years of the University Elementary School," John Dewey argued that

> the educational conduct of the school, as well as its administration, the selection of subject-matter, and the working out of the course of study, as well as actual instruction of children, have been almost entirely in the hands of the teachers of the school; and that there has been a gradual development of the educational principles and methods involved, not a fixed equipment. The teachers started with question-marks, rather than with fixed rules, and if any answers have been reached, it is the teachers in the school who have supplied them.[17]

John Dewey's lifelong commitment, well in evidence in these words written during his Chicago years, was to "democracy as a way of life."[18] As he wrote in "Democracy in Education," democratically organized schools required "the adoption of intellectual initiative, discussion, and decision throughout the entire school corps."[19] Dewey's philosophical dedication to a daily and homely democracy meant that at the Laboratory School, the participants at the ground level were engaged in making key pedagogical decisions.

Years after her time at the school, the teacher Katharine Andrews Healy continued to appreciate "Dr. Dewey's attitude of working with us and his respect for the opinion of the least experienced of us, when his own great pedagogic knowledge might well have made us seem very insignificant."[20] The fact that the largely female teaching force at the Laboratory School was significant to the school's testing of ideas led to a spirit of gender equality unlike that found at most schools of the era where the typical administrative hierarchy often disempowered female teachers.[21] The Laboratory School community experimented with more than pedagogy; they worked together—men and women, adults and children, famous and anonymous—to figure out the meaning of "education as intelligent living."[22]

## Organizing the Laboratory School for the Testing of Ideas

John Dewey's engagement with the emerging philosophy of pragmatism prompted him to establish a school in which to test his ideas, and the central idea under examination in the Laboratory School was the theory of the "organic circuit" of learning.[23] As his friend and colleague George Herbert Mead explained in a 1930 essay, John Dewey "subjected his philosophy to the more severe test of actual

accomplishments in education" when he established "the Experimental School, in which the education of the children was worked out upon the principle that knowing is a part of doing."[24] Rather than the linear-sounding "learning by doing" often ascribed to Dewey and the Laboratory School, the underlying theory of the "organic circuit" was of learning by "doing and undergoing."[25] Dewey explained, "To learn from experience is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions, doing becomes a trying, an experiment with the world to find out what it is like, the undergoing becomes instruction—discovery of the connection of things."[26]

The school's curriculum based on "social occupations," to be discussed further in the next chapter, facilitated this kind of learning, for such studies brought about what Dewey called "a balance between the intellectual and the practical phases of experience," involving the "continual interplay of ideas and their embodiment in action."[27] This is, of course, another way to talk about pragmatism; learning happens, just as truths are found, when ideas are tested out in the arena of real life. Thinking, Dewey wrote, "does not occur for its own sake, nor end in itself." Instead, it "arises from the need of meeting some difficulty, in reflecting upon the best way of overcoming it, and thus leads to planning, to projecting mentally the result to be reached, and deciding upon the steps necessary and their serial order."[28] Dewey's idea, at the center of the school's experimental work, was that children learned as they tested their emerging understandings of the world in occupations that mattered to them and to humans throughout history.

In a 1935 letter, Anna Camp Edwards argued for the centrality of the theory of the organic circuit in the practice of the school. She wrote, "It was the experience of understanding that principle of growth that opened my eyes to the fundamental character of education." In her words, this "organizing, centralizing, unifying principle of mental growth, is namely that all three factors of thinking feeling and muscular effort must enter into each act or coordination."[29] The teachers were integral to the process of testing this theory and thereby determining the educative value of the students' experiences in the school. As Edwards continued in her letter, explaining the work of the teachers, "Together they worked, thought, revised, reaped their satisfactions or endured their failures, considered the consequences, revised, and went on. The results of the [theory] in practice [were] checked by the effects of the activities on the children."[30]

This spirit of collective inquiry was apparent to visitors such as George W. Myers, a contemporary of Dewey's at the University of

Chicago, who observed that "Mr. Dewey had the greatest real faith of any educator I have known in the classroom teacher's judgment as to what children can and should do."[31] Indeed, his pragmatic philosophy required such faith, for if it was necessary to "[test] thought by action if thought was to pass over into knowledge,"[32] then those doing the testing had to be trusted to observe and evaluate the results of their work with children. As Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards asserted in *The Dewey School,* "As time went on, it became clear that this experiment in education required also experimental administrative methods." It wouldn't do to have "a group of persons who planned on paper a program which they then required a staff of teachers to teach to the pupils." At the Laboratory School, they maintained, the involvement of teachers and students "was a fundamental and primary requisite to even the theoretical formulation of an educative program," as "such an experiment in education as this could not go on except through a group of persons all of whom were intellectually and socially cooperating in a constantly developing educational plan."[33]

The school's organization evolved in order to make these cooperative investigations possible.[34] During the early years, the school was organized departmentally, and as the school grew, its leadership structure evolved. Some teachers assumed departmental directorships, while Alice Dewey and the Chicago educator Ella Flagg Young took on official administrative roles alongside John Dewey.[35] Key to the inquiry at the center of the school were the weekly reports in which teachers documented their work in the classrooms; these reports were discussed in the formal and informal teachers' meetings. The school's close alignment with the University of Chicago enabled the teachers, as content specialists, to deepen their expertise through collaborative work with university faculty and students.[36] As Mayhew and Edwards pointed out, when the Laboratory School opened there were no "precedents as to a plan for school organization,"[37] for not only was this school embarking on a philosophical experiment, testing a theory of learning and knowledge, but it was also doing so in a spirit of democracy that was in sharp contrast to the prevailing educational currents of its time. The organizational practices in place at the school were designed to bring about what John Dewey called the "union of intellectual freedom and cooperation."[38]

## Departmental organization and school leadership

The Laboratory School opened in January 1896 with a generalist teacher, but after just a few months, John Dewey realized that the

school's experimental aims required teachers who possessed content expertise.[39] In a draft of his 1899 essay "Three Years of the University Elementary School," Dewey outlined the rationale for this shift, which establishes his emphasis on content. The school required specialist teachers because of the "difficulty of getting scientific facts presented that were facts and truths. It has been assumed that any phenomena that interested a child was good enough, and that if he were aroused and made alert, that was all that could be expected. But it is just as necessary that what he gets should be truth, and should not be subordinated to anything else . . . The difficulty of getting scientific work presented except by those who were specialists has led to the change in regard to other subjects as well."[40]

In an unpublished manuscript on the history of the school, Alice Dewey also weighed in on this matter: "One great reason for change from the plan of keeping children with one mothering teacher to that of giving them special instruction was the extreme difficulty of getting accurate statements on all subjects from any one teacher. We had to meet the objections of both parents and teachers to the change, but it seemed better to face the difficulty of possible strain for classes in moving from one teacher to another rather than the strain of mental confusion which comes from mis-statement, or vague guessing at the facts."[41] For both John and Alice Dewey, it was essential for teachers to be deeply grounded in the academic content that they taught.

In a 1928 talk at a mothers' luncheon, Katherine Camp Mayhew offered her view of the school's reliance on specialist teachers. She was one of the earliest specialist teachers at the Laboratory School, hired just six months after the original (generalist) teacher, Clara Mitchell, so she witnessed the school's shift to content experts. In her judgment, "Miss Mitchell found it very easy to do what she had always been doing—teaching reading, writing, arithmetic, etc. [She] found it difficult to grasp intellectual implications of programs Dewey outlined." (Mitchell left the school in the spring of 1897, and her departure was not an amicable one.[42]) As Mayhew explained, before John Dewey "there had been no one daring enough to suggest that a school should be a laboratory where ideas could be tested out, and new things tried." She thought that her own place in the school was secured by her shared interest in this experimentation and her expertise in science. As she recalled of her work with Dewey, they did not always agree "in ideas about things," but "Dr. Dewey would say 'You have just as much right to your opinion as anyone else.' "[43]

The decision to hire specialist teachers was made early in the Laboratory School's history, and thus it shaped the school's development. As Dewey put it, education involved the "searching out of

facts and principles which were authentic and intellectually worth while in contrast with wooden and sawdust stuff which has played a large part in the traditional curriculum."[44] The Laboratory School was organized departmentally to enable a departure from the "sawdust stuff" of most school programs, and after its third year, the school included departments in "kindergarten, history, science and mathematics, domestic sciences and industries, manual training, art, music, the languages, and physical culture." Each department had a director, and the teachers who headed the departments were, according to Mayhew and Edwards, "qualified by social and technical training, as well as by life experience, to utilize the data of her special field in dealing intellectually with the problems met with in carrying on the activities of her classroom." They were "trained investigators," capable of writing "intelligent reports of the results of testing certain educational theories" that would "constitute scientific findings for study and revision by other teachers, administrators, and students of educational science." The school's departmental organization was central to its experimentation.[45]

In the early years, the school also underwent a shift in the grouping of children, moving from multi-age classes to eleven "groups" (their term for grades) organized "according to [students'] interests and social compatibility which implied some correspondence to chronological age."[46] Class sizes remained small, particularly by standards of this era; groups ranged from ten to twenty students, usually with larger groups broken up into two sections. The Laboratory School community was insistent on keeping the groups small; years after her time at the school, Katharine Andrews Healy wondered if the "real living atmosphere" she remembered was "possible when numbers are large even if there are plenty of teachers."[47] As Mayhew and Edwards argued, any "difficulties of adjustment, which arose from having young children under the care of more than one teacher, were met by having one person responsible for the coordination of each child's program and care"[48]; each group had what they called a group teacher who was responsible for such matters of coordination. The teachers cooperated both within departments (sharing content specialization) and within groups (sharing pupils). According to Dewey, "It is the absence of cooperative intellectual relations among teachers that causes the present belief that young children must be taught everything by one teacher."[49]

Thus, by the turn of the century, the Laboratory School had been organized departmentally in order to facilitate the cooperation that Dewey realized was necessary for an experimental school with

specialist teachers. In addition, as the school grew to its maximum of 140 children, 23 teachers and instructors, and 10 assistants, its increased size demanded changes in its administrative structure. As Mayhew and Edwards wrote, in its early and "formative years," the Laboratory School was administered through "the cooperation of those directing and teaching," and it was "difficult to say where executive or administrative responsibilities ended and those of teaching began." While John Dewey directed the school, "for the first three years of its existence the various administrative duties fell in great part to members of the teaching staff, were informally determined in conference with the director, and shifted constantly to meet temporary exigencies and changing needs." In an effort to provide the school with a "more formal organization," two teachers—Georgia Bacon and Katherine Camp—served from 1900 to 1901 as principal and vice principal, respectively, while still teaching. In 1900, Ella Flagg Young assumed the position of supervisor of instruction, and in 1901 Alice Dewey took on the position of principal, while John Dewey continued as the school's director.[50]

In her roles as a teacher, as director of the science department, and briefly as one of the school's teacher-principals, Katherine Camp assumed a wide range of responsibilities at the Laboratory School. She enjoyed the challenges posed by her work in the experimental school; as she wrote, "I've been unusually busy this past week. The school is filling up again and the work grows more interesting for that reason."[51] While living in Chicago in the teacher's flat, her mother wrote to the eldest Camp sister, Bess: "I rarely see Katie. She is always on the go-or busy about some school work."[52] In 1899, Katherine Camp acknowledged that she was "literally lots busier that [*sic*] I was in Brooklyn."[53] Along with the other teachers, she was often occupied after school hours with writing weekly reports of her work. More time-consuming, it seems, and eventually problematic, was her work on the school programs.

Until about 1901, Katherine Camp's role at the school included work on the programs that outlined the complicated daily and quarterly organization of the school. As her sister Anna wrote in 1899, Katherine "has been spending this Sunday re-arranging programs, a task which she has been on constantly since school began."[54] At one point that year, she enlisted the help of Mary Hill with the programs. As Hill wryly put it, "So far I have been very busy as Miss Camp has been trying to make me useful by allowing me to work on the programs, which we hope we finished last night."[55] The carefully constructed school programs designated the amount of time in the day

and week that each group devoted to the various components of the curriculum. For instance, a typical program for groups IV and V (children roughly seven and eight years of age) included the following subjects, with hours per week: five hours of History and Geography, two hours of Techniques (Reading and Writing), two hours of Science, one and a half hours of Cooking, two hours of Textiles, two hours of Shop, three hours of Music and Art, and two and a half hours of Gymnasium.[56]

The programs balanced "active work" with "formal intellectual work" according to the developmental needs of the children in each group.[57] The arrangement of the programs was "the result of the discussions of the weekly teachers' meetings, of Mr. Dewey's own observations in his almost daily visits to the school and also those of Mrs. Dewey and other parents and friends who kept in close touch with its daily program, as well as of the comments and reflection of visiting teachers, administrators, and graduate students."[58] Mayhew and Edwards argued for the importance of the "ease with which changes in the program, both as to subject and method, could be made."[59] From the available evidence, however, it seems that Katherine Camp may have been all too eager to make changes to thew programs.

By the 1901–1902 school year, the arrangement of the programs was no longer part of Katherine Camp's school responsibilities. As Elizabeth Camp wrote to her daughter Anna, who was in Europe with the Crane family, "I can't tell you very much about the Dewey school. I think things are running rather more smoothly than they did last year. Katherine does not have as much worry now she has nothing to do with the programs and confines herself more to teaching."[60] A letter George Herbert Mead wrote to his wife Helen illuminates some reasons for this shift in administrative responsibilities. The Meads, who were closely involved in the Laboratory School, had befriended some of the young teachers, including the Camp sisters and Althea Harmer. George Mead wrote to his wife in May 1901 of a fact-finding bicycle trip that was prompted, it seems, by troubles in the school:

> This afternoon I took two hours off for a bicycle ride. I took Miss Harmer along, and asked her about Miss Camp. She was very open about her. Said that while all the teachers admired her, she has antagonized them—by continual interference ceaseless change of program, and by her dogmatic attitude. Miss Harmer said she was not equal to the task of organizing the work as was evidenced by her programs which changed from day to day—leaving teachers quite at a loss as to when and where they were to teach, and could not get on with the teachers on account of her manner. Miss Harmer kept her off

by being ugly when interfered with. That Miss Camp could do tremendous things in science if she would devote herself to this and let others alone. This was said much more softly than I have transcribed it, but these were the facts which I have guessed from things dropped by the Deweys. I think Mr. Dewey expects Mrs. Young to direct things next year. But I am afraid Miss Camp will pass through a crash. If it comes up naturally I will talk with her.[61]

While this could not have been easy for Katherine Camp, the Camp family letters indicate that she may have been somewhat relieved, as the arrangement of programs was a complicated and time-consuming task that put her in the position of making administrative decisions about her colleagues. After her responsibilities changed, she was still deeply engaged in the work of the school; as her mother wrote in 1902, "Katherine is late tonight—the teacher's meeting is at Mrs. Dewey['s] and I believe she has a social cup of tea after business."[62] In two letters from 1903, Mrs. Camp and Anna Camp reported similarly on Katherine's activities. Anna wrote that "Kate is 'terribly' rushed with two seminars a week, two teachers meetings this week, and a dinner at the Dewey's." A few days later, her mother wrote that Katherine "had been up to Mrs. Young's talking school."[63]

So while this was surely not a painless transition for Katherine Camp, she remained on good terms with the key figures in the school and found herself able to concentrate on teaching, heading the science department, and furthering her scientific expertise. Thus, the organizational structure that emerged by the 1901–1902 school year included the three administrators—John and Alice Dewey and Ella Flagg Young—with various teachers, including Katherine Camp and Althea Harmer, in leadership roles as directors of the departments, as head teachers for the groups of children, and also as seminar instructors in the University of Chicago's Department of Pedagogy.[64]

## Intellectual freedom at the Laboratory School

As the supervisor of instruction during the Laboratory School's later years, Ella Flagg Young collaborated with John Dewey to encourage teachers' intellectual freedom and growth.[65] Young's work at the school came in the middle of a remarkable career with the Chicago public schools, culminating in her position as superintendent of Chicago Public Schools in the 1910s. Throughout her life as an educator, Young promoted the participation of teachers in decision making regarding curriculum and educational policy. For instance, in the Chicago schools, she instituted teachers' councils, which were

meetings at various levels (from school to district) for teachers to discuss and influence school policies.[66]

In *Isolation in the School,* published in 1901 while Young was at the Laboratory School, she wrote, "It is not liberty in carrying out, it is freedom and responsibility in origination also, that will make the whole [teaching] corps a force, a power in itself... It must be predicated that freedom belongs to that form of activity which characterizes the *teacher.*"[67] Linking teachers' intellectual freedom to that of their students, she wrote, "For teachers and pupils to become parts of an 'incoherent homogeneity' is for them to lose in their school life that individuality which is the inherent right of every soul."[68] Furthermore, like Dewey, Young linked teachers' work conditions to the workings of a democracy. "The school cannot take up the question of the development of training for citizenship in a democracy while the teachers are still segregated into two classes, as are the citizens in an aristocracy." Under what she called "close supervision," the following, she argued, tended to happen: "In a short time, the teachers must cease to occupy the position of initiators in the individual work of instruction and discipline, and must fall into a class of assistants, whose duty consists in carrying out instructions of a higher class which originates method for all."[69] She came up with practices designed for "securing freedom of thought," advocating "within the various parts of the school, organizations for the consideration of questions of legislation."[70]

At the Laboratory School, the intellectual freedom advocated by both Dewey and Young was central to the school's design and practices. Teachers at the school were encouraged to be engaged intellectually with understanding the subject matter, discovering the learning capacities and interests of the children, and bringing the children and content together through innovative pedagogical methods. While advocating intellectual freedom for teachers, John Dewey and Ella Flagg Young were also aware of the need for teachers to create curriculum in an environment in which freedom and guidance were in balance. John Dewey thought that teachers at the Laboratory School "had not only great freedom in adapting principles to actual conditions, but if anything, too much responsibility was imposed upon them. In avoiding hard and fast plans to be executed and dictation of methods to be followed, individual teachers were, if anything, not given enough assistance either in advance or by way of critical supervision."[71] (This seems to have been the case for Katherine Camp and her work on the school's programs.) Dewey maintained that, in spite of these reservations, if one would err, he was "confident that all concerned would prefer to err in this direction rather than in that of

too definite formulation of syllabi and elaboration in advance of methods to use in teaching and discipline. Whatever was lost, vitality and constant growth were gained."[72]

In "Experimenting with Education: John Dewey and Ella Flagg Young at the University of Chicago," Ellen Condliffe Lagemann argues that "Young's suggestions for the Laboratory School apparently showed Dewey that giving teachers clear expectations and assignments did not constrain them. Quite the opposite was the case. More important, her suggestions demonstrated that what was crucial for good teaching were opportunities to think and experiment within a context of frank exchange and full respect."[73] John Dewey credited Young and Alice Dewey with supporting the school climate necessary for exchanges that had "a marked intellectual quality in the exchange of experiences and ideas." He maintained, "Their personalities and methods were such as to introduce more intellectual organization without impeding the freedom of individual teachers."[74]

Evidence from Katherine Camp Mayhew, however, suggests that Young may have intimidated some of the teachers. In a 1929 letter to John Dewey, Mayhew wondered if perhaps Young "did not mean to make us feel she stood upon a lofty pinnacle," and might have "felt left out of a thing which had a well developed impetus of its own when she joined it—She certainly froze the assistants stiff."[75] From the available records, Dewey himself seems to have been successful at displaying his belief in teachers' intellectual freedom. As kindergarten teacher Grace Fulmer wrote, "As with his idea of each child being free to develop his own powers to some ultimate purpose through the guidance of one whose experience was richer, so with his own relation to the teachers in his school."[76] As Lagemann argues, however, Young helped Dewey to realize that this freedom did not come without responsibility and that successful schools required an organizational structure that enabled this freedom and responsibility to coexist.[77] The school's regular teachers' reports and meetings were essential to the Laboratory School community's efforts to achieve this balance.

## Teachers' reports

Beginning in the fall of 1898, the Laboratory School teachers wrote weekly reports that were central to the pragmatic inquiry in which the community was engaged. The reports differed considerably from today's lesson plans, which are used often as a way to monitor teachers' compliance with external mandates.[78] Instead, as Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards explained in *The Dewey School,* "All

the teachers in actual daily contact with children of all ages furnished, in these reports, the data for further inquiries and conclusions."[79] This kept teachers busy; during a week when the school was "flooded with visiting superintendents," Mary Hill attended a teachers' meeting, composed her weekly teachers' report, and completed a group report that was to be published in the *Elementary School Record*.[80]

The weekly teachers' reports provided an opportunity for teachers to articulate their reasons for particular approaches to subject matter and instructional methods and to document the outcomes of these practices with the children. In some cases, the children were involved in the reporting as part of their classroom work. A "scheme for reports" outlined three guidelines that teachers were directed to follow in their reportorial work. First, the reports should address the "actual subject matter for the week. This should be given in specific, concrete terms not merely as a general title. For example, do not say, studied rocks or seeds, etc., but state what rocks and what seeds, etc." In other words, the "report should in all cases indicate not merely the actual subject matter, but the reason for taking it up, its antecedents, and the points which are being led up to." The second guideline considered handwork such as carpentry, sewing, or artwork. In such cases, the "reason or motive for the work should be definitely stated," as well as "its connection or lack of connection with the other work of the school, and the uses, if any, to which the objects made are to be put."

Finally, the third guideline dealt with the instructional methods, declaring, "So far as possible the mode of getting at the topic should be indicated," and "the problem or point to be found out should be clearly stated."[81] At the Laboratory School, teachers employed a wide variety of approaches to subject matter instruction, including "conversation, discussion, dramatization, class readings and references to literature; also the study of pictures, visits to museums and historical places," as well as "experimental work."[82] It must be noted that such richness of methods contrasted sharply with the traditional schools of the era, many of which were such dour places that when asked, some children declared that they would rather work in a factory than attend school.[83]

In these guidelines, several teachers' reports were suggested as exemplars. In one such report, of October 14, 1898, the history teacher Laura Runyon discussed the activities undertaken by the Group IV (age seven) students in the study of migration:

> In the second week we began by deciding on reasons for migration of a tribe. The class was divided into groups. Two members were sent to one corner of

the room and asked to think up reasons why our tribe should move, and then come back and report. Two more were sent into another corner and asked to "make believe" they had discovered a place which would be exactly fitted for our tribe. The rest of the class was asked to think of reasons why not all should go, and to raise objections, fears as to result of migration, etc.

She then outlined the outcome of this study:

The scheme worked well. The first group brought back the report of lack of food for cattle; the second had, while searching for cattle discovered a valley watered by a river, with clay beds near; and, as a final touch of persuasion, one boy said "there is a beautiful view there."... The trustworthiness of the men who were to be guides was inquired into. All possible reasons for and against a division of the tribe were spoken of, and finally all agreed to go.[84]

In this report we learn from Runyon about content (migration), methods (what we might now call role playing or simulation), and her evaluation of the study ("The scheme worked well.") In a sentence from earlier in the report, Runyon articulated the connection made between child and curriculum: "They were led to use their reason in each step, but always guided to the true facts." As I shall discuss further in the next chapter, knowledge of subject matter came from active engagement; specialist teachers made decisions that linked children's reasoning powers to content that guided them to what Runyon referred to as "the true facts," or the heart of the subject matter.

The centrality of the reports is revealed in a "Teacher's Circular" that John Dewey wrote in the fall of 1899. First noting "with pleasure the general improvement in both the quality and general extent of these reports," he went on to stress that "their utility also depends, of course, upon their being read after they are written." It was the responsibility of the director of each department to ensure that the reports were completed, corrected, and then signed by the teachers.[85] Building on these weekly teachers' reports were the quarterly reports written by each group teacher, which enabled the teachers as a whole to evaluate the activities of the quarter "in terms of the gain in development made by the children who engaged in them." Mayhew and Edwards argued that such reports were essential to "the success of the entire experiment. These classroom findings became the basis of informal and seminar discussion out of which came the revision that made for whatever progress in education this experiment may have achieved."[86] In addition, the reports served the purpose of disseminating the ideas and practices of the school to a wider audience. The University of Chicago published Laboratory School reports in its

*University Record* and in a series of nine monographs in 1900 under the title *The Elementary School Record*.

## Teachers' meetings

The Laboratory School faculty met weekly in meetings described by Dewey as occasions when "the work of the prior week was gone over in light of the general plan, and in which teachers reported the difficulties met in carrying it out. Modifications and adaptations followed. Discussion in these meetings was a large means in translating generalities about aims and subject-matter into definite form." He went on to outline the benefits of such deliberations for teachers: "Almost unconsciously teachers of native ability, even if they were without much previous experience, gained confidence in their own independent and original powers and at the same time learned to work in a cooperative way as participants in a common plan."[87] The regular teachers' meetings were necessary, according to Dewey, "to discuss the reports of the school in relation to theoretical principles and to revise future plans accordingly."[88]

By 1899, when the school was organized departmentally, two other types of formal meetings were added to the weekly "general meeting" for the entire faculty, at which "general principles and questions relating to curriculum and methods may be raised and discussed." The second type of meeting was "departmental," and in these meetings, the director of the departments, with the other teachers and assistants, went over their common work "in sufficient detail so that its various parts and sequences are thoroughly understood by all." The third type of meeting was the "group" meeting, "where all teachers having to do with one Group meet, with the teacher in charge of that Group as chairman. Discussion of individual children should be confined as much as possible to meetings of this sort."[89] In a summary of responsibilities regarding the school's "Daily Administration" during the school year 1899–1900, Dewey urged teachers to hold a group meeting at least every other week, "to unify work and to discuss individual children when needed."[90]

In the school's meetings, what we would now call professional development was directly related to the vital work of teachers engaged in curriculum design, instruction, and evaluation of programs.[91] According to Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, "Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the constant and intelligent attempts to put into classroom use, and thereby test, the theory of the school. The success or failure of these attempts occupied to a

great extent the weekly teachers' meetings and was the subject of the informal daily discussion that always went on between the teachers in hallways and on the way to and from the classrooms." Revisions and corrections of practice occurred naturally through these kinds of interactions. "Although the immediate decision with regard to treatment of subject-matter and method was left to the individual teacher, each teacher's method was so checked and rechecked by cooperative discussion of results and effect on the children, that changes in viewpoint continually took place."[92]

So important was this "cooperative discussion" to the school's organization that "the teachers' work was arranged with periods free from class work of twenty to thirty minutes every day for each teacher. In these she could visit and advise with other groups and teachers."[93] The Laboratory School's scheduled meetings and informal cooperative discussions illustrate John Dewey's ideas about democracy in education. As he argued in a 1937 essay, "The democratic principle requires that every teacher should have some regular and organic way in which he can, directly or through representatives democratically chosen, participate in the formation of the controlling aims, methods and materials of the school of which he is a part."[94]

An "outline of teachers' meetings" at the Laboratory School offers an illustration of this democratic principle in action. The outline referred to a general meeting led by John Dewey and included "questions which suggest problems that are to be considered. These are not to cover the topics in any literal way, but will get your minds thinking along lines that will be of use to you." Questions included: "Is there any common denominator in the teaching process? Is there an intellectual result which ought to be obtained in all of these different studies and at these different ages? If there is a normal process [of the mind], if the mind actually works toward it, just as the body is working toward health, what is the use of a teacher anyway?" In the resulting discussion, the teachers participating concluded, "Use of past experience to gain enlarged experience through control was arrived at as the aim or common denominator." During the discussion, "knowledge was suggested as the aim," and Dewey then asked, "If the end is knowledge, how much knowledge is to be gained? Where will you draw the line? As much knowledge as you can stuff in? And what knowledge? It was argued that the method that brings the desire for more knowledge should obtain."[95] Indeed, in this meeting, teachers themselves were challenged to discuss the essential questions of their profession so that they should have, much like the children they taught, "the desire for more knowledge."

In notes for *The Dewey School* manuscript, Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards addressed a problem with the teachers' meetings that the school community encountered as it grew larger. As they observed, "Young teachers should have had more information and socialized contact with the 'heads,' as shown in their attitude toward the more formal teachers' meetings, some of them considering the detailed, practical adjustments necessarily discussed, as boring and trivial, failing, because of the lack of insight, to see the importance to the children of the establishment of right social relationships in the 'give and take' of daily life."[96] By adopting the more formal organization that the school's growth made necessary, the school community may have lost some of the close collegiality of the school's beginnings. In addition, as Dewey explained, during the earlier years: "fellows and members of the faculty of the pedagogical department, graduate-student assistants, and the regular teaching staff of the school all met weekly with the directors to discuss the reports of the school in relation to theoretical principles and to revise future plans accordingly."[97] While this enhanced the community's ability to revise the school's practices, it seems that the school's growth may have discouraged the regular inclusion of these university collaborators in the teachers' meetings.

## University connections

While discussing the emerging *Dewey School* manuscript with her sister and John Dewey, Katherine Camp Mayhew wondered if she "had made enough of the value of the contact of the staff with the whole staff of the university." As she added, "Another thing I wanted to get in there—that kind of help was democratic and social or spontaneous, not a matter of red tape." As the university faculty and students were closely involved with the school, "they did not give advice without knowing the situation."[98] In *The Dewey School,* Mayhew and Edwards described one such interaction with a university student, Arthur Tabor Jones, who shared his laboratory studies with children working on similar, if simplified, experiments of their own. Jones "came each day fresh from his own laboratory study" to work with the children with instruments such as the camera, microscope, and telescope, and the students visited the university laboratories to see other instruments, with interesting names like "interferometer and spectroscope."[99] Mayhew and Edwards argued, "This connection with the University and adults who were studying and working on the same problems steadied and heightened the children's appreciation of the importance and

reality of their work."[100] In addition, it deepened the teachers' connection to the subject matter. As the sisters explained, "the cooperation of the many departments of the University, particularly in all forms of science is acknowledged with gratitude. Heads of these departments, as well as individual staff members, were generous with their time and facilities. In addition to this whole-hearted aid in material ways, intellectual resources were freely put at the disposal of the teachers."[101]

The University of Chicago was a particularly exciting place to be at this time. Mayhew and Edwards recognized that the "intimate relationship" of the school with this pioneering university "gave an easy accessibility for teachers desiring it to many scientists who were, or since have become, leaders of thought and accomplishment in their various fields."[102] The faculty members most involved in the Laboratory School were those in Dewey's department, including James R. Angell, George Herbert Mead, and James H. Tufts. Mead was the most involved, taking responsibility in many areas; along with his wife, Helen Castle Mead, he raised funds for the school and edited Dewey's essays on the school that were published as *The School and Society*. He was also president of the school's Parents' Association.[103] Along with Dewey and Ella Flagg Young, Tufts taught a class to parents.[104] Faculty members in the sciences such as botany professor John M. Coulter, who worked closely with the Laboratory School on plant experiments, cooperated as well.[105] Some of the scholars were also parents of Laboratory School children; Mead's son Henry attended, as did the Tufts children and, sporadically, the children of physiologist Jacques Loeb. If we think of the Laboratory School community as having four components—teachers (and administrators), children, parents, and University of Chicago faculty—in the last two there was a great deal of overlap.

The university-school cooperation was designed to benefit the children, to be sure, and like Dewey himself, faculty members with children in the school had an additional motivation behind their involvement. But the relationship was also meant to make a statement regarding the respect that ought to be accorded to the teachers of young children. As Dewey insisted, "Primary teachers should have the same power, the same freedom (and the same pecuniary recompense that now goes to university and, in less measure, to high-school teachers). Persons selected on the basis of their ability to respond to the needs of an educational situation and to cooperate socially and intellectually with others develop ability to work out and organize subject-matter and methods. Our 'higher' education will not be really

higher until elementary teachers have the same right and power to select and organize proper subject-matter, and invent and use their own methods as is now accorded in some degree to teachers of older students."[106] The school's ties to the University of Chicago served to support the teachers' "right and power" to what Dewey called "intellectual freedom."[107]

## Conclusion

At the Laboratory School, the very structures that were in place to assure teachers' intellectual freedom, such as teachers' reports and meetings, served also to offer teachers the guidance they needed in order to grow in effectiveness as professionals. Dewey made this connection clear. As he argued in 1936, "Experience showed that there are checks upon dispersion and centrifugal effort that are more effective than are the rigid planning in advance and the close supervision usually relied upon. One such check was the weekly teachers' meeting."[108] Dewey further asserted, "Association and exchange among teachers was our substitute for what is called supervision, critic teaching, and technical training." Looking back thirty years, he concluded, "Experience and reflection have convinced me that this principle is fundamental in school organization and administration." As he went on, "In recollection of many things in our school practice and results that I could wish had been otherwise, there is compensation in the proof our experience affords that the union of intellectual freedom and cooperation will develop the spirit that is prized in university teachers, and that is sometimes mistakenly supposed to be a monopoly of theirs."[109]

The Laboratory School community re-envisioned the art and science of teaching by supporting the intellectual freedom of teachers to investigate and create curriculum in a context of cooperative inquiry. As I discuss in the next chapters, in this environment it was possible for teachers to be engaged intellectually and socially through their deep involvement in classroom instruction and inquiry, and in their work in connected institutions such as Hull House. For instance, several teachers published scholarly articles on their work in the Laboratory School. In her 1900 article "Textile Industries," Althea Harmer described her class in textiles, in which she guided her students through a process of inquiry that involved observation, drawing conclusions, and "re-invention." As she wrote, through this kind of instruction the teacher is "calling the constructive imagination into play."[110] Though she was describing the learning process

through which teachers guided students, she might also have been describing the investigative process by which teachers reported on classroom practices and the "cooperative discussion" that took place in the teachers' meetings. The practices designed to encourage teachers to become "investigators"[111]—including the teachers' reports and the regular meetings during which they were discussed—served also to provide guidance that teachers needed to teach effectively and flourish in a climate of intellectual collaboration.

Katherine Camp, circa 1890s. Courtesy of the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. No photo of Anna Camp is available for reproduction.

Althea Harmer Bardeen, circa 1915; photographer Eva Watson-Schutze. Courtesy of William Bardeen.

The Hill sisters, with Mary Hill second from left, circa 1890s. Courtesy of the Swope family.

# Chapter 4

# Teachers as Researchers: Developing a Course of Study

The Laboratory School teachers worked with John Dewey to "discover . . . how a school could become a cooperative community while developing in individuals their own capacities and satisfying their own needs."[1] At the same time, as "investigators,"[2] they were testing Dewey's "organic circuit" theory of learning—the idea that children learn through a process of "doing and undergoing"—taking action, and reflecting on the outcome of their acts. This was, according to Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, unprecedented; as they argued, "There was no previous school experience which had attempted to meet the psychological conditions of learning implied in the concept of the organic circuit."[3] To test the school's "working hypotheses" while coordinating individual and social needs, Dewey argued that two factors must be considered: the first, discussed in the previous chapter, was "the establishment of the school as a form of community life." The second, to be considered here, was "working out a definite body of subject-matter, the material of a 'course of study.' "[4]

The Laboratory School's "course of study," or curriculum, was worked out according to the pragmatic idea that knowledge is discovered through collective inquiry. As John Dewey argued in his 1900 article "The Psychology of the Elementary Curriculum," the "laboratory problem" faced at the school was "the construction of a course of study which harmonizes with the natural history of the growth of the child in capacity and experience." The resulting curricular

question was how to select the "kind, variety, and due proportion of subjects," along with "those modes of presentation that will cause the selected material to enter vitally into growth."[5] The Laboratory School community found this vitality in what they called the "social occupations"—cooking, textile work, and shopwork. For Mayhew and Edwards, the occupations were the "common center" of the curriculum at the Laboratory School[6]; they facilitated the connections, essential to pragmatism, between ideas and their application to the world. The occupations, according to Dewey, encouraged the "growth that comes from the continual interplay of ideas and their embodiment in action."[7]

This was in contrast to practices in traditional schools of the Progressive Era, where content and methods seemed settled matters.[8] At a professional meeting in 1899, the manual training teacher Frank Ball presented a paper outlining his work in the Laboratory School.[9] In the audience were two educators, Louis H. Galbreath and Charles McMurry, whose responses to Ball's account illustrate how sharply the Laboratory School parted company with most schools of the time. Galbreath was struck by what he called the "development of a new thought—that the school is not merely a preparation for life, but is a life in itself. It cultivates the social spirit. The scheme meant not only the adoption of a new curriculum, but also a new management. The spontaneous activity of the University School contrasted strongly with the unreality of our ordinary schools." McMurry had a similar reaction. The Laboratory School, he said, "which started with activity and ended with books, overturned the idea that a child could use nothing but memory."[10]

Indeed, in most schools during the Progressive Era, the predominant pedagogical method called for students to recite lessons they had memorized from textbooks. In *How Teachers Taught,* Larry Cuban explores the question of what actually happened in public school classrooms of the past. Cuban maintains that, with some exceptions, instruction was teacher-centered, with a curriculum dominated by textbooks and recitations. He describes the typical classroom as "formal," with the desks arranged in rows and students moving around only when permitted by the teacher to do so.[11] Citing Joseph Mayer Rice's 1892 study of schools in thirty-six cities, Cuban characterizes urban schools of that time as "grim, dreary, and mechanical" places where children were occupied with drill and recitation and didn't have "the faintest understanding of what they were saying."[12]

In his 1903 article "Democracy in Education," John Dewey argued that in traditional schools, because of the prevalence of what he called

"ready-made" material, "the tendency is to reduce the activity of mind to a docile or passive taking in of the material presented—in short, to memorizing, with simply incidental use of judgment and of active research. As is frequently stated, acquiring takes the place of inquiring."[13] In contrast, the Laboratory School did not rely on textbooks or "ready-made materials," and instead of depending on recitation and memorization, the teachers also employed methods such as excursions, conversations, experimentation, and dramatization. As the author and editor Harriet Farrand noted after a visit to the school, "No textbooks are used, and there are no set lessons to learn and recite in spelling, arithmetic, geography, grammar, history, or anything else; still there is a consistent course marked out, into which all these things enter as accessories, and are mastered as they come up." She observed, "All the branches of study go on together, connectedly and harmoniously, in natural relations." Walking about the school, Farrand saw "clusters of children here and there in the different rooms, gathered about an older person, all talking familiarly together about something which seems to be extremely interesting."[14]

The inquiry-based course of study for the students was made possible by an inquiry-based approach to teaching. A 1902 letter that Dewey wrote to the University of Chicago's President Harper, in defense of the inclusion of teachers' articles in a scholarly volume, illustrated his understanding of the role of the teachers in the school's work. Dewey explained, "At my suggestion some members of the teaching force in the Laboratory School attempted to prepare articles which should interpret upon psychological grounds the result of experience gained in certain lines of instruction in the Laboratory School." He found that he needed to reiterate his position regarding the role of the school as a laboratory: "I supposed it was perfectly clear, not only from the name, but from the history and idea of the school that it bore the same relation to the Department of Education that the laboratory of Physics or Chemistry does to those departments, and consequently, that persons who, upon appointment from the University to do work in the Laboratory, would be competent to furnish material." He concluded, "If the School does not stand in a position of a research laboratory, I see no reason for its existence."[15]

Thus, John Dewey supported the investigatory work of the teachers and made the argument that they were the school's legitimate researchers. The Laboratory School teachers reported weekly on their classroom practice and met regularly to discuss teaching methods, analyze the needs of the children they taught in common, and make

decisions regarding instructional matters.[16] With Dewey's encouragement, they also wrote articles published in several scholarly journals, including the *Elementary School Teacher, The Elementary School Record,* and the *Manual Training Magazine.* In the fall of 1901, for instance, Katherine Camp informed her mother that she was "struggling with reports and an article for the manual training magazine."[17] These articles went beyond descriptions of classroom practices and analyzed the central ideas with which the members of this school community were grappling. Several teachers, including Katherine Camp and Althea Harmer, taught pedagogical seminars at the University of Chicago and gave lectures on educational issues[18]; after the pair delivered a set of lectures in their fields, Anna Camp remarked, "Dear me they are getting so renowned."[19]

The teachers' daily experiences at the school prepared them to think about and articulate their findings, as they carried out the work Dewey described as "testing their ideas and beliefs by putting them into practical application," and then "revising their beliefs on the basis of the results of such application."[20] Indeed, teachers at the school refined the course of study through their observations of the students' interests and "spontaneous activity," building the data for their interpretations of the "result of experience" on children's learning at the school. Their observations of children were guided by a list of "child study questions" that each teacher was asked to complete "independently without consulting with others." For instance, teachers observed the "kind of interest" that students had in objects, noting whether the interest was "mainly physical, that is handling," or if it was rather a "positive interest in investigation, finding out something further about the object." They also noticed whether students showed an "interest in problems for their own sake." After the teachers observed and studied their students, they had the "opportunity for comparison and mutual correction" at teachers' meetings. The teachers were urged to come up with new questions of their own: "Voluntary suggestions as to points not covered . . . are especially desired in order that a further better set of questions may be drawn up."[21]

The Laboratory School teachers understood that this kind of teaching was more challenging than at traditional schools. Acknowledging the particular rigors of working at a school such as the Laboratory School, Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards wrote, "The broad and easy ways of conventional teaching lured the teachers to seemingly pleasant travel. Continually must they be on their guard against the temptation to select the old, easy, and habitual forms of activity for which ready-made materials were at hand, rather than one

that required search for new materials and careful thought."[22]While parents were extremely supportive of the Laboratory School,[23] a teasing letter from Helen Castle Mead to Anna Camp illustrates the likelihood that parents too might have been tempted by the "old, easy and habitual" practices found in more traditional schools. While in Germany in 1901, young Henry Mead attended a public school, and his mother reported that having put her "pedagogical" ideas to rest, her "wicked philistine nature has now the upper hand. It's so much less trouble to have him go to school where manners, neatness, order, obedience, piety, reverence, reading writing spelling & arithmetic are all taught by contract, no nonsense here about natural development, growth, etc. etc. Kinder measured off by the meter & educated accordingly. For immediate results I suppose like military discipline it's a good thing—Well, it won't do Henry any harm, & he is very happy." (Anna Camp passed this letter on to her family, asking of Helen Mead, "Isn't she a renegade?")[24]

Indeed, the entire Laboratory School community was engaged in a pedagogical experiment that made great demands on the teachers' time and energies. As Mary Hill wrote, "Teaching is much like the beating out of blankets—it worries one to know when to stop."[25] But their work at the school offered them an opportunity to inquire deeply into questions at the heart of their chosen profession. Particularly for the female teachers, this provided them with a chance to assume responsibilities, with accompanying satisfactions, rare in American schools of this era. In their published writings, school reports, and correspondence, the teachers left a record of the central role they played in the daily work of this educational experiment. What emerges is a description of a school in which teachers and students alike were engaged intellectually and socially with one another and with what they called "subject matter" in a way that was unlike other schools of its time. For this reason, they often taught and learned in front of a crowd. As Mary Hill wrote in 1900, "I had a pleasant time in school this morning in spite of hords [*sic*] of visitors."[26] Many observers, from home and abroad, wanted to see the school where so many conventional ideas about education were overturned.

## Social occupations and academic content

In 1900, the history teacher Laura Runyon wrote an article on the Laboratory School designed to appeal to the broad readership of the *Chautauquan,* the journal of the Chautauqua Institution. She composed the article as if she were a mother looking at the Laboratory

School, with fresh and somewhat skeptical eyes, as a possible school for her children. Quoting an unnamed teacher, she described a group's work on textiles, conveying the purpose of the school's engagement with the "social occupations." The teacher explained, "The child has always thought of cloth as a thing by itself, with no history back of it beyond the store from which it was purchased. Under the guidance of the teacher he sees it reduced to its first elements, then reconstructed by himself, and cloth has become a new thing to him, bringing to his mind the lives of many peoples and many occupations. Moreover, he has learned a method of investigation which he can apply to any subject."[27]

Social occupations enabled the Laboratory School to fashion a curriculum that facilitated the inquiry central to the philosophy of pragmatism and that clearly distinguished the school from others of its time. Referring in part to the new pragmatic ideas, Katherine Camp argued in an article in the *Manual Training Magazine* that three recent "changes in psychological conceptions of mind" obligated teachers to reformulate "general principles of selection of subject-matter" and methods of instruction. According to Camp, these three changes were John Dewey's idea that the mind is a "social rather than an individual affair," William James's argument that "one essential function" of the intellect is "defining the direction which our activity, immediate or remote, shall take," and the realization that children go through stages of growth, in which "the mind has different interests and capacities."[28] For teachers making decisions about subject matter and methods, the social occupations offered a framework upon which they could build learning experiences that took these developments into account. Such work involved cooperative group inquiry (rather than the individual acquisition of "ready-made" material) and provided children with opportunities to relate intellectual work to activity. The resulting course of study took account of students' developmental growth and interests and built on these interests to bring the children to an understanding of their world.[29]

The social occupations represented what John Dewey called the "industrial history of man," which "is not a materialistic or merely utilitarian affair. It is a matter of intelligence. Its record is the record of how man learned to think, to think to some effect, to transform the conditions of life so that life itself became a different thing."[30] One purpose of teaching social occupations was that students would be motivated to learn the skills of reading, writing, and computing because they realized that those abilities were necessary to solve the real problems they encountered in their work in carpentry, textiles,

and cooking.[31] The school's physical accommodations made this kind of work possible. In the large house at 5412 Ellis Avenue that the school occupied from 1898 to 1903, the Laboratory School facilities included two science laboratories ("one for combined physics and chemistry, and one for biology"), art and textile rooms in the attic, three rooms to be shared by the history and English departments, and a kitchen "large enough for two groups to work together and two dining rooms properly equipped for serving." The gymnasium and manual training rooms were located in a barn that was connected to the main building through a "covered way."[32]

Mayhew and Edwards argued that the social occupations served as a "common center" for the elementary curriculum and provided a "thread of continuity because they were concerned with the fundamental requisites of living."[33] As John Dewey explained in 1901, the tools of manual training—"the saw, hammer and plane, the wood and clay, the needle and cloth, and the processes by which these are manipulated"—were "not ends in themselves; they are rather agencies through which the child may be initiated into the typical problems which require human effort."[34] For instance, according to Althea Harmer, the study of textiles offered students "experience along several distinct lines of work," including history, which she called the "basis of the whole"; the "inventive and experimental" scientific fields; mathematics and technical design; the visual and expressive arts; and handwork. Education grounded in the social occupations, properly correlated with the academic subjects, made possible what Harmer called the "awakening of latent powers." In the production of "articles for actual use the joy of the child lies in the mere doing and making. His impulses, constructive and artistic, are realized in actual, concrete form. The result of his work shows any laxness or carelessness in its planning or construction. He is face to face with himself."[35] In their various areas of expertise, the Laboratory School teachers engaged in a dynamic process of working out content, teaching through innovative methods, and interpreting and reporting on their classroom practice.

## Science

From the Laboratory School's early years, science took a central place in the course of study, for, as Katherine Camp argued, the scientific method was the "key to intellectual power in any field of knowledge."[36] Arguing in 1900 for the importance of "Science in Elementary Education," Katherine Camp argued, "If the use of experimental and observational science can accomplish this training of the

constructive and inquiring mind, it will have justified its place in a plan of elementary education."[37] The science curriculum at the Laboratory School was designed to teach scientific content, to be sure, but more importantly, it was meant to channel children's curiosity into habits of inquiry.

Teaching science at the Laboratory School made great demands on teachers' knowledge of both pedagogical methods and content. As Katherine Camp argued in a 1903 article, the science teacher must possess mastery of the following: "First, scientific method in itself; second, a sympathetic understanding of the springs of action of the child, united with knowledge of the content of the different sciences." As she explained further, "One essential thing to be insisted upon is the teacher's ability to recognize the purpose of hypothesis or theory, as merely outlining present knowledge and to be held always flexible, ready for readjustment, or even abandonment, whichever should be demanded by scientific growth and development."[38] This resembles what Robert Westbrook calls the pragmatists' embrace of doubt.[39]

While such abilities were particularly important for science teachers at the Laboratory School, it was essential for all teachers at the school to possess an experimental temperament and an inquiring bent of mind. As Katherine Camp Mayhew asserted years later, the school required teachers with an "intelligently critical attitude," rather than a "dominating" personality.[40] Mary Hill explained this qualification in a letter describing a lunch at the teachers' Hyde Park flat, where their guest was J. F. Reigart of the School of Ethical Culture in New York City.[41] Hill explained that in contrast to John Dewey, Reigart believed that "the fundamental and universal motive is the aesthetic, and so the children are first well grounded in Mother Goose and Twinkle twinkle. The latter he seemed to think particularly beautiful and adapted to bring out the poetry and meaning of a star much better than knowing it to be another sun at a distance hard to conceive of—and that the light which now reaches us started from it many many hours ago."

As Mary Hill continued, Reigart "thinks us gross materialists and thinks we have a terrible absence of high ideals. Miss Camp asked him what made him think so? And he said for one [thing] the attitude of the children towards the teachers—it was too familiar and like the home one!" He preferred a relation "of great reverence" and argued that "there should be but one teacher to twenty five children—otherwise the familiar relation starts up." Hill thought otherwise: "I told him that I thought one of the first things was to have the children know your faults and that I didn't think there was nearly

so much danger of her exercising an undue influence over the childs [*sic*] individuality when the number was few enough to permit of such a relationship as when it was larger and the teacher was looked upon as a superior being with sort of a special pull on the sources of knowledge."[42]

The teachers at the Laboratory School did not rely on traditional relations of "great reverence," or the security that might come from being seen as "superior beings"; they were responsible for fashioning new personas as teachers, with correspondingly novel materials and methods. As John Dewey wrote in 1900 of selecting curricular materials, "the search for the truth involves experimentation in the region of the unknown," as that is "the only step which can introduce rational conviction into education."[43] Likewise, in a 1901 letter to University of Chicago's President Harper, he wrote that "the chief end" of any university laboratory, including the Laboratory School, "was to find out things in a scientific way."[44]

The Laboratory School, then, was what Alice Dewey called a "double experiment." As she wrote, "The teacher had to initiate the children into group life, and social life is conventional. At the same time she must watch herself to see at what moment she could discard her surest props of method and take to wings that might melt in the sun."[45] At the Laboratory School, relationships were unconventional for the time, and the teachers were working with methods and materials that were experimental and might not work. To find success experimentally, the teachers had to be willing to fail. In the science classrooms, experiments and excursions were among the new methods that replaced the "surest props of method" found in traditional schools; the content included biology most prominently, but also astronomy, chemistry (connected to cooking), and geology. (In fact, science was a relatively new school subject, and thus methods of teaching science were not as established as in the so-called "three R's."[46])

Experimentation in the science classrooms proceeded according to the teachers' understandings of children's developmental needs, as did instruction in the other subjects, while calling upon teachers' expertise in scientific fields. Katherine Camp maintained that instruction at the Laboratory School was organized according to three stages of children's growth; the first went to about age eight, the second until about age twelve, and the third to about age fifteen.[47] As an illustration of the difference between the first and second stages of growth, and the kind of scientific work possible with these groups of children, Camp explained that children of the second stage, who had moved

beyond an interest in "activity for its own sake," would, in their work with iron smelting and ceramics firing, try "many ways of bringing about the desired end: For example, they were asked to find out how their clay bowls could be heated without danger of spoiling, and were led from their first general answer 'When they look dry,' and 'When they had dried a long time,' to suggest testing in the fire a piece of the clay, the same thickness as the bowl, before putting in the more precious dish. From the way in which this piece of clay acted in heat they drew their own conclusions as to the length of time necessary for drying the bowl." It is at this stage that "the child begins to experiment consciously, in the sense that he initiates certain conditions to find out what will happen, rather than ask, 'Tell me why this happens.' "[48] Once children enter the third stage, they are able to exert more control over scientific processes in order to "bring about a desired end." The responsibility for the teacher of physics at this stage, for example, is to "gather together the children's past experiences in such a way as to emphasize some special form of energy, such as gravity, light, heat, or electricity, thus making the transition to a more technical study of 'physics.' "[49]

Throughout the developmental science curriculum at the Laboratory School, the aim was to teach students to become scientists of everyday life. As teacher Katharine Andrews Healy put it in the 1930s, "I think the children did get the scientific attitude of mind. They found out things for themselves. They worked out the simplest problem that may have involved a most commonplace and everyday fact in the manner that a really scientific investigator goes to work." As she went on, "Do you remember the disgust of the head of the University Latin department—that the children spent two laboratory periods on a trifle that 'they might have found out in a few minutes from a book'? Isn't it astonishing how few otherwise intelligent beings we meet that do have an enquiring mind?"[50] Acquiring knowledge from a book, no matter how quickly it could be accomplished, could not replace the habits of mind that resulted from inquiry.

The use of experimentation in the science curriculum was designed to encourage this "scientific attitude of mind" in the children; it also enabled the teachers to further develop their own knowledge of how children of different ages learned and thus to improve the curriculum in an ongoing, and also experimental, way. As Katherine Camp argued, "As we watch the developing child, we find this continual interplay of the activity of observation, of experimentation, reflection, and application in a new activity, growing more and more definite and controlled." As the children approached the end of the elementary

years, after a course of study engaged in inquiry, the aim was to bring them to "reflection upon results, to recognition of principle and law, and again to renewed observation and experiment, and extension to new phenomena and experiments of the old principle passing into a new, so developing the controlled mind we call scientific."[51] This was a work in progress. As Mayhew and Edwards explained of the children, "They were beginning to see science as knowledge logically arranged (or possible of such arrangement) for the purpose of searching out more knowledge. This was not true by any means of all, or of some all of the time. Such insight came irregularly and most often at the heels of eager interest; it often took flight as the result of dismal failure in technique."[52]

An example from a Group VIII (age eleven) science class that Katherine Camp taught in June 1900 illustrates the process undertaken at the Laboratory School for the training of the "controlled mind," and the scientific understanding necessary on the part of teachers. In this series of lessons, the students' examinations of tadpoles led them to wonder what caused the creatures to change their position. Camp suggested that they find out "whether light would make tadpoles move or whether darkening part of the dish would make the tadpoles collect in the dark or the light portion and whether jarring or otherwise disturbing them caused them to move." As Camp reported, "They made a series of about eight observations and found, as has been found elsewhere, that light did not seem to be a determining factor." Here Camp illustrated her knowledge of contemporary scientific studies, which she used to verify students' discoveries—not to supplant their own inquiry. That students gained knowledge of the tadpoles and the reasons for their actions was important to Camp, but so also was the quality of this knowledge when it resulted from inquiry—rather than directly and originally from a "controlling teacher."[53] As a scholar of science herself, dating from her undergraduate years, Camp was able to draw upon this background as she guided her students through scientific experimentation.[54]

Excursions, or what we would currently call field trips, supplemented the use of experiments in the science curriculum. Laboratory School students spent time outdoors in their garden and also ventured forth into the neighborhood. Katharine Andrews was involved in the work done in the garden; she maintained, "The planning and care of the garden furnish a natural cause for the review of much of the work done in the laboratory, not only in botany, but in the other sciences; conditions of soils, germination, effects of heat and moisture are recalled."[55] And the excursion, Andrews wrote, "is by far the best

means of carrying on botanical study." She explained, "Excursions have been of two kinds—those on which the children have been given some subject to work out, and those that have been more of the nature of a picnic, when the children have been more free to follow their own inclinations." Even in a city lot, she argued, natural (and educational) riches abound: "pollination, seed production and distribution, adaptations for protection against animals and extremes of weather, and the relationships of plants in colonies can be seen all around." On one lot near the school, she and her students found about fifty varieties of plants, "which the children were able to distinguish," along with "three kinds of soil," "four strata of plants," and "masses of algae."[56]

On occasion, the students dramatized scientific processes, though dramatization was used more often in the study of history. For instance, a University of Chicago assistant in Psychology, Willard Gore, observed one of Katherine Camp's science classes in which young children "were engaged in no less a 'social occupation' than that of impersonating the solar system—or at least the sun, earth, moon, and maybe a planet or two for good measure. They took their positions on the floor and revolved about one another in true planetary style, yet with childlike zeal and informality." Decades after his visit, he remembered this "snap-shot, a mere random cross-section" as it seemed to "typify the simplicity and audacity of the school's pedagogy."[57] As John Dewey wrote in 1900 in the article "Reflective Attention," the "fundamental necessity" was "leading the child to realize a problem as his own, so that he is self-induced to attend in order to find out its answer."[58] Whether this occurred when impersonating a planet, or when dramatizing an historical event, teachers at the Laboratory School tried to create classroom experiences that simultaneously made the commonplace new and wondrous, and transformed the unknown into problems the children wanted to solve.

## History

In the Laboratory School, with the "common center" of the social occupations, John Dewey maintained that there was a "necessary correlation" between manual training, and history and science.[59] As Dewey explained, "History is introduced at a very early period and is conducted on the principle that it is a means of affording the child insight into social life." Thus taught, "great emphasis is laid upon the typical relations of humanity to nature, as summed up in the development of food, shelter, habitation, clothing, and industrial occupations. This affords . . . natural and frequent opportunities for adjusting the

work in history to that in manual training on the one side, and to science on the other."[60] For instance, as I shall discuss in the next section, the study of textiles was conducted jointly through the scientific examination of fibers and the historical investigation of the development of textile production.

This correlation of history, science, and the occupations provided continuity in the Laboratory School course of study.[61] The curriculum was constructed developmentally, so that children studied historical eras and societies judged appropriate for their intellectual abilities and spontaneous interests. Through their own pedagogical experimentation, the teachers discovered a course of study in history that built from year to year, but did not adhere to a strict chronological progression. For the youngest groups, there was a focus on what they called "primitive life," because in the study of the early humans, students found that they "always learned by doing." As Mayhew and Edwards argued of "early man," "His method was a trial-and-error one in the beginning. Then, by intelligent experimenting, he discovered, he invented, and brought to bear contrivances of his own fashioning upon his physical environment. What better introduction to the experimental method could any child have than that of the first discoveries of the power of mind over matter?"[62]

The early focus on household occupations was followed by a study of invention, discovery, and exploration. Group VI, the nine-year-olds, was seen as a transition group, as students were moving into what the Laboratory School called the second (or reflective) stage of development. As Mayhew and Edwards wrote, "Some of the important theoretical statements lying behind the work of the school were developed through faculty discussions of the practices" of this group as compared to Group V.[63] The teachers noticed a change in the "attitude toward his work" in the child of nine,[64] and as the history teacher Laura Runyon argued, this meant that "the problem of the teacher, at the beginning of the reflective stage, becomes more complex. In general she must see that the subject-matter of history is so presented that the child's mind will reach out, question, examine, and analyze the forces at work in causing the men and women of history to act thus and so, in order to understand how their acts aided or hindered progress."[65] Thus at this point, the study of history became more grounded in specific times and places, beginning with local history and extending to the study of colonial and revolutionary United States and the European background of colonists.

Each group of children also experienced continuity within the school year, embedded in the connections across the different subject areas. Again, the occupations, studied scientifically and historically,

served to unify the curriculum. One example, which might sound quite dangerous to our ears, was a Group IV (age seven) study of the discovery of fire. "After much individual experimentation each child learned to make a fire and formulated the chief things requisite to the experiment." The students made several discoveries: that it was difficult to start a fire, and that early humans must have taken care to keep their fires burning. Hardwood, they found out, burns slowly, and it was possible to keep a fire going by partially covering it. In connection with their study of fire, the group selected stones for weapons, cooked by roasting, and boiled with the help of heated stones. In their work of imagining life in early times, they also experimented with clay, making clay vessels and working out details such as the length of time necessary for firing clay and the natural sources of dyes for pottery.[66]

The approach to history at the Laboratory School was marked not just by the correlation of history with other subjects and the occupations, but also by the theoretical approach to the past as understood by children, and the corresponding methods of instruction. As Dewey argued in his essay "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," "It was an essential part of the conception of proper subject-matter that studies must be assimilated not as mere items of information, but as organic parts of present needs and aims, which in turn are *social*." While adults might think in terms of the historical "development of civilization," from the children's perspective the work in history at the Laboratory School "was a movement of life and thought dramatically and imaginatively reenacted by themselves."[67] Dewey and the Laboratory School teachers were early proponents of methods of teaching history similar to those advanced today by scholars such as Sam Wineburg, who argues that history is one part of the curriculum that offers opportunities to develop powers of analysis and an understanding of how people of the past made crucial decisions.[68] The history teacher Laura Runyon earned a master's degree from the University of Chicago, with a thesis on the teaching of history at the Laboratory School; as she argued in 1903, "Whatever section of the world's past be selected for the teaching of history, the aim is to enable the child to interpret society of which he finds himself a part, and his own part in that social whole." The aim of the teachers, in selecting a curricular focus and materials, was to "keep alert . . . the inquiring and inventive attitude of the child."[69]

In order to support this inventive attitude, the methods employed by the history teachers included dramatization, conversations, excursions, and constructive work. Georgia Bacon taught history and mathematics at the Laboratory School, though her undergraduate

degree, earned in 1897 at the University of Michigan, was in biology. As Bacon explained in her 1900 article "History," conversation and discussion enabled teachers to introduce "facts and conditions," in order to make "the life of the time under consideration as *real* as possible." With this understanding of the past, the "problems of the time naturally present themselves, and the class endeavors to find a solution. It is an interesting fact that the more the class lives in the time the more certain it is to find the same solution to the questions of the day as the people who actually worked them out." Thus dramatization often followed these conversations as a natural outgrowth of this immersion in the lives and problems of people from the past. The children deepened their historical understandings and worked on their other abilities by writing narratives and reading historical novels.[70]

Georgia Bacon, who was the head of the department of history at the school, insisted that the "ideal way of teaching history" in the elementary school was to "have the teacher well acquainted with her subject, *well equipped with facts;* then, having in mind a definite thing to be taught, allow the children to approach it from whatever standpoint they wish—the teacher only answering questions or helping the children to answer them till they have gained not only an extensive but an intensive view."[71] As with the other subjects, teachers' content expertise was essential in the teaching of history at the Laboratory School. In addition, with history, perhaps more than with the other subjects, instruction was shaped by teachers' political sensibilities and the social impulses of their time.

Possibly because of her residence at Hull House and the knowledge she gained there of larger social issues, Mary Hill questioned whether her colleagues at the Laboratory School were sufficiently "broad" in their outlooks. Her comments were provoked by a conversation with the manual training teacher Frank Ball. In a letter to Gerard Swope in 1900, she wrote, "The children at school are making quite a big house out in the yard. Today I heard one of them say 'Are we union men?' and Mr. Ball said 'Not much—no union man works for me'—as I was passing close by I said 'Why, Mr. Ball,' and he said 'I won't be dictated to'—and I replied 'Then of course you mustn't dictate.' But he waggled his head and kind of grunted a 'well I—I—' and I walked on—wishing I knew what really to say." As she continued, "I wish we could have a big man teaching in that school—with broad sympathies—I think that's what most of the teachers lack. They are just that broad intellectually they are a little afraid of committing themselves by any such sentimental stuff as sympathetic identification.

And some of their history is so expansionistic. But it's well for the least effective person in the whole place to criticise."[72]

Discussions of imperialism and expansionism were in the air at this time, and teachers who followed national and international events surely came down on different sides of the various debates. One can find examples of what Hill called "expansionistic" history and a lack of "sympathetic identification" in the teachers' writings on the school. For instance, in her master's thesis on teaching history at the Laboratory School, Laura Runyon wrote, "In getting land from the Indians the same methods were used that have prevailed through the ages when a people with superior weapons and brains, in sufficient number, meet an inferior people." While she didn't condone such action (she cited the "higher moral attitude of a few individuals" who "paid the Indians for the land they occupied"), her willingness to accept judgments of cultural inferiority and superiority was likely illustrative of the problems that Hill saw in her colleagues.[73] References to "savagery" and "savages" are scattered throughout the teachers' reports on history classes when discussing the study of "primitive life," though the reports also contain evidence of the teachers' respect for the practical and intellectual efforts of such early humans to solve everyday problems. At least some of the teachers seemed intent upon expanding their knowledge of social relations. Anna Camp, always curious, sought insight from her father, asking in a letter to her family, "What are Papa's views on Expansion and 'Imperialism'?"[74] However broad (or narrow) in sympathy they may have been regarding imperialism, the Laboratory School was unusual in its rejection of traditional gender stereotypes for children in the study of social occupations.

## Textiles

In the Laboratory School, girls and boys worked together on all occupations. The manual training teacher Frank Ball (the anti-union man), writing of shopwork and carpentry, maintained that there was "no reason why girls should not have this training in the lower grades as well as the boys. Experience has proved that in this as in other departments of the school they are as expert and often more painstaking."[75] As the former student Josephine Crane Bradley recalled of her experience with carpentry at the school, "The building of the club-house—the real and practical work—helped us to see what architecture really is. We got far more out of that than out of books."[76] The faculty was not so careful to balance their own responsibilities for the work on the clubhouse, as it was mostly the male teachers who got involved.[77] But

for the children, textile work, like the building of the clubhouse, was the domain of both boys and girls.

Alice Dewey maintained that "due in part" to an "ingenious teacher" of textiles (likely Althea Harmer[78]), this field of study "was particularly stimulating to a persevering spirit of invention." And for Alice Dewey, "the inventive" was the "largest . . . aspect of work"—"the impulse to plan, to contrive was fostered and cultivated not alone as it showed itself in mechanics, but in all the intellectual processes as well."[79] In a 1904 article, "Textile Work Connected with American Colonial History," Althea Harmer explained how the study of domestic arts and sciences enabled children to gain a wider understanding of the history of human interactions and ingenuity. As she wrote, "The child's understanding of the daily life of a people is vivified by reproducing their typical occupations. This realization of their daily struggles is insured by his use of the actual material and methods of their time."[80]

Althea Harmer then described the work done in her classroom with flax: "Flax was cultivated in the garden and also made into thread, using the simplest method of retting, heckling, and scutching."[81] Together, the children solved problems associated with the production of flax. As she argued, "In the solution of these problems the child gets the same training that is given by abstract subjects, such as geometry, for example, with this difference, that the problems presented here are concrete, in touch with practical life, and have a historical and social background which gives them a living interest."[82] When children are involved in actual problem solving, according to Harmer, their "attitude is one of inquiry and investigation, and [their] creative impulse shows, not only in the discovery of processes and methods of work, but also in their artistic impulses and power in creative work. Pedagogically considered, this is the most important result of the work—this making the children scientific and self-reliant in their attitude of mind."[83]

For example, in a teachers' report of October 21, 1899, for two sections of Group IV (age seven), Harmer explained that the children began their study of textiles by examining their own clothing "to see the different kinds of cloth" and "pick[ing] to pieces different kinds of material to get an idea of the different kinds of fibres," before discussing "where the raw material is obtained." The children then "examined stalks with the cotton in bolls, flax with the seed pods and with the fibres in the stalk, the silk of the cocoon, and the wool as it is sheared from the sheep." The problem to be solved for these students was to determine the fibers that "could most easily be made

into thread." This was followed by a focused investigation of wool, as the children decided that it was the easiest to work with, because of "the length and coarseness of its fibre."[84] Thus Harmer led her students through an investigation of a "concrete problem" that was designed to teach scientific and historical content at the same time that it enabled them to develop a "scientific and self-reliant" approach to learning and, indeed, to the world.

In her descriptions of her textile work at the Laboratory School, Althea Harmer demonstrated her knowledge of the science of textile production, calling upon her background in domestic sciences. During her time in Chicago, as demonstrated in her writings, she developed an understanding of the methodology required to engage children in investigations. In her work with textiles, Harmer led the children through steps that she called "particular acts of judgment" involving "thought power." Children are trained in observation, "in the inspection of different fabrics and fibers; and this not ending in itself, but for the sake of forming a conclusion regarding their adaptability to certain purposes." This is followed by what Harmer referred to as the " 'reinventing' work," where "the tool, or instrument, and method of going to work are always dependent upon the material, on one side, and the result to be attained, on the other." As the teacher guides the students through this process of inquiry, she is "calling the constructive imagination into play."[85] For the child, she went on, "there is but one thing going on: he is occupied with making things, with weaving, etc.; he is busy in doing something which appeals alike to feeling, perception, imagination, judgment, and manual skill, utilizing them in an activity which interests him."[86] For the teacher, it was essential that this work engaged the whole child in experiences that would develop a distinct approach to solving problems of all kinds. As she wrote, "The aim is to so arrange the work that the *problem* comes to the child from his actual work, and if possible, in such a way that he discovers the solution; i.e., each step in the process is so dependent on the nature of the material that the children make the steps logically and of their own initiative."[87] This required much forethought on the part of teachers and a healthy respect for experimental methods.

## Cooking

As Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards wrote, the occupation of cooking "held a distinctive place in the curriculum of the school."[88] In the building in which the school was housed from 1898 to 1903, the kitchen served also as a laboratory, for the study of

cooking was a scientific endeavor for the Laboratory School children. In Laura Runyon's article about the school, in which she presented herself as a prospective parent, she wrote that when she first saw the kitchen she had "mistaken [it] for the laboratory."[89] But cooking was social as well; groups took turns to prepare and serve luncheons. As Mayhew and Edwards wrote, "The custom of a weekly luncheon worked well for the older groups also in expressing and developing a social spirit." For instance, when one group of children cooperated to make lunch, "some calculated and measured the amount of cocoa needed, others measured and weighed hominy and water. Others set the table, while two wrote stories to read for the entertainment of the others."[90]

Like textiles, cooking served to teach the Laboratory School student how to solve problems, and to do so both as an individual and as a member of a group; the work in the kitchen addressed the central problem of the school: how to foster individual growth while building a cooperative community. As Althea Harmer wrote in her article "Elementary Cooking in the Laboratory School," "The cooking has particular educational value with the younger children in giving opportunity for individual work, initiative, and independence, and also in calling for group work, which encourages a spirit of helpfulness and nice adjustment of the individual personalities to the work of the group as a whole."[91]

As Althea Harmer indicated, cooking started with the young children. In a teachers' report from November 18, 1898, for Group I (age four), Harmer wrote that they were cooking rolled wheat and ground wheat. "All directions were obtained from the children by questions and by examination of the materials to be used."[92] The older children studied the chemistry of foods more explicitly; for example, in a report from October 28, 1898, Althea Harmer described "experimental work done with the potato." After first asking the children of Group IV (age seven) to recount the science of starch and cellulose in the potato (they could not do so), she reviewed "how these constituents were affected by water and heat." The group spent one-half hour on review, followed by one hour of "practical work," in which "potato soup was made and apples baked."[93] In a report from October 12, 1900, for a section of Group VIII (age eleven), Harmer wrote that the work that quarter would focus on the "study of bread stuffs." They would "cook one or two carefully planned luncheons" and engage in "experimental work and practical tests." For instance, after examining different types of flour, the students experimented with the flours by measuring a quantity of each, removing the starch by "washing

through cheese cloth, and the amounts of cellulose and gluten remaining in the squares of cheese cloth compared." This was followed by experiments with liquid and flour in batters, which led to work in proportions, to be pursued in a mathematics class. The class planned a visit to a mill in order to "trace the different processes in milling."[94] As Harmer argued in her article on cooking, "The fact that experimentation is continuous throughout the year, and that results are always made use of in some practical end, gives added value to each experiment in that each becomes part of a larger whole, the original problem growing larger and showing many sides."[95]

Thus through cooking, teachers taught the traditional subjects—mathematics, reading, and writing, along with chemistry—by introducing problems that had meaning for the children, and that such abilities enabled them to solve. As Alice Dewey wrote of the use of occupations to teach the traditional subjects, "The learning of forms such as had occupied 75% of early school life can be done in less time and with less effort and no mental boredom provided this formal study is filled with the meaning and content from which it derived its original value and for which it really exists."[96] The idea, then, was that children would learn the fundamentals because they needed these skills in order to put together a luncheon, for instance, or build a clubhouse; the children would learn these symbolic abilities in much the same way as they originally developed in the minds and lives of early humans.

Some evidence suggests that Alice Dewey herself found that supplementary, and more direct methods of instruction were needed to ground all children in the skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. In 1901, Elizabeth Camp, then widowed and living in Chicago with her daughters and their flatmates, wrote to her daughter Bess that "Mrs. Dewey was here last week and was talking about Fred" [the oldest Dewey child], as "she thought he was not grounded in the foundations as he ought—said the night before he could not do an example in long division." As Mrs. Camp went on, "I guess they—the Dewey School—will have to modify the idea they commenced with that children could be educated with out working at things they could see no use in like the old fashioned three r's. Don't say I wrote this or speak of it, but I imagine it is one of the things that troubles Kate [Katherine Camp]. I don't think it is a bed of Roses."[97] Modifications did follow such observations, particularly in the subject of mathematics.

## Reading, writing, and arithmetic

Reading, writing, and arithmetic, the core components of the traditional curriculum in John Dewey's time and in ours, were taught at the

Laboratory School primarily in connection with the other subjects and occupations. As the Laboratory School teachers experimented with pedagogy, they observed the results of the instruction on the students and made changes accordingly. The community was testing out the idea that students could learn basic academic content more efficiently, and with less drudgery, if the educational activities in which they were engaged made it plain to the children *why* they needed to know how to read, write, and perform mathematical operations.[98] In her article for the *Chautauquan,* Laura Runyon quoted a teacher who said that "Dr. Dewey believed the time spent in an elementary school on reading, writing, and arithmetic could be more profitably spent; that an average child could learn these in doing other things."[99]

School records provide descriptions of this unusual, even daring, pedagogy. (Recall that the school received early mockery, primarily for its method of teaching the basics through the occupations. As Alice Dewey wrote, quite dramatically comparing the school to a baby hippopotamus on display, "A spirit of ridicule, and a [cheerful] anticipation of failure and freakishness hovered over this baby from the first."[100]) For example, in their chapter on the Group III (age six) children, Mayhew and Edwards described the general program for this group. The day began with a conversation, or as they describe it, "time for the exchange of the amenities of the day usual to a group of persons meeting after an absence." Then the students discussed the work of the day with their group teacher, Katharine Andrews, and the assistant Wynne Lackersteen, making plans and delegating responsibilities. Each group of children had a leader, in place for a week; this child was responsible for "know[ing] the program," as well as "the next class room and route to the room," and for "keep[ing] the line, i.e. permit no interference."[101] (In keeping orderly lines, the Laboratory School was like most schools.) For this group, the occupational work was focused on "occupations serving the household," and their first project was the construction of a model farmhouse and barn out of large blocks, along with a chicken coop and garden, all built to scale. This was accompanied by the study of wheat, complete with experiments with what they called "getting the seeds from the hulls," and milling the grains by hand until they had three tablespoonfuls of flour, which they used in making a cake.

In the process of constructing the model farm, these students worked on measurements; in "milling" the flour and studying wheat, they worked with fractions as well. More mathematical work was done through a new game of dominoes, invented by one of the teachers. Another game, connected with excursions outside, prompted an interest in reading. As Mayhew and Edwards report, the items the

class found on their trips outside were placed on a table, and signs were placed on the board asking students to "find a cocoon," for instance. This game led to a desire on the part of the children to make a weekly record of their work—at this age it was dictated to the teacher—and these records were "reread with undiminished interest" by the children.[102] This was reading, writing, and arithmetic as they were intended to develop at the Laboratory School: a spontaneous desire on the part of the children prompted the children to learn these skills in order to complete meaningful work.

Particularly with the older students, books were used as references in their studies of history and science. For instance, Georgia Bacon reported that books that "sum up a period studied" were read as a review in history, after the children had worked on the period through dramatization and discussions. In addition, "with the older pupils, each is given a different point to look up and bring to the class to contribute toward building up the whole. This provides a *raison d'etre* to the recitation." Thus in some instances, instruction included the traditional recitations that were so prevalent in traditional schools of this time. As Bacon maintained, "Sometimes the lesson is carried on so that the children run aground except as they can get certain information, and the gathering of this information constitutes the lesson to be prepared. At other times the teacher gives out a number of points to be looked up, on which the discussion of the following day will be based. In class this interchange of thought, the additions and criticisms, clear up the ideas and fix them firmly in mind."[103]

Laboratory School students developed their writing skills by recording their history narratives and botanical observations. As Georgia Bacon explained, "Composition, both oral and written, usually takes the form of description or narration, but is sometimes varied by dramatization when a suitable subject presents itself."[104] Similarly, in the sciences, students wrote reports that were primarily meant to further their work with their experiments, but that also served to hone their writing skills. As Katharine Andrews wrote in her article on botany, "The writing of records, so essential to scientific work, also serves the purpose of lessons in writing and composition. Individuality of expression is encouraged, but the three points of a good science record—what was done, what happened, and the conclusions—are insisted upon.[105]

The Laboratory School was organized so that teachers could observe the children in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum; this sometimes resulted in changes in the usual manner of teaching reading and writing. For instance, one of the sections of

Group VII (age ten) included a number of children who found it difficult to read and write. As a result, "after discussion, the group decided to give, for a period, much time and attention to collateral reading." This time was still connected with their work in history, but designed to review reading skills. They also began additional writing lessons, "supplemented with drill exercises on words or construction that troubled them." As Mayhew and Edwards asserted, "Most of the children entered into this arrangement with whole-hearted acceptance of its being the best way out of a bad situation. They recognized that they could not go on with the team's work until they could read the books that held the necessary information." They reported that the students asked for homework and that after three months the children's skills had improved enough to carry on with the usual Laboratory School curriculum.[106] Laura Runyon made a distinction between the use of drill in the context of such a curriculum from drill in traditional schools; at the Laboratory School, she wrote, there were "times when drill was necessary [but] the purpose of the drill was always apparent to the child and gained his cooperation."[107]

Thus the collective process that John Dewey referred to as "testing ideas" by "putting them into practical application" resulted in some cases in modifications and additions to what was primarily a problem-solving curriculum. In a letter to her mother, Anna Camp remarked on "changes in program work etc. of the older children" that occurred after the teachers decided that the "older classes are doing too many different kinds of work—It is spread out over too large a field, taking in too many different subjects. And so now they are concentrating on certain subjects and dropping others for a time, and putting two or three hours on one subject a week instead of an hour. I am sure this is right for I think the children were getting scatterbrained."[108]

Like reading and writing, mathematics was closely linked to the studies of the occupations, science, and history. Teachers' reports indicate that students employed math in order to build the clubhouse, measure ingredients in the kitchen, and complete textile projects. In addition teachers' reports on classes in number work indicate that students learned math by keeping the accounts of the school and working on figures related to the school tuition.[109] At one teachers' meeting, the teachers discussed "number work in school." Various teachers reported on their current studies in the area of number work. For instance, the subprimary class worked on numbers as follows: "In setting the table, they must decide on the number of plates, napkins, etc." John Dewey made a suggestion to the teachers: "The best way to get idea of numbers is to associate them

with solids. Whenever material is to be distributed for the group, it should be in relation to numbers, grouping numbers, by twos, at least."[110]

By 1900, the teachers had observed problems in the math curriculum; a set of letters Mary Hill wrote to Gerard Swope illustrates the process by which the Laboratory School revised its practices accordingly. In a letter in early April of 1900, she told him, "I have been reading arithmetic all evening—with a most disgraceful lack of concentration—you know that the number work at the school is being reviewed with a view to systematizing as far as necessary to avoid gaps and lapses and tomorrow I have to report re. an arithmetic."[111] The teachers discussed their findings at "number meetings"; Mary Hill attended one later that month. Having received a letter from Swope that must have criticized some of their efforts along this line (his letters do not survive), Hill responded, "As for number work up to a certain point your criticism is just—only their conception of number in the lower classes especially is far above their ability to use number forms. The work is being systematized now—to see that no gaps are left—as until Group VII, the number work all grows immediately out of their other work. Is that clear or not?"[112]

The process of program revision at the Laboratory School, then, involved teachers first noticing a problem, such as the "gaps and lapses" in the children's knowledge of math. After a problem was noted, teachers informed themselves (as Mary Hill did with her reading of arithmetic) and then met, in this case in the number meetings, to discuss their findings on the subject as they related to their observations of the children. Evidence suggests that at least part of the solution to the problem with number work was an increased focus on drills. In June 1900, Mary Hill noted in a teachers' report for Group VIII (age eleven) that the children were learning the multiplication tables by heart.[113] Katherine Camp reported in October 1900 that in a class on number with Group IX (age twelve), the children worked on drills in all four mathematical operations.[114]

In another likely attempt to improve the number work in the school, in the fall of 1900, the teachers' reports indicate the addition of a new teacher, Clinton Osborn, who seems to have been primarily a teacher of mathematics. (Prior to this time, teachers who were specialists in science, history, or domestic sciences taught the classes in number work.) Osborn was at the time working on his master's degree in education and philosophy at the University of Chicago; his thesis was on "The Teaching of Arithmetic and Elementary Algebra." Osborn's reports on two sections of Group IX (age twelve) indicate

that he may have been hired to do some of the systematizing that Mary Hill wrote about.[115] Osborn reported in October 1900: "As both the school and the children are new to me, I have spent considerable time in getting information." He found that compared to public school children, the Laboratory School students were "more spontaneous and quicker in grasping new ideas. They also seem less skilful in the mechanical operations."[116] (This corresponds with Hill's findings with the younger children that their "conception of number" was more advanced than their technical abilities.) Reporting a week later on the other section of Group IX, Osborn wrote, "The children of this group are not easily interested, and I have spent most of the time persuading them that it is worth while to separate work and play for a part of the time. We discussed the origin of the digits, and the children were much interested."[117] The Laboratory School community had processes in place that enabled them to evaluate the effectiveness of their methods and to collectively address problems in their instruction and curriculum.

## The challenges and rewards of teaching at the Laboratory School

The teachers' work at the Laboratory School was challenging and sometimes unsettling. As Katherine Camp once wrote to her mother about a misunderstanding with John Dewey regarding her administrative duties, "I am in a box, as far as going anywhere else is concerned. I should hate to go like poison on some accounts, on others life would be easier and more desirable."[118] The school drew upon the teachers' considerable expertise and sense of adventure, but also demanded a great deal of their time and focus. They did not go through the experience unchanged; as Anna Camp Edwards reminisced, "The teaching experience in the Dewey School with its adventurous atmosphere did much to establish [my] attitudes in all living human relationships."[119] Katharine Andrews Healy was similarly affected; as she remarked, "That was such a rare experience and I still count those school days under Dr. Dewey as some of the very happiest of a happy life."[120] And as a reporter observed in 1900, "The most striking feature of the school, aside from its unusual methods and the very good quality of work done, would appear to be the absence of drudgery and the abounding happiness of the children." The reporter quotes a group of teachers as saying, "Happy work is the only real work, the only good or enduring work. It is only the work we are interested in doing which is of any real value to ourselves or to the world."[121]

We can only surmise the reasons for this happiness, and it is difficult to gauge its extent, but the teachers quoted above suggest that one source was the intellectual freedom they experienced at the school, where they were entrusted to make pedagogical decisions. Teachers and students were engaged in work they "were interested in doing." Teachers were noticed and encouraged as professionals: George Herbert Mead wrote to his wife in 1901 that "Miss Harmer's account of her own work and interest in it was delightful," remarking that "she is growing very rapidly."[122] In notes written as they prepared *The Dewey School* manuscript, Mayhew and Edwards remarked on the "confidence Mr. D. always placed in the classroom teacher, the value of each individual's idea," and linked that to "Althea's, and other teachers' growth to confidence."[123] And in a letter to her father, Anna Camp wrote that John Dewey urged her to collect the writings she did in her tutoring work with Josephine Crane, "and then sometime with a good many additions combine them into a consecutive history of Rome for children, written along the same line along which I have been teaching them. He said he thought besides the good intellectually I would get out of it, that I might make a little money on it, as there are so few histories of Rome that children can understand. It is a grand scheme, but it seems a good deal beyond my powers just at present. Perhaps I could work it up little-by-little however."[124] The teachers took their profession seriously, often devoted their summers to furthering their knowledge; in 1901, for instance, as Mrs. Camp reported, Althea Harmer was to spend her six weeks' vacation at "Pratt and I believe the Teachers college in New York to get what new ideas she can in her line."[125]

The teachers' content expertise permitted them to show children new worlds through an exploration of what might commonly be seen as ordinary life. As Althea Harmer wrote, "Having acquired sufficient experience to examine intelligently the Indian basketry, the child has gained an insight into the life of these people, and there is opened up for him a new field of interest, a new world complete in itself, and satisfactory to his infinite questionings."[126] Science teacher Katharine Andrews, writing on the value of field excursions for the study of botany, maintained similarly that "to see a plant in its haunts, to watch its struggle among the crowds battling for supremacy, to note its many ways of resisting its enemies, is to know the meaning of life more fully."[127] When teachers deeply understood the content that they taught, they could transform the ordinary into something new. As John Dewey wrote of imagination, "The point is not to dwell with

wearisome iteration upon the familiar; and under the guise of object-lessons to keep the senses directed at material which they have already made acquaintance with; but to enliven and illumine the ordinary, commonplace, and homely by using it to build up and appreciate situations previously unrealized and alien." As he concluded, "And this also is culture of imagination."[128]

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# Chapter 5

# The Laboratory School and the Context of Progressive Era Experimentation

When composing letters to Gerard Swope, her future husband, Mary Hill surely wrote for him, and not for posterity. But while her letters are privately reflective, they are also engaged with the public events and ideas of her time; thus they provide an intimate gaze into the "circle of friends" surrounding the Laboratory School and Hull House.[1] In one of her letters to Swope, Hill captured the experimental atmosphere of Progressive Era Chicago and the nation: "Nothing but living can ever prove any thing."[2]

Mary Hill was a resident at Hull House while she taught at the Laboratory School; her roommate at the settlement house was Alice Hamilton. During their time together at Hull House, Hill was instrumental in the creation of the Labor Museum, an innovative adult education initiative, while Hamilton was a pioneer in the field of industrial medicine. Their efforts were emblematic of the new age; they were professionals concerned with applying their knowledge to public purposes. Trained as a physician at a time when female medical students were rare (and mockingly called "hen medics"), Hamilton struggled to find a way to bring her hard-won professional knowledge to bear on the problems she encountered in the Hull House neighborhood. In 1899, in a letter to her cousin Agnes Hamilton, she wrote, "Sometimes it is a big temptation to drop" scientific work and "just throw my [illeg.] energies all into H.H. work, but that would be absurd and wrong."[3] Several years later, the way had become clear

to her. As she told her cousin Agnes, "The work I have for next year is really not remote and useless. I believe at last I shall be able to bring together my scientific life and my settlement life. I shall be doing research into the causation of scarlet fever and I think it will not be hard to extend it and include investigation of scarlet fever in our neighborhood and stir up the Board of Health on the subject of isolation and disinfection. It seems like a real practical use at last of my knowledge which has always seemed so remote and academic."[4]

For Mary Hill, Alice Hamilton, and their colleagues at the Laboratory School and Hull House, reality was, as William James put it, "*still in the making*." For the pragmatists, James explained, the universe was not "absolutely secure," but rather "still pursuing its adventures."[5] The teachers and settlement house residents sought to respond to this evolving world in pragmatic fashion, seeking original ways to put their professional knowledge to "practical use" and doing so as part of a loose network of institutions that had embarked on similar experimental projects. While the most intricate and mutually beneficial connection for the Laboratory School community was with Hull House, several teachers also "adapt[ed] the principles of the school"[6] and deepened their own expertise at the Physiological School in Chicago, a school for developmentally disabled children; in vacation schools at New York's Chautauqua Institution and in Boston, Massachusetts; and at the summer program at the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory. Through their engagement with various innovative institutions, the Laboratory School teachers joined wholeheartedly in the Progressive Era movement to understand and improve the nation through collaborative experimentation.

## Progressive Era experimentation

The turn of the twentieth century occasioned reflection on the passage of time and on the changes wrought by humans during the previous hundred years. In 1902 Elizabeth Camp, the Camp sisters' mother, picked up *The Wonderful Century,* a book about the "inventions and discoveries of the past century"; reading it, she wrote to her daughter, "makes one wonder what can be added."[7] While many marveled, as Camp did, at the advances brought on by human ingenuity, others were concerned about the rapid changes in the nation's cities; much scholarly work on the period has focused on the middle-class "search for order" in the midst of all the tumult.[8] Bertha Johnston, an advocate for the rights of women and children, put it this way in 1901: "True it is that the demands of commercial life and many destructive

forces move with fearful rapidity in the great cities. All who would not be caught in the wheels of the machinery must keep in time with a quickstep march."[9] Cities were growing, and reformers noted that the municipal services could not keep up. Many of the new urban residents had braved the passage over from Europe, in hopes of finding safety and prosperity; in Chicago, for instance, 41 percent of the residents in 1890 were foreign-born.[10] Many city dwellers found employment in the nation's expanding industries, which, in Chicago, included textile factories, steel mills, and the notorious meatpacking plants. As the new century opened, the center of gravity in the United States was shifting to the industrializing "great cities."

The responses of middle-class and wealthy Americans to this national transformation ranged from patronizing reforms meant to alter immigrant lifestyles to practical efforts to provide much-needed municipal services; sometimes both motives coexisted in one reform effort. In this shifting environment, as scholars have shown, various groups fought for the ability to shape the cities and their institutions. While well-to-do reformers had the advantage of resources and connections, working-class and immigrant groups did not willingly surrender control over their daily lives. For instance, in his study of Progressive Era school reform, William Reese demonstrates that a diverse array of local groups worked tirelessly, sometimes in common cause with the more powerful advocates of educational centralization, and sometimes in opposition, to achieve their aims for their neighborhood schools.[11]

The experimental impulse, evident in the pragmatism of John Dewey and William James, permeated these various efforts to respond to a changing society.[12] Particularly after the economic depression of 1893, Reese maintains, there was a "striking interest in educational innovation."[13] For instance, vacation schools were created in the late nineteenth century in response to the perceived dangers posed to children "drifting about aimlessly" during the summer months.[14] In a 1900 article, the Vassar-educated physician Helen Putnam wrote, "One of the chief functions of vacation schools is that of serving as experiment stations, so that these schools exert a positive influence upon regular school methods."[15] Similarly, Jane Addams described "the Settlement" as "an experimental effort to aid in the solution of the social and industrial problems which are engendered by the modern conditions of life in a great city."[16] Hilda Satt Polacheck, a Polish immigrant whose life was changed by her connection to Hull House, observed in her memoir that "Hull-House became a laboratory for experiments in human needs."[17] In part, the genius of this era

could be found in the sheer abundance of services first imagined and then brought to life. Hull House offerings included, among many others, a day nursery, a kindergarten, drama and music classes, hot meals for overburdened workers, and public baths.[18] They even had what was known as a "visiting kindergarten," which was an in-home educational service organized for children who were chronically ill or otherwise unable to attend school.[19]

In *Rebirth of a Nation,* his study of Progressive Era America, Jackson Lears argues that this "atmosphere of experiment" extended to academic disciplines and the arts and contributed to "the conviction that life contained more surprise and possibility than previously imagined."[20] Turn-of-the-century Chicago provided its citizens with many opportunities to be surprised, and it must be said that these were not exclusively pleasant surprises. But residents like John Dewey and Jane Addams, and the teachers and reformers connected with these well-known Americans, saw in the city's problems the possibility to think anew about the challenges particular to their era, and about the abiding questions faced by humans across time.[21] Newly arrived in Chicago, John Dewey observed of the city that "every conceivable thing solicits you; the town seems filled with problems holding out their hands & asking someone to please solve them—or else dump them in the Lake." He told his wife, Alice Dewey, "Think of all hell turned loose, & yet not hell any longer, but simply material for a new creation."[22] Jane Addams was similarly optimistic about the city's possibilities; as the author and critic Lloyd Morris wrote of Addams, she "made reform seem like an exciting adventure as well as an ethical obligation."[23] Hull House, Morris argued, "acquired the prestige of a national social laboratory."[24] The teachers and settlement house residents were ideally placed to learn from what Daniel Rodgers calls "a world mart of useful and intensely interesting experiments."[25] Chicago, teeming with life, was a fertile testing ground for new ways to imagine how to live in an urban community.[26]

With much of the city leveled by the Great Fire of 1871, and then rebuilt, Chicago was ready to be on the international stage by 1893 when the city hosted the World's Fair—the Columbian Exposition—commemorating the four hundred (plus one) years since the exploits of Christopher Columbus. Katherine and Bess Camp were two of the 27 million visitors who enjoyed the vast offerings of this grand event.[27] The fair was a monumental undertaking, with exhibits from seventy-two countries and a mile-long fairway—the elegantly named Midway Plaisance.[28] Having been overlooked at the 1876 World's Fair in Philadelphia, women would have none of that in Chicago.

The Woman's Building, designed by a female architect, showcased the achievements of women from across the globe, and the influential Board of Lady Managers raised funds and planned events; the consensus seems to have been that the Fair provided a large audience with abundant reason to believe in female competence and achievement.[29] It was also a cause for at least guarded optimism. If the city could construct, and then dismantle, six hundred acres of buildings and entertainments, including the first-ever Ferris wheel (huge, at 140 feet high), then surely it could tackle the day-to-day urban issues of transportation, sanitation, and education. Having proven their organizational abilities in the World's Fair, Chicago women set out to address the city's problems, with Hull House at the forefront.[30]

## Reform connections: Chicago

### Hull House

In a "Toast to John Dewey," written in 1929, the philosopher's friend Jane Addams wrote approvingly of Dewey's idea that in "an ever-changing society," there is a "constant need of exploration and rediscovery." While many people in the 1890s "propounded [their] theory and stuck to it," for Dewey, the "ultimate test of the utility of any social scheme" was the question, "Does it work?" In his "little practice school," she went on, he "demonstrated among other things the inter-action between the individual and his environment." These interactions at the Laboratory School led to "an atmosphere of freedom and confidence between teacher and pupil, of a common interest in the life they led together."[31]

Addams might have used similar words to describe Hull House, the settlement house she opened with her friend Ellen Gates Starr in 1889 on Chicago's West Side. Hull House was designed to bring middle-class residents together with their immigrant neighbors, ideally developing a "common interest" in a shared life.[32] Describing her friend's early work, resident Alice Hamilton wrote that the Hull House neighborhood was "a region of unrelieved ugliness," yet among the immigrant residents, there was "much craving for beauty." Jane Addams, in her "desire to interpret democracy in social terms," worked to improve social conditions in the neighborhood so that all could lead fulfilling lives.[33]

In her 1896 essay "A Modern Lear," which John Dewey called "one of the greatest things I ever read both as to its form and its ethical philosophy,"[34] Jane Addams outlined her vision of how humans

in modern times could build a shared life. "Our thoughts, at least for this generation, cannot be too much directed from mutual relationships and responsibilities. They will be warped, unless we look all men in the face, as if a community of interests lay between, unless we hold the mind open, to take strength and cheer from a hundred connections."[35] As Louis Menand argues, Addams believed that "interests, if they are worth securing, are mutual." What Addams called "affectionate interpretation" is, according to Menand, "the means by which we understand how."[36] At Hull House, Addams worked to create a "community of interests" with her immigrant neighbors and to promote conditions that enabled others to find "a hundred connections" in unlikely places.

This recognition of others engendered a responsibility to create the conditions necessary for what she called "lateral progress"—a social democracy that brought about individual fulfillment for all.[37] At first, inspired by London's Toynbee Hall, Addams and Starr organized classes in arts and culture at Hull House, which were taught by the middle-class residents. While courses such as Julia Lathrop's Plato Club remained popular, Addams was prompted by residents like Lathrop and Florence Kelley, and by her neighbors, to consider adding more practical measures to address the social ills that accompanied the rapid urban growth in the tenement neighborhoods of Chicago.

The social science methods of investigation that grew out of this impulse emerged before Hull House celebrated its tenth anniversary on Halsted Street. Like the Laboratory School, the settlement house was shaped by collective inquiry into solving social and educational problems; both institutions illustrated what for Dewey was the importance of "giving a central place to scientific method as the key to social betterment."[38] Though the Laboratory School and Hull House were led by visionary and highly accomplished figures, Dewey and Addams both depended upon skilled and intelligent colleagues (in both places, largely female groups) to whom they entrusted the daily work of teaching and investigating. Dewey's idea of the organic circuit of learning—the process of learning through a loop of doing and then undergoing (or considering the outcome)—required that the teachers be trusted to lead children through this process and that they possess the expertise required to evaluate the results of the learning experiences.

A similar process took place at Hull House. The residents who ran the various programs learned as they worked with their West Side neighbors, revising and improving the settlement house's programs as they went along. For instance, as Florence Kelley wrote in 1898

of Hull House, "A curious study might be made of the experiments in hospitality, of which during eight years many have succeeded and few have failed." Of one such experiment, a coffee house, she noted that "the final success may have taken a form quite different from that which filled the imagination of the residents who toiled over its beginnings." The value in such work, Kelley argued, was in "the fund of experience it yields as a basis for wider social action."[39] At both the Laboratory School and Hull House, learning was reciprocal: teachers and students learned from each other, and residents and immigrant neighbors did the same.

The pragmatic conception of knowledge demanded this reciprocity, since according to pragmatism, ideas are verified through action, and all those engaged in this action must contribute to the ongoing construction and evaluation of new ideas. The aims of a social democracy could only be met with a combination of mutual recognition and rigorous inquiry into common problems. As Anne Firor Scott argues, for the women at Hull House, "professionalism and research as the bases for action became basic values," and the "scientific spirit" meant that "science [was] applied to human purposes."[40] The *Hull-House Maps and Papers,* an 1895 study of the Halstead Street neighborhood, is an early example of how Hull House used scientific and investigative techniques as tools for improving urban living conditions. The set of maps of "nationalities and wages in a congested district of Chicago," accompanied by residents' essays on "problems growing out of the social conditions," drew attention to the new settlement house. And the experience of putting the study together contributed to the growing sense among Hull House residents of the contributions of the scientific method to "democracy as a way of life."[41]

The Laboratory School and Hull House were linked by the close friendship between John Dewey and Jane Addams, and by the considerable intellectual influence these figures exerted upon each other. In addition, the Laboratory School teachers were caught up on the hub of activity one could always find at Hull House during those years. (As one resident put it, "Hull- House I verily believe was the most interesting place in the world when Julia Lathrop and Mrs. Kelley were both there."[42]) The Camp family's letters include regular references to Hull House and often mention, for instance, lectures they attended there, such as Jane Addams's course of six lectures on "Democracy and Social Ethics," which Anna Camp attended with a friend. The Camp sisters, along with their mother, went to Hull House to hear speakers on such topics as "rescue work for women" and the Boer War, and Anna Camp also made "visits to the poor, in the Hull House

districts" with a flatmate, Miss Fenton, who "interested us all in her work" with the Bureau of Associated Charities.[43] Althea Harmer was a regular visitor to Hull House, where she participated in evening and weekend events.[44]

As a resident, Mary Hill was, of course, deeply involved in the settlement house activities, including the Labor Museum, to be discussed shortly, an English course she taught (where she found some of the students' compositions to be "as vivid as Tolstoi"[45]), and bicycle trips with fellow residents. As Alice Hamilton told her cousin, "Mary Hill, Mr. Swope and I purchased three wheels on the same day—all Monarch '97"—and took long excursions, "spinning around with the air fresh on our faces." As Hamilton reported, even "Miss Addams had the wheeling fever" that swept Chicago and the nation.[46] In their daily lives, the Laboratory School teachers were intellectually and socially engaged with the settlement house and its activities, an involvement that connected with their teaching of history at the school.

Perhaps as a result of their engagement with these two experimental institutions, the teachers under study here were keenly aware of what they called "social history."[47] History at the Laboratory School, embedded in the study of social occupations such as cooking, textiles, and woodworking, was the imaginative investigation of the daily lives of individuals—of how ordinary human beings came to new understandings of how to live in the world, and of how to improve life as they knew it.[48] Their studies of traditional basketry, for instance, enabled the children to understand that, as Althea Harmer put it, "the Indian woman has put the best of what she has of artistic refinement and technical skill into her work. Through her individuality we get the best of what the people had to offer—we get a view of their life from its best side."[49] As Harmer wrote further, in an article on textile work and colonial history, "In giving emphasis to this side of social history, we bring the child into closer touch with the inner life of the people with whom he is concerned in history." As a result of this type of historical study, "the question unconsciously arises: What did these people inherit, and what additions did they make to their inheritance?"[50]

## The Labor Museum

Althea Harmer's focus on cultural inheritance and change bears very close resemblance to the work done by Mary Hill with Hull House's Labor Museum, an adult education initiative that showcased

and preserved the traditions of immigrants from the settlement house's diverse neighborhood. Mayhew and Edwards wrote that an "interesting connection" between the Laboratory School and the settlement house "was the cooperative attempt to work out the beginnings of a labor museum by the teachers in the school and the residents and foreign neighbors of Hull House."[51] The Labor Museum was more than a traditional museum; in addition to presenting artifacts, it featured demonstrations of traditional skills and occupations by neighborhood residents. Jane Addams was initially inspired to create what became the Labor Museum when she encountered an elderly Italian woman, on a stoop on Polk Street, with a distaff—an old-fashioned spinning tool—in her hand. As she wrote in *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, "My exciting walk on Polk Street was followed by many talks with Dr. Dewey and with one of the teachers in his school who was a resident at Hull-House [Mary Hill]. Within a month a room was fitted up to which we might invite those of our neighbors who were possessed of old crafts and who were eager to use them."[52] (She was overly optimistic, in hindsight, regarding the time it took to set up the museum, as Mary Hill's letters indicate that it took quite a bit longer than one month.)

One of the main purposes of the Labor Museum, according to John Dewey, was to "show the younger generation something of the skill and art and historic meaning in the industrial habits of the older generation—modes of spinning, weaving, metalworking, etc., discarded in this country because there was no place for them in our industrial system."[53] Jane Addams saw this effort as a "bridge" that could bring together "the old life and the new," a showcase of the "inherited resources" of the "daily occupations" in which many of the neighborhood residents were engaged, though in their modern, factory versions.[54] The Labor Museum would show the young generation the rich origins of the trades at which they spent many, often tedious, hours; it would further provide the older immigrants an opportunity to teach others, including their own children. Addams had all too often observed what we would now call the "generation gap," an estrangement between immigrants and their children that could have tragic consequences for families. In the words of one neighborhood resident, Hilda Satt Polacheck, the Labor Museum "reduced the strained feelings on the part of immigrants and their children." For these children, Polacheck observed, "the Labor Museum was an eye-opener."[55]

Mary Hill was involved early in this project, first called the "Motor Industrial." As she wrote to Gerard Swope in March 1900 of the idea,

"Miss Addams is quite full of it and quite definite. She is going to see Mr. Dewey and raise some money." As she went on, "Miss Addams [*sic*] present scheme is to have me teach at the school 3 days a week and the rest of the time run the textile part of the Motor Industrial and be its curator."[56] Later that month she wrote that "Miss Addams talked to me some more about the Museum—and is very pleased and enthusiastic though there don't seem to be many besides us two who are—It scares me." In response to Hill's worries, Addams told her, "We'll just have to make it go so that people can see what we mean."[57] Certainly John Dewey was another who was interested; during a conversation about the "Industrial Museum," Dewey told Hill about Roycroft, an arts and crafts community, and "somehow out of the conversation the idea seemed to crystallize of making opportunity for the artistic pauper population—I really don't believe they've been paid sufficient attention to."[58]

Mary Hill spent the following summer looking for old tools and implements to include in the museum exhibits, which would eventually include displays of traditional practices in textiles, woodworking, ironworking, printing, cooking, and pottery. Describing this work in a letter to Gerard Swope, Mary Hill wrote from upstate New York, while searching for artifacts for the Labor Museum: "I hoped I might find something around here for the museum this being an historic neighborhood—but the D.A.R.'s spend their time in erecting monuments on battle grounds and let their spinning wheels rot in the garrets and won't even take the trouble to give one away."[59] The creators of the Labor Museum, from the start, self-consciously set about to redefine ideas about historical relevance and historiography; the museum's "First Outline" maintained, "To put all historic significance upon city walls and triumphal arches, is to teach history from the political and governmental side, which too often presents solely the records of wars and restrictive legislation, emphasizing that which destroys life and property rather than the processes of labor, which really create and conserve civilization."[60]

Mary Hill involved Gerard Swope in these efforts to gather artifacts promoting history from this new perspective, exhorting him to bring back anything of interest from his travels in Mexico. "Couldn't you find cooking utensils? The stones or pans on which the tortillas are backed [*sic*]—anything used for grain—an oven if interesting and transferable—water jars, etc . . . There are of course heaps of things but it takes hunting to get them."[61] These searches for artifacts benefited the Laboratory School as well; as she wrote to Swope, while meeting the head of Marshall Field's wholesale department, she "asked him

for samples of all the kinds of linen textiles they had—each sample to be big enough for two specimens—one for the H.H. textile museum (I modestly called it) the other for the school."[62]

The Labor Museum opened in October 1900, and Mary Hill was characteristically nervous about its success; she seems to have held herself and her work to very high standards. Created to answer the "distinct need for educational methods adapted to the situation" of the neighborhood's working people, the museum began with exhibits on textiles, and one of its earliest activities was a lecture on "early spinning" by Althea Harmer, "illustrated by the spinning of wool on a hand spindle by Signora Molinare." As Hill wrote about that evening, the event, "I think, interested the audience arousing the ones who knew about it a good deal."[63] Hill needn't have worried about the Labor Museum—it went on to become one of the most popular of Hull House's varied offerings. She was reassured early on, "entertained and warmed at the heart" by a group of boys in her Hull House basket-weaving class, who, she reported, were "keen on the museum."[64]

Another Hull House neighbor was similarly "keen" on the Labor Museum. After a "particularly boring day" at the textile factory, Hilda Satt decided to walk the three blocks from her home to Hull House. That evening, in the fall of 1900, Jane Addams was greeting visitors at the door. After asking her if she'd like to join a club or a class, or perhaps go to the gymnasium, Addams took her to the newly opened Labor Museum. Satt was smitten from the start. As she recalled, "The museum had been opened a short time before, and it was a very special addition to the work at Hull House and very dear to [Addams's] heart. As I look back, and this may be wishful thinking, I feel that she sensed what I needed most at that time. She turned me over to Miss Mary Hill, who had charge of the museum." Mary Hill showed Hilda Satt around the museum, where the first stop was a display of textiles, including cotton, wool, silk, and linen. To Satt's surprise, she "discovered that cotton grew out of the ground. I had never thought just how the cotton cloth that I worked with every day was made. I could not tear myself away from the case. Miss Hill started explaining the exhibit." That evening, this young garment worker, "ready to learn almost anything," received instruction from Hill on how to weave a Navaho-style blanket. After that, she spent many evenings at Hull House and enjoyed the Saturday night demonstrations of neighborhood women spinning and weaving.[65]

For Hilda Satt, the discovery of the artistic and social origins of the textile industry was intellectually satisfying. Both the Labor Museum

and the Laboratory School represented attempts to illuminate and dignify the basic human occupations and to deepen modern understandings of the importance of such work to human progress. It could be argued, of course, that educational efforts like the Labor Museum did not go far enough to address the drudgery of Progressive Era factory employment. But those involved with the Labor Museum were trying to fashion what Maurice Hamington calls a "brand of industrial education" that "would provide workers with the tools to understand and question the nature of their labor."[66] This education ran counter to the prevailing industrial movement, led by figures such as Frederick Taylor, to reduce factory work to the individual performance of minute and measurable tasks and to take authority away from workers.[67]

The Hull House and Laboratory School communities worked to foster an alternate type of authority: what John Dewey called "a democracy of mind." As he wrote in "Democracy in Education" in 1903, "Modern life means democracy, democracy means freeing intelligence for independent effectiveness—the emancipation of mind as an individual organ to do its own work. We naturally associate democracy, to be sure, with freedom of action, but freedom of action without freed capacity of thought behind it is only chaos. If external authority in action is given up, it must be because internal authority of truth, discovered and known to reason, is substituted."[68] At Hull House and at the Laboratory School, the communities experimented with education designed to develop this kind of "internal authority" in individuals, in the context of social inquiry.

Like the Laboratory School, with its focus on "occupations" such as weaving and cooking, the Labor Museum sought to teach through inquiry into the most essential of human social interactions. In this way, the effort illustrates the process of discovery that was also at the heart of the Laboratory School community. One class of eleven-year-olds (Group VIII), studying textiles, "found that in a city like Chicago all methods of spinning were still used due to the presence of newly arrived emigrants from older civilizations." Some of the children relied upon personal travel experiences to recall some "primitive forms of spinning"; they were also helped with "much information" from "foreign helpers in some of the children's homes." In work similarly inspired by the Labor Museum, they "constructed a Navajo loom for pattern weaving, making the loom frames, battens, and shuttles."[69]

Likewise, in a teachers' report on a lesson on pottery in May 1899, Mary Hill discussed a combined class in history and science that went on an "excursion to the Field Museum." The students made clay pots

and then followed this up with an investigation of Indian pottery. As she explained, "They saw the different ways in which it had been made,—by simply turning the clay between the thumb and finger, as they had been doing; by lining baskets in which case the marks of the basket were left on the clay, and how probably their first notions of design arose from this fact."[70] Like those who created the Labor Museum, the Laboratory School teachers used their content expertise to provide students with experiences that enabled them to make connections between the larger world—in this case, of the past—and their own lives. As Herbert Kliebard argues, Dewey wanted to "restore to modern life the role that he believed knowledge had once played in a pre-industrial society."[71] The Laboratory School community tried to learn from the arts and industries of the past in order to prepare students to respond to the changing reality of Progressive Era America.

In their daily work at the Laboratory School, teachers were engaged with students in what John Dewey described as thinking that "does not occur for its own sake, nor end in itself. It arises from the need of meeting some difficulty."[72] As they planned educational experiences that developed such thinking in their students, teachers needed to keep both the outlook of the children and the contours of the subject matter in mind. As the Camp sisters advised, "Like Alice, she must step with her children behind the looking glass and in this imaginative land she must see all things with their eyes and limited by their experience; but, in time of need, she must be able to recover her trained vision and from the realistic point of view of an adult supply the guide posts of knowledge and the skills of method."[73] This shifting of perspectives, from the mind of the child to the heart of the content, and the mental agility it required, put the teachers at the center of the pragmatic experiment that was the Laboratory School and enabled them to find success also in related ventures such as the Labor Museum.[74]

## "A Dewey school for us"

Jane Addams had long been supportive of these innovative ideas, and by the turn of the century, she was eager to include what she called "a Dewey school for us" as part of the Hull House offerings.[75] The teachers were right in the middle of the deliberations over this exciting, though never-realized, effort. As Addams wrote in 1900, "I am more attached to Dr. Dewey's experiment."[76] Discussions about what Mary Hill and Katherine Camp called, in their letters, the "J.D. H.H. school" were not made public, and there is little if any mention of

the idea for such a school in the historical analyses of the Laboratory School or of Hull House. As the teachers' letters indicate, plans for a Hull House school along the Laboratory School lines seem to have been debated twice: in late 1899, under ordinary circumstances, and again in 1901, when the idea was first introduced of a possible merger between the Laboratory School and the Chicago Institute, the school founded by the philanthropist Anita McCormick Blaine and the educator Colonel Francis Parker.[77] As I will discuss in the next chapter, this was to be the ultimate fate of the Laboratory School, which came to be known (and still exists) as the Laboratory Schools. But initially, the talks of a "branch school" at Hull House seem to have originated quite naturally, the result of a shared consciousness of common purposes and ideas among members of both communities.

The story of the plans for a "J.D. H.H. school" can be pieced together from Mary Hill's letters to Gerard Swope. She first wrote to him of such plans in the fall of 1899, when it seems that talks had already stalled. As she wrote in November 1899, "the branch school has been indefinitely postponed—them as can't pay has to wait to get from anybody." The "enthusiasm for the H. H. school," she explained, "seems to go in little puffs. It is hard to get to anything definite and feasible." George Herbert Mead and his wife Helen were involved in the discussions, and they were "very discouraging," as "Mr. Mead seems to expect a duplicate of Miss Camp to fall from heaven—like the Diana of Ephesus or some such lady—Did they have the temple ready for her or build it around her after she had chosen the spot?"[78] Nonetheless, by late December 1899, Hill wrote, "Again my hopes of the school are rising—of the J.D. H.H. one I mean." After a meeting at Hull House with Alice Dewey, there with the Dewey children, "Miss Addams now says she will give a school room, light, heat, cleaning, and equipment, while the other end supplies salaries and materials." Addams stipulated that the room would be "used for adults in the evenings." A few days later, after another meeting that included Katherine Camp, Hill felt that Addams had "made the adult part of it clearer to Miss Camp—It looks as though this time it would go—Miss Addams told them that she was offering the children's part just as bait—that she was interested in the grownups, which I hope my comrades-in-arms are digesting."[79]

Mary Hill noted that Jane Addams and Alice Dewey thought they would need three teachers, at $1,000 each (annually), to teach in different departments, along with "an intelligent and interested man to take charge." It is not clear why these women would seek a man to take charge; Hill herself seemed ideally suited for such a responsibility,

yet she seemed to question her abilities: "I'd like to do a lot of work towards it," she wrote to Swope, but "as I say, I have to go in so many directions and besides am weak-minded, and have no constructive imagination nor a literary style—but am simply dazzled by the idea of the thing. Please hold me up to doing something for it anyway."[80]

Less than a fortnight later, however, she was "discouraged about the J.D. H.H." and believed that "people at that end don't seem to me to be quite frank with Miss Addams, though it is too early in the game to pass judgement. Miss Camp told me in strict confidence that Mr. Mead thought Miss Addams was trying to get money which ought to go into perfecting that school, and [that] expecting Mr. Dewey to supervise the work or advise in any way was wrong, he having already too much work. The last may be a valid objection but the first seems to me unjust." Hill felt that money raised by Addams for the purpose of a Hull House school would legitimately belong to the settlement house. Originally, the Meads' stated objection to Addams had been "on the score of not having a second Miss Camp to run it." So in Hill's opinion, the Laboratory School crowd to that point was not being entirely forthcoming to Jane Addams.[81]

John Dewey and Jane Addams finally discussed the idea after a Hull House trustees meeting; Addams asked Dewey, " 'Shall we confide our plans of the school?,' to which he replied that he himself hadn't been confided in yet. She then told him and he looked much pleased—so she told me." For Dewey, "the most important thing to get was some one to give her whole time and Miss Addams said she had the person. I wish you were here to talk with."[82] Hill implies here that Addams thought she was that person; if so, the earlier desire for an "intelligent man" was a fleeting one. The plans, however, did not come to fruition—at least not in the form of a Hull House school for children and adults.

Ultimately, it seems that the Laboratory School crowd could not figure out how to split their time between the Laboratory School and the prospect, exciting though it was, of a new school located at Hull House. As Mary Hill wrote to Gerard Swope in February 1900 of a conversation with Katherine Camp, "she began in rather an embarrassed way and very apologetically," eventually asking, " 'Don't you really love our school too much to leave it altogether for the H.H. one?' Wasn't that funny?"[83] Hill, excited by the idea of such a school, was ideally situated for that particular experiment; the others seemed not to be ready to divide their attentions, and the "J.D. H.H." school didn't happen. The Labor Museum, which took shape that same spring, likely benefited from these deliberations, as

it shared some of the aims of the "branch school"—particularly Jane Addams's ideas regarding a school for adults.[84]

Once again, in 1901, the prospect of a Hull House Laboratory School resurfaced. This was occasioned by the threat (as Katherine Camp and others saw it) of a merger between the Chicago Institute of Mrs. Blaine and Colonel Parker and the Laboratory School, which eventually did come about, along with a million-dollar endowment that Blaine gave to the University of Chicago. In 1901, when the merger was proposed, one possible solution for the Laboratory School community was to move operations over to Hull House, as they renewed and revised the discussions of the previous year. As Mary Hill noted in March 1901, "Miss Addams had Mrs. Dewey, Miss Camp, and Miss Harmer over to talk about a school here. There is no definite plan as yet—only it does seem almost probable."[85] A week later, she wrote, "Nothing further has been done about the H.H. school. Mr. Dewey still knows nothing definite about next year. Miss Harmer is aching to be Textile curator even if there is no school. Shall I really not arrange to do something here next year?" (Already engaged to be married in the summer of 1901, Hill had informed her Hull House and Laboratory School colleagues that she would be joining Gerard Swope, who was working in St. Louis, and would no longer be running the Labor Museum.)[86]

Elizabeth Camp, mother of the Camp sisters, was living in Chicago at this time, and she remarked in a letter to her daughter Bess that "Miss Addams has offered to raise the money and ensure Kate and Althea for five years if they would come over and start a school on the Dewey Plan there at Hull House. They are thinking of it but can do nothing until they have talked with Mr. Dewey."[87] But as I shall discuss further in the next chapter, Laboratory School parents came to the rescue that year and promised to raise funds adequate to run the school independently for another year. The "J.D. H.H. school" was not to be, "dazzling" though the idea was; it is tempting to wonder about the possibilities such a collaboration might have meant for long-lasting educational innovation and reform.

## The Chicago Physiological School

Hull House was not the only Chicago institution to which the Laboratory School established ties; John Dewey and George Herbert Mead were on the board of trustees of the Chicago Physiological School, a school for children with disabilities (then labeled "delicate," "feeble-minded," or, even worse, "idiots") that opened in the

fall of 1899 under the direction of Mary Campbell, formerly head of the girls' department of the Wisconsin Institution for Feeble-Minded Children. Hailed by the *New York Times* as "a new training school for nervous and backward children, the first of its kind in the world," the school was "to be an experimental one in training children, whose development is stunted." Those involved, including teachers, psychologists, and neurologists, would conduct a "close study" of each child, with "records of every observation" to be kept. The purpose of the school, as the paper reported, was to "determine what environment will do for the children who fail to develop normally."[88]

An advertisement for the school placed in the journal *Pediatrics* claimed that the school would employ "the best pedagogical methods, administered by teachers who are recognized specialists in child-study."[89] In early 1900, Mary Hill met with George Herbert Mead and Mary Campbell, and she told Gerard Swope that she had "rashly undertaken to run some work over there—in fact have promised them two hours a week and to direct three other hours if a teacher can be found to be directed." Her role as teacher in this school was to discover how Laboratory School ideas and practices could be translated in this different setting and implemented with children with what we now call special needs or developmental disabilities. As she wrote, the "work itself—or rather the material won't be new"; what was experimental was the "application to those children." She asked Swope, "Don't you think it will be interesting to see how much they take hold of and what they are like in general?"[90]

Mary Hill faced an immediate challenge at the Physiological School: as she wrote to Swope, "My subordinate was insubordinate and I shall have to have a talk with her and after that possibly resign." Apparently, the "subordinate" was opposed to the instructional methods borrowed from the Laboratory School. After an "interview" of an hour, the assistant teacher told Hill that "she would be willing to lay aside her scruples (about the Dewey School!) [but to] learn more about it isn't in her plan. She has intimate friends who know the Dewey children and Winifred Miller—that is enough."[91] Nevertheless, in addition to Hill's supervision, Katherine Camp visited the school to give a pedagogical talk to the teachers.[92] In spite of the challenges, Hill "enjoyed the long hours I spent at the Physiological School—for I was there nearly four hours. Miss Campbell is getting out her circular and she asked my advice about certain things—as to whether some reports were worth publishing—Think of being consulting runner of a school!"[93]

Mary Hill was still working at the school in October of 1900, when she informed Swope that the school had a new name: the Chicago Hospital School for Delicate Children—"parents like it better."[94] She doesn't mention the school again; the Labor Museum opened that month, and it is possible that she ceased her connection with the school as her time was taken by the new Hull House effort, along with her work at the Laboratory School. In any case, the school was not in operation much longer; it closed several years later, mostly because of financial problems that Mead and Henry Donaldson, a University of Chicago neurologist, tried unsuccessfully to resolve.[95] But it represents an example of the experimental reach of the Laboratory School community; the pragmatic trying out of ideas went beyond the Hyde Park school, as John Dewey and the teachers worked to figure out whether a pedagogy involving inquiry and social occupations had relevance in other settings, including the urban vacation schools that began to open in the late nineteenth century.

## Reform connections on the East Coast

### Vacation schools

In his study of American school reform, William Reese argues that during the Progressive Era, "urban schools had adopted numerous educational 'experiments' that promised to transform the very character of public education." One of the most prominent and well publicized of these experiments, Reese argues, was the vacation school. In many cities, vacation schools began as the projects of women's clubs and civic associations, a response to the needs of children left unattended on city streets during the long summer vacations—time off from school that made sense in an agrarian nation, but that served no discernable purpose in the cities.[96]

During the years prior to 1910, the experimental nature of these "hot weather schools" was pronounced. In many cities, the six-week sessions during the summer included "excursions," along with nature study and manual training, with a focus on a more active kind of learning than children found in the public schools. As one Chicago principal asked in 1898, "As long as the schools are experimental, why not attempt something that would benefit all who are trying to discover what is best for the American child?" He went on to suggest that "frequent teachers' meetings should be held before and during the term, for the purpose of comparing notes and receiving suggestions."[97] For a short period of time, reformers saw vacation

schools as "experiment stations" that would reveal effective pedagogical methods that could be applied to the schools during the rest of the year.[98] As Reese reports, however, the experimental nature of the vacation schools was short-lived. By 1910, as municipalities began to take fiscal and administrative responsibility for the summer schools, they began to look like the programs we know today—traditionally academic and intended for children who did not succeed during the regular school year.[99]

In the first years of the new century, when the vacation schools were still experimental, several Laboratory School teachers attempted to apply the school's ideas to summer programs at New York's Chautauqua and in Boston, Massachusetts. During the summer of 1900, Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Laura Runyon ran a vacation school for children at the Chautauqua Institution, the upstate New York educational center. Founded in 1874, Chautauqua offered ambitious adult education programs during the summer months in a pastoral setting. The daily program in 1900 included devotions, music, lectures, and readings; lecture topics ranged from "Witchcraft" and "Hypnotism" to "The Government of Tropical Dependencies," and entertainments included concerts, magic shows, and athletic exhibitions.[100] In spite of this variety of offerings, however, it wasn't for everyone; attending in 1899, William James complained, "I long to escape from tepidity."[101]

During the summer of 1900, both Jane Addams and John Dewey gave "popular lectures" at Chautauqua, and Camp, Harmer, and Runyon were listed as instructors in the Division of Summer Schools, which offered instruction for adults. As Camp wrote to her father, along with running the vacation school, she was to "give fifteen lectures."[102] Camp offered a course on "Elementary Experimental Science," Harmer taught "Typical Industrial Material as Utilized in Elementary School Work," and Runyon provided instruction on the "Colonial History of the United States."[103] In addition to his general lecture, Dewey also offered two courses on "Current Educational Problems" and "Educational Psychology." These courses, all five hours a week for three weeks, served to provide a wider audience for the ideas and practices of the Laboratory School. But it was in the vacation school that the teachers experimented with the Laboratory School practices, as did Mary Hill at the Chicago Physiological School, by testing the methods in a different setting.

In the "Chautauqua Program" for July 1900, the organizers announced, "Three of the teachers of the University of Chicago Elementary School (under the direction of Prof. John Dewey) have been

secured for the summer, and will attempt to apply the principles of this well-known school to a vacation school, under the unusual advantages offered at Chautauqua for out-of-door study."[104] In a May 1900 letter to George Vincent, principal of Chautauqua's Department of Instruction, Laura Runyon alerted him to a "bad blunder in the May *Chautauquan*. In the statement of the condensed program of schools, Dr. Dewey is put down under the Vacation School. You will remember that he was unwilling to take any responsibility for it, and this is hardly fair either to him or to the public."[105] This was clearly the three teachers' project, though Dewey wrote to Vincent in May to inquire about the possibility of "getting the garden started under way," to be part of the vacation school curriculum, informing him that "the teachers would be glad to make suggestions regarding the plan for the garden."[106]

As Laura Runyon recounted, the teachers' work was "an attempt to adapt the principles of the [Laboratory School] to out-of-door work and a vacation time, and also to let visitors see the workings."[107] One student of the "Dewey Vacation School" had "pleasant memories" of "building small houses—learning all about ants from a glass box where they could be watched." The "planting and weeding a garden," however, "didn't seem to appeal to her."[108] Thus the Chautauqua experience enabled the Laboratory School teachers to advertise the school's ideas and practices at the same time that they experimented with the relevance of the Laboratory School to other settings.[109]

The teachers' work in Boston the next summer took place in a more typical vacation school of this era—one in a "great city" that served children who might otherwise be "drifting about aimlessly." The connection between the Laboratory School teachers and the Andrews School summer program, run in 1901 by the Massachusetts Civic League, seems to have been made by Bess Camp, the eldest of the Camp sisters. Bess Camp began work in 1901 as superintendent of the food department at the Women's Educational and Industrial Union (WEIU) in Boston, an organization dedicated to improving working conditions for women.[110] Like other reform institutions of this time, the WEIU was self-consciously experimental; Cornelia James Cannon's 1927 history of the institution calls it "a civic laboratory."[111]

Through her work with the WEIU in Boston, Bess Camp became acquainted with Mary Morton Kehew, then president of the organization, and Ellen Swallow Richards, a scientist who was a pioneer in the field that came to be known as "home economics." (Richards preferred the term "euthenics," by which she meant "the science of controllable environment." She had earlier tried to make a case for

"oekology," which meant "the science of right living," but the biological sciences had already taken "ecology.")[112] In a letter to her sister Katherine, Bess Camp asked, "Are you going to Chautauqua again this summer? If you are not and you want to do summer work there is a chance here—Sunday night Mrs. Kehew approached me on the subject. It seems that for three years, I think it is, the women here have raised money to carry on the summer schools in the school buildings given by the city. Last year the city kept two or three schools open, but they were under inferior teachers. These pioneer women seem very anxious to keep the summer schools in their hands, at least until they are able to give the city a model school to start with. It seems that Mrs. Richards told Mrs. Kehew that you were the one to start that school, so Mrs. K. asked me about it."[113]

Katherine Camp accepted the position as director of the Civic League Vacation School (located at the Andrews School) for the summer of 1901, and she worked alongside fellow Laboratory School teachers Harry Gillett and Alice Lachmund. As she wrote to her mother that summer, "the school is just beginning to be half-way respectable, and at the end of the six weeks will be just where it will be hard to leave." The work was satisfying to Camp: "The class of children is about as difficult as one can find but very appealing and grateful."[114] Several articles and books on vacation schools describe this experiment. As Ella Lyman Cabot wrote in her 1914 book *Volunteer Help to the Schools,* it was possible to "show by a single example the value of private experiment in relation to attendance and curriculum for vacation schools." The Massachusetts Civic League had attempted during the previous years to address the matters of irregular attendance, an appropriate summer curriculum, and the relation of summer schools to other recreational agencies. As she reported,

> During the third year of the Massachusetts Civic League vacation schools the committee tried an entirely different type of curriculum, if one may use so stiff a word for so happy a piece of learning. The attempt was made with a group of teachers, largely from the Chicago University School, to have little children get a clearer idea of the life about them in city and country. The plan of the school was to enlarge the children's interests and to train their powers of observation, reasoning, and acting by letting them work out for themselves the methods of obtaining food and clothing.[115]

A newspaper article, with the headline "Hot Weather School," described further what the author called "a unique experiment, or, rather, an exhibit, in vacation school methods." Working with four classes of

thirty-six students each, the teachers, led by Camp, employed "methods [that] are entirely new to Boston, but [that] have been elaborated in the school attached to the University of Chicago, and have been tried in practice in the Chicago vacation schools, where they have gone far from the results reached to solve the difficult and new program of teaching vagrant youngsters in warm weather." At the Andrews School that summer, the "general aim of the program" was "to utilize educationally the children's natural interest in the occupation of older people. Some typical occupation of real importance is chosen—in this case, farming—and the attempt made to enlarge the children's experience, systematically." This reporter found a "picturesque scene," with garden patches in which the children planted flowers, grains, and vegetables. As was done in the Laboratory School, the work in the garden was connected to shopwork (making farm tools), artwork (clay modeling of farm animals), and cooking. As the reporter noted, "Both boys and girls take all this in hand and the teaching keeps close throughout to the practical problem of providing food as a motive." The older children that summer had an additional focus on clothing, as the school was in a "tailoring neighborhood."[116]

Harry Gillett was responsible for what the reporter called "perhaps the most distinctive feature of the scheme"—"the excursion trip, which has been developed from a helter-skelter scramble into something serving real educational uses, without sacrificing the fun of the outing." Many of the excursions related to the "food and clothing motive," but some, with the older students, were connected to the "famous George Junior republic" project, also supervised by Gillett. Certainly not famous now (though programs still exist), the George Junior republic was a program that introduced children to municipal government, including the New England town meeting structure, by creating a self-governing body made up of the students.[117]

While contemporary accounts describe this experiment as successful, it was not replicated, perhaps because of the expense. In an article on Boston vacation schools, a Boston professor, Spencer Baldwin, describes the Civic League program of 1901, attributing the plan to John Dewey. After outlining the aims and activities of the plan, including the cost and attendance ($1,415 and 163 children), he stated that in 1902, "the program will be substantially the same as that of two years ago, before the Chicago innovation was tried."[118] Not long after that, vacation schools ceased to be experimental in nature, as cities settled for a remedial model of summer school, and the Laboratory School teachers did not join in vacation school work

again. But the next summer, Katherine Camp and Althea Harmer returned to Massachusetts to participate in another institution that bore the imprint of Ellen Swallow Richards—the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratories.

## Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory

In a 1975 history of the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL), the biophysicist Detlev Bronk reminded us, "It is timely to recall that some energetic, visionary women were largely responsible for creating the MBL." In 1881, the Boston Society of Natural History announced that, in cooperation with the Woman's Education Association of Boston, it had established a "Sea-side laboratory," in part to provide laboratory opportunities to women interested in science. First located in Annisquam, Massachusetts, the MBL outgrew its original location, and by 1888 it had moved to its current location at Woods Hole. As Bronk recounted, the Women's Association was persuaded that they should relinquish control of the Annisquam laboratory and its equipment to the Woods Hole laboratory, then run by the federal Fish Commission. The Woman's Association raised funds necessary for this enlarged facility, and three of the women from the association were among the seven founding trustees of the new laboratory. "Never again," Bronk wrote, "has there been so large a percentage of women among the trustees."[119]

Ellen Swallow Richards was one of the women who co-founded the Marine Biological Laboratory. As the first woman admitted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (as a special student), Richards was a tireless advocate for women's participation in scientific teaching and research. Undaunted by setbacks (MIT would not permit her to enroll in a doctoral program, as the institute didn't want its first Ph.D. in chemistry to go to a woman), Richards was responsible for a dizzying number of reforms in the fields of chemistry, oceanography, water safety, municipal sanitation, and home economics. Her work provided opportunities for the Laboratory School teachers in two distinct fields: as noted above, in the Boston vacation school and at the Woods Hole laboratories.[120]

Katherine Camp and Althea Harmer benefited from Richards's work to establish the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory as a scientific institution that would welcome women. Katherine Camp was officially enrolled in courses at Woods Hole in 1899 and 1902; Althea Harmer was there in 1899, as indicated by the Camp letters, but she was not officially enrolled as a student.[121] In 1899,

Camp took the summer course in physiology, directed by the University of Chicago physiologist Jacques Loeb (whose children attended the Laboratory School). The course, consisting of laboratory work and lectures, included such topics as "The Tropism of Animals," "Effects of External Influences upon Living Matter," and "Physiological Morphology." Of her summer, Katherine Camp wrote to her family: "Woods Hole is all our fancy painted it—in most ways much more, but I must say that the number of amusing and interesting people is smaller than it used to be—or else I've grown particular in my old age." Her days were filled with laboratory work, lectures by Loeb, and swimming (she called it "bathing") "with the nice people—prof's & instructors & wives." Her work in the laboratory was "very interesting and a pleasure almost always and when it seems a burden I leave it—so I enjoy life." Of her fellow students, she wrote, "The people in the lab are all 'researchers'—except a 'lazy boy' and myself—and a naïve girl form the Univ. of Penn. who is tremendously afraid of the course." This was clearly not so for Camp, who was unafraid to evaluate the quality of instruction—the assistants were, she felt, "all very good and interested in the work—so things go smoothly."[122]

In order to earn her keep that summer, she taught three children: Leonard Loeb, son of Professor Jacques Loeb, and Frank and Carroll Whitman, likely the children of the laboratory's director, C. O. Whitman. She and Althea Harmer also "began house keeping," which meant that they prepared their own breakfasts and washed their own clothes. Ever conscious of their budgets, like many female students of this time, Camp and Harmer were creative in their efforts to make ends meet. (As she wrote of the possibility of a trip to see her friend, Henrietta Goodrich, in Boston, "I can't go up there I'm afraid—as money is a negative quantity.") As a result, her days, as she wrote to her sister Anna, were "full." Their time was not too full, however, for jaunts and excursions, such as a "mushroom hunt with the botany class—under Mr. Atkinson of Cornell, whose lofty scorn for the possibility of a little mushroom's being edible was chilling to speak mildly—he was classification mad."[123]

Three years later, as her mother informed a relative, Katherine Camp returned to "Woods Hole Mass to study—taking a course in Botany,"[124] directed by another University of Chicago professor, Bradley Moore Davis. This course included topics such as "Cryptogamic Botany," "Ecology," and "Plant Physiology." This time, Camp was initially frustrated by a delay in getting her laboratory work assignments; she hoped that "in the class one can do a lot

of individual work and this I hope to succeed at doing—and read and go to lectures etc. I just like work and [am] mad not to get it doled out until this A.M."[125]

The Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory offered Katherine Camp the opportunity to deepen her scientific knowledge through laboratory and field research, just as Ellen Swallow Richards and the other women founders had intended. The decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth century offered women opportunities in the professions and the sciences that had been unavailable earlier and that, unfortunately, were harder to come by after 1910. As Margaret Rossiter argues in her history of American women scientists, the period from 1880 to 1910 was one of "great fluidity and innovation" for women in science. By 1910, however, "a new rigidity set in."[126] The Laboratory School women took advantage of this promising time, participating in experimental institutions in Chicago and elsewhere in the nation.

## Conclusion: "Discovery Is Transformative"

In lecture notes that George Dykhuizen wrote while taking George Herbert Mead's 1926 course on John Dewey, he captured the mood of the Laboratory School (though the text under discussion was Dewey's 1926 text *Experience and Nature*): "Discovery is transformative, not surely additive. It changes the world in which the public lives."[127] These notes aptly describe the experiences of the teachers at the Laboratory School, as well as their connections to the larger world of Progressive Era experimental institutions. In both cases, the discovery that was the companion to collective inquiry was not merely an activity that added to the lives of the community members. According to this understanding, discovery transforms; it engages the inquirers with the world in such a way as to create new expectations about what it means to live and interact together.

Like other experimental institutions of its era, the Laboratory School changed our ideas about what it means to be part of "the world in which the public lives." Instead of passive recipients of information who were judged on their ability to memorize and recite, students were active participants in learning experiences designed to engage them in problem-based inquiry. Instead of compliant followers of instructions from administrators, teachers were content experts who created educational experiences that would carry students from their interests to mastery of content deemed essential. In settlement houses like Hull House, and in the "experiment stations" of vacation

schools, Americans of this time were actively searching for solutions to urban problems and forcing local, state, and national governments to address the needs of its citizens in ways previously unimagined. The transformation Mead spoke about in his lecture came about through this kind of social engagement. As Dewey wrote in an appendix to *The Dewey School,* "The integration of the individual and society is impossible except when the individual lives in close association with others in the constant and free give and take of experiences and finds his happiness and growth in processes of sharing with them. The idea involved a radical departure from the notion that the school is just a place in which to learn lessons and acquire certain forms of skill."[128]

For the Laboratory School community, the school was much more than a "place in which to learn lessons." It was a gathering place for individuals engaged in what the Camp sisters called "experimental living guided by intelligent thinking." A story from the teachers' letters illustrates in a light-hearted way some of the spirit of experimentation that these early female professionals must have possessed. It involves three of the teachers under study here: Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill. Writing to Gerard Swope in 1900, Hill recounted an evening visit the three paid to Dr. Jacques Loeb. (Katherine Camp was known to disagree with Loeb. In a letter to her mother, she wrote, "Now Dr. Loeb is down on coeducation—thinks the poor boys are distracted! Need protection! I can't stand him any longer."[129]) According to Hill's account, Loeb offered the friends an after-dinner cigarette and left the room, underestimating, it seems, their willingness to go against conventions. For, Hill wrote, "When he returned and found Miss Harmer actually smoking he nearly fell over and pulled down the shades. I afterward shared it with her—since she asked me to and thinking that smoking alone might cause her embarrassment. He said that the smoke made him dizzy. Then we played whist and at about half past ten came home. It was very amusing."[130]

The teachers' letters and writings offer us a glimpse into their daily lives, which included the Laboratory School and Hull House, and various other centers of Progressive Era experimentation. For them, "the world in which the public lives" included those who were shocked by a woman smoking a cigarette, and others who would doubt their ability, as women, to make important pedagogical decisions or to draw scientific conclusions. Yet, alongside friends such as John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, and Jane Addams, these teachers worked to

transform, through their discoveries, the way we understand teaching and learning. The experiences of the "Camp-Dewey-Mead crowd" can help us understand not just an experiment, or an era, but also what might come from schools in which all are engaged as "communities of inquiry."[131] In such schools, teachers must be equipped and entrusted to make the daily decisions that shape their work.

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# Chapter 6

# Implications of the Laboratory School Experiment

In 1949, John Dewey's many friends and admirers organized a celebration of his ninetieth birthday, which followed similar events when he turned seventy and eighty. (He missed his eightieth birthday commemoration, sending a note instead; *Newsweek* reported that Dewey told a friend: "I was canonized once, but I won't be canonized again."[1]) Nevertheless, he attended the 1949 dinner and festivities, as did Anna Camp Edwards and Mary Hill Swope. Neither Althea Harmer Bardeen nor Katherine Camp Mayhew were still alive—Bardeen died in 1920, when her four children were still quite young, and Mayhew died in 1946, after some years of illness. Dewey missed seeing Edwards at his ninetieth birthday celebration—her response to the invitation was apparently lost, and so Dewey was not aware that she was in attendance until afterwards, when she informed him by letter. He wrote fondly in response: "Among all from whom I heard this past week, there was no one from whom it gave greater pleasure to hear than from you." He lamented that he had "made a mistake at the outset in telling the Committee in charge of the celebration" that "I was to have nothing to do with it. My working hours are limited and I thought to save myself. I suppose it was natural that the Committee did not know my older friends. I did intercede when I found Mary Hill hadn't been asked to come to the dais—But it was ridiculous to have all that talk of education; nothing about the Chicago school where it all started."[2]

Looking back a half century, John Dewey and the surviving teachers understood that the Laboratory School years had shaped their

educational philosophies and changed their lives. As Mary Hill Swope wrote of John Dewey in a birthday commemoration, "The best education I ever received was in his school where I worked, presumably as a teacher—but from which I received much more than I ever gave."[3] The Camp sisters dedicated almost a decade of their lives to the writing and publication of *The Dewey School*, their book on the Laboratory School. And while Althea Harmer Bardeen did not live long enough to reflect back over the decades, a biography of her son, John Bardeen, attests to the lasting implications of the Laboratory School experience in her life and in that of her family. John Bardeen was a Nobel Prize-winning physicist—a co-inventor of the transistor—whose biographers argue, "Decades after the end of Althea's tenure at the Dewey School, her son John would become internationally known for solving problems using a cooperative experiment-based approach built on overcoming specific difficulties, setting concrete goals, visualizing their achievement, and [using Harmer's phrase] 'calling the constructive imagination into play,' "[4]

The Laboratory School community came together at an extraordinary time, when the nation was open to experimentation; for those approaching education with a sense of adventure, the years in Chicago provided a lifetime of ideas to mull over and experiences to savor. The teachers' experimental work at the Laboratory School was short-lived, at less than a decade; their work at the Physiological School and the vacation schools was even briefer. The teacher Laura Runyon regretted that they had not been able to collect longitudinal data on students after they left the Laboratory School, in order to assess the effects of the school on the students.[5] Nonetheless, contemplating the school a century later, we can learn from this example of a community of teachers who brought their expertise to bear on the cooperative work of building a experimental school.

## The End of an Experiment, and the End of an Era

After a remarkably productive decade in Chicago, John and Alice Dewey left Hyde Park and the University of Chicago in 1904 and thus ended the daily interactions of the "Camp-Dewey-Mead crowd" that had so enriched their years in the city. While to many this seemed to be an abrupt departure, those involved in the Laboratory School understood that it was the result of long-standing undercurrents of discord between John Dewey and the university's president, William Rainey Harper. In spite of many common aims for the improvement of education, the two men had long disagreed about the university's

financial responsibility for the Laboratory School. Dewey argued that the university should fund the school as it would any departmental laboratory; Harper, conscious of the ongoing need to trim a large budget, never agreed to such levels of support for the pedagogical laboratory. After several years of relatively humdrum wrangling, a magnanimous gift from the wealthy McCormick heiress Anita McCormick Blaine complicated matters even further.

Blaine had earlier offered a million-dollar endowment to Colonel Francis Parker, whose innovative work at the Cook County Normal School she admired; they made plans for a practice school for training teachers—the Chicago Institute. In 1901, Blaine and Harper, with the blessing of Parker and his faculty, merged the Chicago Institute and its million dollars with the University of Chicago, for the purpose of establishing a School of Education. The Laboratory School community, which had the most to lose, was taken by surprise by news of the merger; teachers, parents, and even the parent of a teacher were distraught.

As Mary Hill wrote to Gerard Swope that spring, "Now for the horrible news—the baseness, sordidness, disloyalty, and lack of honor are beyond words. Pres. Harper has once more sold his soul and this time for the Blaine money and Chicago Institute as though Mr. Dewey were a worm underfoot. That things will stay as they seem at present I can't believe." And though it would take another few years, Hill was right. "It seems as though public opinion must take effect—Unless it doesn't catch on to the situation. Miss Camp and Miss Harmer came over this afternoon and have been telling me about it. The trying part in the present is that one must smile and smile and know its vilainous [*sic*]." Hill wished that someone would "send up a couple of prairie schooners and take Mr. Dewey the best of his force and equipment and drive the whole thing to St. Louis." (Perhaps she meant for Gerard Swope to come to the rescue; he lived in St. Louis.) "It seems as though a decampment were the best thing left."[6] As she wrote a week later of the school, still located then at 5412 Ellis Avenue, "The thought of that work and everything at 5412 being clean wiped out makes me sick."[7]

The Camp sisters' mother, Elizabeth Camp, had a similar reaction. Explaining the situation to her eldest daughter Bess, Mrs. Camp wrote,

> Althea came home an hour since and said Mr. Dewey told the teachers about the consolidation of the University School and Colonel Parker's. I have sent you the Record that contained an account of it. The Dewey School will go

out of existence—all Primary work carried on by Col. Parker and his method. Mr. Dewey will have more to do with the secondary and his teachers will go on with that work. The details are not worked out yet, but as the papers got hold of it Mr. Dewey spoke of it. It is a great disappointment. Poor Kate feels badly—for it is the primary work she likes the best. I guess there is no doubt but she will get a place in the new arrangement, but am afraid her heart won't be in it. It is too bad changes have to come—it is coming home how big trusts absorb the small ones—for it is Mrs. Blaine's million makes it desirable to President Harper.[8]

Max Eastman, looking back a few decades later, concurred. As Dewey's former student summed it up, "It was from being forced to swallow a million of them in one gulp that the school rather suddenly died." Eastman thought that the Laboratory School, successful and renowned by 1901, did not need Mrs. Blaine's fortune.[9] Perhaps so, but they certainly could have used a solution to the constant money troubles. As Bess Camp wrote to her sister Katherine, after she saw John Dewey while he was in Boston that spring, "I thought he looked tired. It made me a little homesick to see him." She wished that "affairs were more settled for you for next year" and "that Dr. D. could get an endowment for a school of his own."[10]

During that spring of 1901, the public opinion that Mary Hill predicted did take effect. Educators from around the country wrote in support of the Laboratory School. For example, Herman Lukens wrote to John Dewey in April of 1901 that "for some years now I have been accustomed to look to your school and the reports that come out in the Record as the freshest and best and most inspiring of the pioneer work in education."[11] Similarly, G. W. A. Luckey wrote, "The experimental school as you have been conducting it impresses me as quite vital to original investigations in education."[12] Myron Scudder urged President Harper to reconsider the changes, as "the friends of education all over the country have deplored the possibility of the discontinuance of Doctor Dewey's experimental school. The inspiration and quickening that have gone out from that school during the last two years have done more for elementary education than the people directly interested in it have realized."[13]

It was the Laboratory School parents, however, long active in the school through the Parents' Association, who won a short reprieve for the school.[14] The Parents' Association met that spring to find a solution and proposed to guarantee subscriptions in support of the school. The University Board of Trustees accepted the proposal, and as Mary Hill wrote the next month, "The Dewey School is to go on the same

as ever. Isn't that an anticlimax?"[15] George Herbert Mead described a parents' reception that May, which was "pleasant and genuine." Both John Dewey and Ella Flagg Young spoke to the parents—Dewey "naturally," and Mrs. Young "eulogistically of Mr. Dewey his ideas and the school and explained that the Colonel's school was only a practice school—there could be no competition between them. The Colonel would have raged like the heathen if he could have heard."[16]

This arrangement was to be short-lived; Colonel Parker died in March 1902, and John Dewey was named his successor as the director of the new School of Education. For the 1902-1903 school year, he was the official director of two separate elementary schools—the Chicago Institute, renamed the University Elementary School, and his own Laboratory School. By the fall of 1903, the new Emmons Blaine Hall, built to house the School of Education, was completed on the campus, and it was difficult to continue to argue for two separate schools; Dewey himself seems to have come to support the merger at this point. As Robert McCaul posits, the move enabled Dewey "to apply his laboratory approach to the field of teacher training," a field "he had not attempted to cultivate in any systematic way before."[17] But the arrangements for both of these years proved unsuccessful, for several reasons. Wilbur Jackman, dean of the School of Education and a longtime Parker colleague, seems to have been a thorn in Dewey's side. Jackman wrote at length about the problems during the two years following Parker's death; he seemed most grievously injured by Dewey's lack of interest in the former Chicago Institute, as evidenced by Dewey's absence at their faculty and parent meetings. Neither man was blameless in these difficulties, and from descriptions of their interactions, it seems that they were profoundly ill suited to collaborate with each other.

To add to the problems, Alice Dewey, who had been named principal of the Laboratory School in 1901, was appointed reluctantly by Harper to the position in the newly merged school for the 1903–1904 school year. The Chicago Institute teachers were not pleased with Mrs. Dewey, fearing that she would be eager to dismiss them for what they saw as unfair reasons. The Laboratory School faculty had no such reservations, at least according to the written record from these teachers. At the end, in the spring of 1904, President Harper informed Alice Dewey (when her husband was out of town) that her position had been for just one year and that she would not be asked back, as the university did not support spousal hiring (anymore). He implied that John Dewey had agreed to that arrangement the year before (which Dewey denied), so it isn't hard to imagine her reaction.

When Dewey returned to Chicago, it took the couple little time to make the decision that both would officially resign from the school and that he would resign from the university. He was promptly hired at Columbia University, where he would remain until retirement, and the "Camp-Dewey-Mead crowd" was dispersed.[18]

This "crowd" was beginning to diminish because of another, more felicitous reality—the marriages of the young female teachers. (These departures were by choice, as unlike most schools at this time, marriage did not mean that female teachers had to resign—among others, the music teacher May Root Kern was married, and, of course, the principal Alice Dewey was as well.)[19] Of the four teachers at the center of this book, Mary Hill was the first to depart. Mary Hill and Gerard Swope married in 1901, in a Mackinac Island wedding presided over by Jane Addams, and Hill joined her new husband in St. Louis, where he had lived for several years, working for Western Electric. (It is to that long-distance relationship that we owe the cache of letters Hill wrote to Swope.) Katherine Camp became engaged to a physician, David Porter Mayhew, in the summer of 1903 and announced her plans to leave Chicago at the end of the academic term in 1904. The departure of John and Alice Dewey led to the resignation of Althea Harmer, who tried her hand at interior decorating for a year, when she met her future husband, Charles Bardeen. They married in 1905, and she moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where Bardeen was a professor of anatomy at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, soon to be dean of the university's new School of Medicine. Anna Camp, as tutor to Josephine Crane, accompanied her young friend to help her with her studies at the University of Wisconsin—Madison. Camp met her future husband there—a theology student named Richard Edwards—and they married in 1908.

Throughout their lives, these four teachers remained connected with each other, and with the Dewey and Mead families. The Camp sisters and Mary Hill Swope were particularly close to the Deweys, and Althea Harmer Bardeen remained intimate with the Meads; she named her only daughter after Helen Mead and the child's paternal grandmother and visited the Meads in Chicago with her children.[20] But the nature of the relationships inevitably changed without the daily contact of the Laboratory School years. Likewise, when the Dewey family left Chicago for New York in 1904, the fruitful and rewarding collaboration that John Dewey had enjoyed with his friend Jane Addams was irrevocably altered. Their friendship remained until Addams's death in 1935—though it was sorely tested by their opposing positions on the entrance of the United States into World War I—but the relationship

faded in comparison to what proximity had made possible between these two like-minded and complementary pragmatic intellectuals. The community of teachers and reformers created in the wake of this friendship, and the experiments they were engaged in, had really just gotten under way. As the Chicago principal Flora Cooke wrote, in a review of Mayhew and Edwards' *The Dewey School,* "No thoughtful person can read this book, I believe, without feeling that the discontinuance of the Dewey Laboratory School was a major tragedy—not only to that particular venture, but to a fuller understanding of the great potentialities of education and to its progress everywhere."[21]

While there were very particular reasons for the end of the Laboratory School as it had been originally conceived, a shift was under way in the national mood that had been favorable to experimentation in educational and social reform movements. Much of the historical research on the Progressive Era dates the end of the period to the entrance of the United States in World War I, or, alternatively, to 1920. History as it is actually lived out, of course, is never so neatly experienced. As I discussed in the second chapter, by the early years of the new century, women's recently opened spaces in higher education were being contested. This was not because academic advancement had injured female reproductive capacities, as Edward Clarke had warned in 1873, but rather because female success had engendered another fear—that women were "feminizing" universities and colleges. In higher education, scientific research, and the professions, women found that even when they could get advanced degrees, they couldn't find positions in a range of disciplines. Instead, women were segregated in fields created just for them—home economics for the scientists, and social work for the social scientists. Many professional women—seeking personal fulfillment and the opportunity to contribute to society—made the best of this situation, but it represented a major setback for women. In their ventures into what historians (though not women of the time) call the public sphere, Progressive Era women may have been *too* successful.[22]

Similarly, along with settlement women like Jane Addams and Julia Lathrop, advocates of reforms such as vacation schools found that when municipal, state, and federal governments assumed control of social and educational reforms—the reformers' ultimate aim, after all—the results did not always involve the leadership of women. The innovative nature of such efforts was often lost; as discussed in the fifth chapter, vacation schools, once seen widely as "experiment stations," settled quickly by about 1910 into the academically remedial programs that they continue to be today. In his research on schools as

social centers, Kevin Mattson finds that the experimental movement to make wider use of school buildings blossomed from the early 1900s until World War I, when it was undone by the use of these participatory forums by politicians eager to "make the 'war to save democracy' appear democratic."[23] Thus in some key respects, the experimental ethos and expanded possibilities for women had diminished by the 1910s. Perhaps the great tragedy of which Florence Cooke wrote was part of a larger one—the eclipse of a grassroots experimental approach to solving social problems and answering abiding human questions.[24] (Several decades later, of course, the New Deal reprised this experimental attitude with large-scale federal programs.[25]) A related tragedy that Cooke might have noted was a grave misunderstanding of John Dewey—the failure of the general public to understand his advocacy of an experimental approach to solving problems in a democracy, and of the essential role of teachers in such experimentation in education.

## Implications of the Laboratory School for Twenty-First-Century Education

In a 1900 review of John Dewey's *The School and Society,* Thomas McCormack outlined the purpose of what he called an "ideal and fascinating scheme of elementary education"—the Laboratory School. He contrasted this to what he called "*offentliche Verdummungsanstalten*" and translated as "institutions for the stupidification of the public," which he thought were all too prevalent in traditional school systems. Referring to this conglomerate as a "mountainous mass of dough," he hoped that the Laboratory School would be "a leaven." (It would be hard to find a more evocative description of school reform.) McCormack did not believe this would be easy; he wrote, "Intelligence, constantly administered and applied on the gigantic scale required by rational schemes of instruction for entire nations, seems humanly impossible," given that "human beings, too, are sluggish, logged with social inertia."[26] To bring this discussion to bear on present matters, we can ask how the ideas and practices of the Laboratory School might act as a "leaven" for improving the vast educational system of our time.

While the Laboratory School has been under public and scholarly scrutiny since it began, the teachers involved in the school have remained largely anonymous. My book looks at the school from their perspective, to learn about the lives of these adventurous young women and to uncover, through this investigation, a deeper

understanding of the ideas and practices of this renowned pedagogical experiment. While this is my primary purpose in pursuing this history, it is also possible to put these historical interpretations to work in an effort to understand current school improvement efforts. As John Lewis Gaddis argues in *The Landscape of History,* one aim of historical study is "to interpret the past for the purposes of the present with a view to managing the future."[27] Similarly, in *Democracy and Education,* John Dewey asserted that "knowledge of the past is the key to understanding the present" and that, furthermore, "the true starting point of history is always some present situation with its problems."[28]

By investigating this educational innovation from our past, it is possible to discover how a collective moment of pedagogical imagination might point the way to future practices that would better utilize and promote teachers' intellectual capacities. Indeed, the "starting point" for this historical investigation was my frustration with what I saw as a lack of appreciation for the intellectual work of teachers—sometimes among teachers themselves. As a student teacher in northern California in the late 1990s, I was horrified to find myself, in a district "in-service," standing up with my discussion group to sing, to the tune of "M I C K E Y," our interpretation of a section of a professional article we had just read. My search for a different kind of teaching experience led me to the past, and to the Laboratory School, where, as I have argued throughout this book, the teachers and their intellects were central to the workings of the school.[29] If we are to learn anything from this historical innovation, it should be that effective teachers must be adequately prepared to be at the center of any effort to improve our schools.

John Dewey is accused by many of being difficult to understand. For instance, in his biography of the philosopher, Alan Ryan argues that the "unclarity of his educational views" has promoted the widespread simplification and distortion of his ideas.[30] But in his writings on schools, Dewey clearly and consistently maintained that the achievement of meaningful education depends on the intellectual authority of talented teachers. He warned against overly prescriptive curriculums, arguing, in 1925, "By means of achievement and mental tests carried on from the central office, of a steadily issuing stream of dictated typewritten communications, of minute and explicit syllabi of instruction, the teacher is reduced to a living phonograph."[31] In his 1901 essay "The Educational Situation," Dewey asserted that "the reality of education is found in the personal and face-to-face contact of teacher and child. The conditions that underlie and regulate this

contact dominate the educational situation."[32] According to Dewey, it was therefore essential for teachers to have a say in determining the conditions that make such connections possible.

As Dewey continued in his 1901 essay, "The fact that the [course of study] is fixed by board of education, superintendent, or supervisor, by a power outside the teacher in the class room who alone can make that course of study a living reality, is a fact too obvious to be concealed. It is, however, comparatively easy to conceal from ourselves the tremendous import of this fact. As long as the teacher, who is after all the only real educator in the school system, has no definite and authoritative position in shaping the course of study, that is likely to remain an external thing to be externally applied to the child." The danger in this situation, as Dewey saw it, was that "if [the teacher's] work is the task of carrying out the instructions imposed upon him, then his time and thought must be absorbed in the matter of execution. There is no motive for interest of a thoroughly vital and alert sort, in questions of the intrinsic value of the subject-matter and its adaptation to the needs of child growth." Unlike the experience of the Laboratory School teachers, who were engaged daily in these questions, such "conditions relieve him of the necessity of being a student of the most fundamental educational problems in their most urgent reality."[33]

John Dewey was also attuned to why educational fads seemed to hold sway in schools. In his 1904 article on the relation of theory to practice, Dewey observed, "The tendency of educational development to proceed by reaction from one thing to another, to adopt for one year, or for a term of seven years, this or that new study or method of teaching, and then as abruptly to swing over to some new educational gospel, is a result that would be impossible if teachers were adequately moved by their own independent intelligence."[34] For Dewey, and also for the Laboratory School teachers, who were dedicated to their content areas, the selection of the "subject-matter" was a matter of both urgency and interest. As Dewey realized, "The real course of study must come to the child from the teacher. What gets to the child is dependent upon what is in the mind and consciousness of the teacher, and upon the way it is in his mind." It follows, then, that "the success of the teacher in teaching, and of the pupil in learning, will depend upon the intellectual equipment of the teacher." The matter of determining the course of study, or the curriculum, is nothing less than "a question in the organization of knowledge, in the organization of life, in the organization of society." When teachers are uninvolved in figuring out these urgent questions of curriculum, the worst outcome possible, according to Dewey, is "a maximum of routine with a halo

of sentiment thrown about it, or a great wish-wash of superficiality covering up the residuum of grind."[35]

John Dewey's colleague and friend George Herbert Mead argued similarly for the importance of teachers' involvement in educational decisions. As he wrote in 1907, after his years of involvement with the Laboratory School, "It is hard to believe that anyone would hesitate to recognize the necessity of the statement that the teachers, in the huge school system of a great city, should have something to do with the formation and criticism of the administration which they have to carry out." As he described the situation of the teacher, "Above her stands the vast system of school administration giving her the books and methods which she is to use, and before her stand the children who can receive the contents of the curriculum and be affected by the methods of the school only through her agency." Most teachers, then and a century later, are caught between an administration that hands down rules and curriculum and the students who appear before them each morning, with all their particularities in evidence. But unless teachers can exercise the agency that Mead noted—unless they can make decisions on the basis of their intimate knowledge of students and content—learning of a "thoroughly vital and alert sort" cannot happen.

Teaching, Mead argued, "is not a mechanical art; it is a social process; it is a process in which personalities come into contact with each other; and where we have contact of personalities, we have social organization. This organization cannot be imposed from the outside, it must arise from the interaction of these living personalities."[36] Perhaps Mead was calling upon his experiences with the Laboratory School here; as Laura Runyon argued, the personalities of the teachers contributed much to the vitality of the school.[37] The Laboratory School was significant as a proving ground for female professionals, and for teachers, male and female, and their ability to make important decisions as they worked together in a challenging, innovative environment. By all accounts, they avoided the "maximum of routine" and the "wish-wash of superficiality" and put their content expertise to good use in creating a course of study organized around the social occupations. Far from being "living phonographs," they were engaged in lively discussions, alert to the effects of their teaching on their students, and involved in the larger social and educational reform efforts of their age. My historical research into the experiences of the Laboratory School teachers suggests three key elements of a concerted and serious effort to improve schools of our time, with teachers at the heart of these reforms.

## Teacher expertise and preparation

As the experiences and writings of the Laboratory School community attest, teachers, by virtue of their centrality to the "reality of education," must be engaged in deliberations over essential questions regarding the "organization of knowledge" and the creation of effective teaching methods. Today's teachers need to be experts in content, pedagogy, and the scientific method, so that they are equipped with the knowledge necessary to make key decisions about teaching and learning. These expectations must be introduced in the nation's teacher education programs, where prospective teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels should be required to major in a discipline that they will expect to teach: English, mathematics, history, or one of the sciences. Teachers of the "specials"—art, music, physical education, and drama—would major in one of these fields.[38] This would guarantee that all teachers have a deep understanding of at least one of the school subjects, including the knowledge of how members of these disciplines think. In addition, teacher candidates must learn how to effectively convey important knowledge to young people. This approach requires, above all, a curiosity about a body of knowledge *and* about how children think and learn. At present, teacher candidates learn how to teach in the methods courses that dominate teacher preparation. Those of us in colleges of education should explore ways of streamlining the material covered in these courses, in order to leave room for a deeper grounding in content.

Teacher education candidates should begin in the university to develop an understanding of the scientific method and an aptitude for inquiry—a willingness and eagerness to make discoveries about content, children, and the methods for bringing the two together. Many of us have had the good fortune to have encountered teachers with this approach to their work—the teacher who takes great satisfaction in figuring out how to convey a mathematical concept to children of varying abilities, or the teacher who devotes herself to understanding how to reach a shy and reserved child.[39] This inquiring approach to teaching has to be taught to our teacher education candidates as something to *relish*—something to get excited about. All teacher education programs must prepare teachers for the high-level intellectual work that teaching can and must be. It isn't enough for prospective teachers to love children and learn what "works." Their preparation must be intellectually rigorous and should include ample opportunities to learn from excellent teachers—both in practice classrooms and in the university.[40]

Furthermore, we should look both to the Laboratory School and to educational practices abroad to learn about teacher specialists at the elementary level. As the Laboratory School community found, generalists at the elementary level cannot be sufficiently expert in the wide range of subject matter taught in today's schools.[41] It is unlikely that our educational system will undergo a large-scale reorganization and adopt the specialist model in all elementary schools, but a version of this model is possible. If all teacher education candidates are required to major in a content area that they expect to teach, then elementary schools could be organized in such a way as to capitalize on the varied expertise of their teachers, and hiring could be done based in part on the content specialties of prospective candidates. Grade levels, then, would be balanced with teachers who had majored in the various content areas, and teachers would come together to share their knowledge of the key subjects.

Restructuring the school day would allow time for teachers to engage in this kind of rigorous collaboration over subject matter and instructional methods. There is no joy, no sense of discovery for teachers when they must cram their collective inquiry into stolen moments at the end of a tiring day. Mayhew and Edwards noted that at the Laboratory School, such "continual exchange of news" was so essential that they arranged schedules around daily free periods that teachers dedicated to visiting classrooms and meeting with each other.[42] As researchers have discovered abroad, in other countries the school day is structured so as to include time for teachers to work together on matters at the heart of their profession—improving curriculum and refining their practice.[43]

## Curriculum and community

At the Laboratory School, the structures that were in place at the school to assure teachers' intellectual freedom, such as teachers' reports and meetings, served also to offer them the guidance they needed to be effective professionals.[44] Current school leaders must be prepared to foster school environments that offer the proper balance of freedom and guidance—something the Laboratory School teachers understood to be crucial to their experience at the school. As Katharine Andrews Healy wrote of the "atmosphere in which I basked": "I shall never cease to be grateful for that rare experience. I don't know what I should have done without it—in bringing up my family. Only to-day a friend asked me if I had realized then what a great man Dr. Dewey was, and I was glad that I could tell her that

I had had the sense to know that he was one of the giants and knew what a very lucky girl I was."[45] Healy was struck by Dewey's "attitude of working with us" in a collaborative fashion; as she recalled, "We were all on a piece of research together and never the least dictation, only a rare open minded attitude of inquiry on his part. Oh, I am a much better person for that contact."[46] Some, including Dewey himself, have argued that the philosopher was lacking in some of the skills required of an administrator, but others, like Healy, remarked on Dewey's commitment to listening to the teachers, which, I would argue, is a crucial administrative ability.

Recall also that at a 1928 talk to a mothers' luncheon, Katherine Camp Mayhew told her audience that while she and Dewey didn't always agree on all matters, "Dr. Dewey would say 'You have just as much right to your opinion as anyone else.' "[47] And Grace Fulmer, one of the school's kindergarten teachers, felt that while Dewey didn't always approve of her work, she nonetheless felt free to "work in my own way, while his ideals and influence upon my educational experiences have increased with the passing years."[48] As Dewey knew well, Jane Addams ran Hull House in much the same fashion, with regular residents' meetings in which decisions were made collectively—decisions that Addams didn't always agree with.[49] Among the many abilities a gifted leader must possess, this openness to the views of others must feature prominently, both for the intellectual freedom it offers to all participants and for the practical advantage gained of an abundance of potentially good ideas.

As John Dewey realized, ideals mean little if the daily details of the school's operations are not considered with great care. Dewey and his colleagues paid attention to two factors in organizing the experimental school: first, the "establishment of the school as a form of community life," and second, the determination of a "body of subject-matter," or the school's curriculum. Recognizing the centrality of the teachers and their expertise, the school's community was shaped by the regular teachers' meetings during which curriculum and methods were hammered out; through such collective efforts, individuals learned from the expertise of their colleagues, with the aim of improving the education of their students.

Thus for schools of today to thrive—to become the "vital and alert" centers of learning that Dewey envisioned—we must establish school communities that benefit from the knowledge and ideas of all participants. School administrators at all levels must be willing to listen attentively to the practitioners who have daily contact with children, including teachers, specialists, lunchroom workers, custodians, and the

students themselves. This is not unlike the best practices of other professions, such as medicine.[50] It is beyond the scope of this chapter to outline the serious problems we face in trying to improve American schools, but it is important to state that while many schools in middle-class or well-to-do neighborhoods are at least adequate, too many of those serving poor children are, by various accounts, failing in their responsibilities to their students.[51] Such schools across the nation must harness the intellectual power of all involved to work toward the improvement of basic measures of success such as high school graduation rates.

Two ideas employed during the Progressive Era—one by the Laboratory School and another by various schools across the nation—should be considered for their relevance to some of the most pressing issues in today's schools. The first is the implementation of a content-rich and rigorous curriculum. The Laboratory School teachers built a community that was grounded in problem solving. They taught the fundamental skills of reading and mathematics in situations that showed children why such skills were useful and desirable, supplementing this, when necessary, with drill work. Scientific and historical studies were closely linked to the "common center" of the social occupations. For example, as I have argued, the study of cooking at the Laboratory School presented teachers with rich curricular possibilities. As Katherine Camp Mayhew maintained on the value of cooking for children, "When a child of nine or ten finds that he can formulate all his cooking experience of four years into a simple classification of foods . . . in the few pages of his self-made notebook, he gets a sense of power that carries over into his study of physiology and development which make him impregnable to fads and fancies of an unscientific age."[52]

A course of study that included cooking enabled the Laboratory School teachers to engage students socially, with the luncheons they prepared; scientifically, with the study of chemistry and methods of inquiry; physically, with the work in the school garden; and academically, with the reading, writing, and mathematics that they did in connection with the work in the kitchen. Cooking, perhaps more than the other social occupations, illustrated John Dewey's theory of the organic circuit of learning—the integration of, in Anna Camp Edwards's words, "thinking, feeling, and muscular effort."[53] It vitally engaged the children in methods of science and inquiry; as Mayhew and Edwards wrote, "No failure was ever passed by or covered up. It was critically reviewed to ascertain what conditions had affected the result." And the results of these experiments mattered to the children.

When one understands, for instance, that "thorough mixing and an even heat will prevent the formation of lumps," then "lumpy gravy and soups never appear on the menu." The mastery of such details surely contributed to the success of the luncheons that sometimes included "distinguished visitors."[54]

The California master chef Alice Waters has brought back the Laboratory School's focus on food in the schools with a program she calls "The Edible Schoolyard." Waters cites John Dewey as an inspiration for her work with the Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, California. Students in the school have, along with Waters, planted a one-acre organic garden, which the teachers have linked to the school's curriculum in much the same way Dewey and the teachers did at the Laboratory School.[55] Other examples of reform along these lines are beginning to emerge. The Baltimore school district has made significant changes to their lunch program under the guidance of a food-service director who has transformed the district's culture of food—introducing local produce into school menus and healthy food in vending machines, and even turning the land surrounding an abandoned orphanage owned by the city into an organic farm run by students.[56] But while the introduction of cooking and gardening into the public schools might be an effective response to the needs of our time, this is just one route to a higher aim: the creation of what Dewey called "courses of study" that engage children in learning essential content and methods of inquiry. As John Dewey argued in *The School and Society*, "Relate the school to life, and all studies are of necessity correlated."[57]

In the schools of our time, increasingly shaped by the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2002, reading and math, and the required standardized assessments of these subjects, are the engines of the curriculum.[58] In fact, at one New York City school, young children make what the teachers call a "field study" to a farm "not only for a glimpse of rural life, but to rack up extra points on standardized tests" that might contain questions that mention crops and livestock.[59] In our rush to increase test scores, we are short-changing our students in the essential content areas of science, history, the arts, and classic works of literature. This need not be so; the example of the Laboratory School indicates that it is possible to combine a sequential and content-rich curriculum with methods that involve the whole child, and the whole community.[60]

Another Progressive Era reform that we might revisit is the movement to create schools as social centers. As Kevin Mattson argues, this was a relatively short-lived reform, but a significant one for those

attempting to foster what Mattson calls a "democratic public." His research focuses on Rochester, New York, where the reform thrived in the early twentieth century, before it ended quite swiftly because of shifts in the political control of the city. While the social centers were in operation, however, great crowds, including many immigrants, flocked to the schools in the evenings to "debate the great issues of the day."[61] This was a time when ideas were embraced, inspected, and tossed out—with great enthusiasm. In a 1907 *New York Times* article on William James, Edwin Bjorkman wrote, "When he appears on the lecture platform, breathlessly listening crowds greet him as the messenger of some new gospel." Bjorkman found that at "women's meetings, matrons and maids display equal eagerness in comparing the relative positions" of Schiller, Dewey, and James on matters of pragmatism. He understood that "my picture may seem overdrawn, but I will guarantee that it is not. I have been buttonholed a dozen times on mere suspicion of being better informed than my questioners, by merchants and publishers and newspaper men and men in more humble walks of life, each one demanding more light on what he referred to as 'this new thing in philosophy.' "[62]

Scholars of today such as Robert Putnam have described a society that is lacking, and in need of reviving, that kind of social organization and civic engagement; the evocative title of one of Putnam's books is *Bowling Alone*.[63] Using the public schools as social centers, or community centers, is one way to bring communities together for a variety of purposes. Similarly, in New York City, Geoffrey Canada has created the Harlem Children's Zone—a large-scale program to turn that neighborhood around. This program attempts to reach families before children are born and to follow them through to adulthood with a variety of schools and programs. Canada is really trying to build an alternative community—one that provides its members with the opportunities and possibilities of lives built on education.[64] As John Dewey wrote in his 1902 article "The School as Social Center," community building of that sort offers what he called "socialism of the intelligence and of the spirit"—the extension of the rewards and pleasures of higher learning to the entire population.[65]

## A national commitment to educational experimentation

In a 1913 essay called "Cut-and-Try School Methods," John Dewey discussed a visit he made to Thomas Edison's laboratory. He was struck by "the immense advantage a great commercial enterprise has

over the greatest of our existing educational institutions in the matter of conducting systematically an experimental development of a new proposal before putting it into general practice." He asked whether we can "expect continuous and intelligent progress in school matters until the community adopts a method of procedure which is now a commonplace with every great industrial undertaking." (The laboratory was developing the "motion picture scheme," and Dewey had prescient comments about the potential effects of movies on children and on schools.)[66] A few years later, in the article "Experiment in Education," he argued that "the greatest contribution which any one experimental school can make is precisely the idea of experiment itself, the ideal of the experimental method as the spirit in which a social problem is to be approached."[67]

By establishing the Laboratory School, Dewey had already attempted to introduce this process into the nation's educational system. As he wrote in a 1901 letter to University of Chicago's President Harper, "the chief end" of the Laboratory School, as with any university laboratory, was "to find out things in a scientific way."[68] Dewey and his colleagues shared the results of their experimentation through the publication of reports of the school in the *University Record,* and the teachers' articles in the *Elementary School Record* and the *Elementary School Teacher,* as well as the demonstrations of the methods at Chautauqua and in the Boston vacation school. As Herman Lukens suggested in his 1901 letter in support of the school, these publications interested educators the nation over and likely encouraged the "hordes" of visitors to the Laboratory School that the teachers remarked upon in their letters.

Educational experimentation also performs an important function in a democracy. As Michael Sandel argues, for Dewey, "Democracy was not simply a matter of counting up people's preferences, however irrational, but a way of life that educates citizens to be capable of 'intelligent action.' "[69] For the pragmatists, Sandel maintains, "The process of knowing does not consist in grasping something accurately from the outside; it involves taking part in events in a purposive, intelligent way."[70] Thus teachers who observe their actions and evaluate results provide a model of the daily use of the methods of inquiry that Dewey thought to be necessary in a thriving democracy.[71] For most teachers, this experimentation need not be as extensive as the work done at the Laboratory School. Indeed, in *The School and Society,* Dewey recounted his response to a teacher who objected to the adoption of a Laboratory School method; the teacher said, " 'You know that it is an experimental school. They do not work under the same conditions

that we are subject to.' " Dewey's answer was this: "Now, the purpose of performing an experiment is that other people need not experiment; at least need not experiment so much, may have something definite and positive to go by." As he argued, in education as in industry, "The first thing is to discover the truth, to afford all necessary facilities, for this is the most practical thing in the world in the long run. We do not expect to have other schools literally imitate what we do. A working model is not something to be copied; it is to afford a demonstration of the feasibility of the principle, and of the methods which make it feasible."[72]

Parents are often uncomfortable with the idea that their children will be "experimented upon"; the Laboratory School parents had a related worry during the 1901 talks of a merger between the Chicago Institute and the Laboratory School—they were concerned about their children being "practiced upon" by student teachers.[73] But it is essential to convey clearly to the general public that without experimentation, schools will not improve. There are a number of ways that we can ensure that all schools benefit from an experimental approach to teaching and learning. The Laboratory School teachers worked in close collaboration with university faculty from many different departments of the University of Chicago. Not every school can or should be a laboratory for a scholarly education department, but surely closer ties can be established between our public schools and our colleges and universities. By that I do not mean simply the existing connections maintained primarily to provide colleges of education with training centers for prospective teachers. Teacher education programs can be strengthened by more cooperation with university faculty in the letters and sciences, and by greater involvement of practicing teachers in university courses.

To further promote the Laboratory School ideals of experimentation, I propose that each state should create a laboratory school. The teachers in these schools would be highly talented leaders in the profession, and the schools would be designed to help the states answer vexing questions they face in their efforts to provide an excellent education to *all* their students. For example, in a state that includes a city with a large number of so-called dropout factories—high schools that fail to graduate 40 percent (or more) of their students—it would be advisable to establish a laboratory school that would experiment with methods that would keep teenagers in school, and that would provide them with the kind of education they need to thrive in a modern economy. Other states might want to establish laboratory schools that would focus on strategies to improve special education, or

the education of English Language Learners. Each laboratory school would be responsible for sharing the results of their experimentation with the rest of their state and with the nation. This would establish a national network of laboratory schools, designed to determine the "feasibility" of pedagogical methods and curriculum, and then to disseminate their findings.[74]

## Conclusion

Ida DePencier, a longtime teacher at the Laboratory Schools (the plural was added after John Dewey left), wrote a history of the school in 1967. While her predecessors, the Camp sisters, focused on the Dewey years, DePencier extended the story through 1965. In her chapters on the early years of the school, the former teacher reminded her readers just how unusual the Laboratory School was when it appeared on the educational landscape in 1896—how sharply it differed from the "accepted school of the day." She quoted Flora Cooke, principal of the Francis Parker School, who in 1910 described a traditional school in New York where everything "worked as smoothly as a high power machine," with children opening their books and beginning to study at the count of "One, two, three." It was no surprise, DePencier wrote, that some visitors to the Laboratory School, with such visions of "accepted schools" in their minds, saw in the experimental school " 'a riot of uncontrolled liberty.' " As Alice Dewey also pointed out, while the Laboratory School's innovative character brought it much public attention, not all of it was positive. It took courageous teachers, DePencier argued, to "stand up to the criticism, misunderstanding, and often ridicule that were directed at the Dewey School. One can only admire those early teachers who were willing to devise, to investigate, to discard if necessary, to defend what they were doing—defend the freedom of the school, the new approach to reading, writing, and arithmetic, the lack of quiet and passivity, and the kind of discipline which the school stood for. Their guideposts were Mr. Dewey's theories and principles, and their success lay in their dedication to childhood and happy learning."[75]

As young women forging professional lives in the late nineteenth century, Anna and Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill were already pioneers; to do so in an iconoclastic school like the Laboratory School required a special kind of courage, as DePencier put it, along with what the Camp sisters called "joy in its adventure."[76] An investigation of the teachers' experiences in the school—devising,

investigating discarding, and defending—provides us with a deeper understanding of what happened at this particular time and place in our nation's history. But that is not all. The history of the Laboratory School teachers also offers us knowledge that we might use to "manage the future." In the article "Success and Failure in Educational Reform," Herbert Kliebard asks whether the study of reform movements can provide "historical lessons." He argues that educational research findings should equip us not with rules for practice, but rather, in John Dewey's terms, with "*intellectual instrumentalities*," or "intellectual tools by which we can fashion our own pathways." As Dewey argued, "If we retain the word 'rule' at all, we must say that scientific results furnish a rule for the conduct of *observations and inquiries,* not a rule for overt action."[77] The historical lesson that Kliebard draws is that successful school reforms must "require all those involved, researchers and practitioners alike, as Dewey implied, to reinterpret the data for themselves."[78]

Likewise, the historical lesson of the Laboratory School is that our understanding of the teaching profession must be rooted in what John Dewey and George Herbert Mead recognized and the teachers' work illustrated—that only through the agency of teachers can student learning take place. Given their centrality to crucial moments of learning, teachers must be equipped and enabled to make important decisions about educational reform, curriculum creation, and school organization. The Laboratory School teachers realized how unusual their school was in many ways, from its innovative curriculum to its close connection to a university. They also appreciated the opportunity it offered them to participate fully in the inquiry and experimentation at the core of the school. As teacher Grace Fulmer recollected, "It was with the deepest regret that every teacher who had had the good fortune to be associated with Dr. Dewey in his splendid work in what we loved to call 'The Dewey School' saw its doors closed. But that which no door can bar has gone out from that school until its influence has been felt around the world."[79]

What was remarkable about this school was that at a time when women were just entering the professions (only to find many elusive to them), the Laboratory School was propelled onto the national and international stage by a mostly female faculty—expert teachers who were entrusted with the power to determine the conditions under which they worked and children learned. As "New Women" in Chicago, they sought personal fulfillment and a public role, and found both—encouraged by John Dewey, Jane Addams, and George

Herbert Mead to recognize and develop their talents and passions. In their experiments at the Laboratory School, Hull House's Labor Museum, and beyond, Anna Camp, Katherine Camp, Althea Harmer, and Mary Hill embodied the hope and possibility of this experimental age and of the kind of "democracy as a way of life" that is possible when all are engaged in shaping their places of work.

# Notes

## Introduction

1. Helen Greeley, quoted in Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896–1903* [1936] (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transactions, 2007), 406. While both Mayhew and Edwards worked on the book, Anna Camp Edwards wrote all but one chapter (see Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* ix); nonetheless, I have referred throughout my book to both Mayhew and Edwards as the authors of *The Dewey School,* as that is how they chose to attribute the book's authorship.
2. John Dewey to Alice Dewey and children, July 12, 1894 (00158) *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). See Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 318, where Menand, citing this quote, discusses Dewey's reaction to Chicago, and earlier, on page 305, where Menand discusses University of Chicago sociologist Albion Small's description of Chicago as a "vast sociological laboratory." When it opened, the Laboratory School was called the University Elementary School.
3. Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877–1920* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009), 225–226. On this era, see also John Higham, "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890s," in John Higham, ed., *Writing American History: Essays on Modern Scholarship* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1970), 73–102.
4. William James to Sarah Wyman Whitman, October 29, 1903 (09546), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). On pragmatism, see (among others) James Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870–1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Menand, *The Metaphysical Club;* Charlene Haddock Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Robert Westbrook, *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

5. Fellow pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce is often credited with the phrase, and certainly the concept, of a "community of inquiry." See Matthew Lipman, *Thinking in Education* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 20. On Peirce, see also R. Jackson Wilson, *In Quest of Community* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968), 46.
6. Jane Dewey, "Biography of John Dewey," in P.A. Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 1939), 29–30.
7. Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 373.
8. Robert Westbrook argues that the Laboratory School was "above all an experiment in industrial democracy," or workplace democracy. See Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* 88. On Dewey's "organic circuit" theory, see my discussion in Ch. 3.
9. John Dewey, "Democracy in Education," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 4 (December, 1903), 198. See also Ella Flagg Young, *Isolation in the School* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1901).
10. Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* 4.
11. Helen Greeley, quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 406.
12. Throughout this book, when referring to the women before marriage, I will use their original family names; when referring to them after marriage, I will use their married names: Anna Camp Edwards, Katherine Camp Mayhew, Althea Harmer Bardeen, and Mary Hill Swope. One exception is when I occasionally refer to Mayhew and Edwards, in connection with their 1936 book *The Dewey School,* as the Camp sisters. Biographical sketches of the four teachers at the center of this study are outlined in Ch. 2.
13. For the phrase "circle of friends," see George Herbert Mead to Jane Addams, December 1, 1910, Jane Addams Collection, Swarthmore College (on microfilm). Mead wrote, "May I add my affectionate appreciation—the appreciation which I feel whenever I think of what you are to Chicago and to those who are fortunate enough to feel that they belong to the circle of your friends." Ellen Condliffe Lagemann describes this as the "creative community" that formed in Chicago around the Laboratory School. See Lagemann, "The Plural Worlds of Educational Research," *History of Education Quarterly,* 29, 2 (1989), 195.
14. In *The Dewey School* appendices, the authors include a list of teachers and assistants, and of those listed, 80 were women and 31 were men. (In addition, two were listed just by initials, and one just by the title of Dr.) See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* Appendix III, 479–480. Just as importantly, of a total of 13 members of the Laboratory School community who were listed as authors of articles on the school, three were men (and that included John Dewey), and ten were women. See "A List of Articles by Teachers

in the Dewey school," box 17, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. For a philosophical analysis of the intersections of pragmatism and feminism at the Laboratory School and Hull House, see Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism.* On Hull House as a women's institution, see Maurice Hamington, *The Social Philosophy of Jane Addams* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 25–27.

15. On the "New Woman," see Jean Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Women's Movement in America, 1875–1930* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 2003); and Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985).
16. Alice Hamilton to Agnes Hamilton, July 3, 1898 and July 2, 1898, Hamilton Family Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. On the bicycle craze in late nineteenth-century Chicago, see Perry R. Duis, *Challenging Chicago: Coping with Everyday Life, 1837–1920* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998).
17. As I shall discuss in later chapters, many of these hopes would be dashed for women in the early decades of the twentieth century.
18. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 312.
19. John Dewey, Introduction to Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* xiii, and "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," Appendix II in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 464–468.
20. Robert Westbrook, "Dewey's Truth," *History of Education Quarterly,* 20, 3 (Autumn, 1980), 351.
21. Dewey, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 464–468.
22. Katherine Camp Mayhew, notes taken at mother's luncheon, October 15, 1928, in Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), box 12, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
23. Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, early draft of Chapter III: Experimental Practices Developing the Curriculum, page 14, box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
24. John Dewey, *Freedom and Culture* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1939), 176.
25. Dewey, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 464–468.
26. John Dewey, "Psychology of Occupations," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 3 (April 1900), 82. On the occupations as the "common center" of the curriculum, see Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 43. On the occupations at the Laboratory School, see Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893–1958* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 69–74.

27. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 256. See also Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 323.
28. Alice Chipman Dewey, unpublished manuscript on The University Elementary School, box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library; and John Dewey, *The School and Society* [1900] and *The Child and the Curriculum* [1902] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).
29. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 167–168.
30. Ibid., 271. As Robert Westbrook argues, "It is apparent why Dewey identified science with democracy and pragmatism with both. Science was most significant to him as the exemplar of a progressive, participatory, problem-solving approach to experience by a cooperative community in search of shared meanings. Conceived in this fashion, scientific method was the method of democratic community." See Westbrook, "Dewey's Truth," 349.
31. John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1929), 245–246. This quote appears in slightly different form in Ross Posnock, *The Trial of Curiosity: Henry James, William James, and the Challenge of Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 87–88.
32. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 373.
33. On the Progressive Era, see Kevin Mattson, *Creating a Democratic Public: The Struggle for Urban Participatory Democracy During the Progressive Era* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998); Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870–1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003); Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1998); and Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).
34. Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House* [1910] (New York: Signet Classics, 1961). See also Hamington, *The Social Philosophy of Jane Addams,* 159–161.
35. "Dewey's Labs," *Newsweek,* June 3, 1963, 75.
36. Flora Cooke, "Review of *The Dewey School,*" *Progressive Education,* XIV, 3 (March 1937), 218. Cooke worked with Colonel Francis Parker at the Cook County Normal School, and then was appointed principal of the Francis Parker Elementary School on the city's North Side. The changed Laboratory School continued (and still exists today) as the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. The demise of Dewey's Laboratory School will be discussed in Ch. 6.
37. Althea Harmer, "Textile Industries," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 3 (1900), 79. Others at the Laboratory School used the term "constructive imagination." See Lillian Cushman, "Principles of Education

as Applied to Art," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 1 (February 1900), 3; Dewey, *The School and Society,* 11; and Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, 29 December [1899], Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10; University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.

38. See Richard Allington, *Big Brother and the National Reading Curriculum: How Ideology Trumped Evidence* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002); Susan Eaton, *The Children in Room E4* (New York: Algonquin Books, 2007); Anita Ede, "Scripted Curriculum: Is It a Prescription for Success?," *Childhood Education* 83, 1 (Fall 2006), 29–32; Donald H. Graves, *Testing is Not Teaching: What Should Count in Education* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002); David Kauffman, "Curriculum Prescription and Curriculum Constraint: Second-year Teachers' Perceptions" (Cambridge, MA: NGT Working Paper, 2005); Linda McNeil, *The Contradictions of School Reform: Educational Costs of Standardized Testing* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Deborah Meier, *In Schools We Trust: Creating Communities of Learning in an Era of Testing* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2002) and *Will Standards Save Public Education?* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2000); Vivian Troen and Katherine C. Boles, *Who's Teaching Your Children?* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003); and Greg Winter, "Make-or-Break Exams Grow, but Big Study Doubts Value," *The New York Times,* December 28, 2002, A1, A15.. On mathematics, see Bill Jacob, "Implementing Standards: The California Mathematics Textbook Debacle," *Phi Delta Kappan,* 83, 3 (November 2001), 264–272. There is also evidence of a narrowing of the curriculum in schools across the nation, as they focus on these high-stakes subjects; see Richard Rothstein, *Grading Education: Getting Accountability Right* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2008); and Claus von Zastrow and Helen Zanc, *Academic Atrophy: The Condition of the Liberal Arts in America's Public Schools* (Washington, DC: Council for Basic Education, 2004).

39. For literature in support of Open Court, see Daniel Gursky, "What Works for Reading," *American Teacher,* 82 (March 1998), 12–13. Gursky cites an AFT Publication that includes Open Court among "Seven Promising Reading and English Language Arts Programs." For research challenging the efficacy of Open Court, see Gerald Coles, *Misreading Reading: The Bad Science that Hurts Children* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000), especially chs. 3, 4, and 5.

40. Susan Ohanian, *One Size Fits Few* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999). My experience reflected what D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly characterize as the prevailing expectations regarding curriculum: "that schools and teachers will learn to do well what the thinkers and policymakers tell them to do." See D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, "Teacher as Curriculum

Maker," in Philip W. Jackson, ed., *Handbook of Research on Curriculum: A Project of the American Educational Research Association* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 379. See also William F. Pinar, *What is Curriculum Theory?* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004). Pinar maintains that teacher unions have contributed to this situation, arguing that: "By ignoring pressing professional concerns such as discretion over curriculum content and the means by which its study is assessed, union leaders have failed to mobilize America's teachers or to persuade the American public that quality public education is worth paying for" (177).

41. Certainly a lack of adequate resources in many schools, especially in impoverished schools, is a connected problem that is too infrequently acknowledged as a reason for academic troubles. For instance, many in California in the 1980s and 1990s condemned whole language methods while schools lacked class sets of books, well-stocked school libraries, and manageable class sizes. See Stephen Krashen, "Whole Language and the Great Plummet of 1987–1992," *Phi Delta Kappan,* 83, 10 (June 2002), 748–753.
42. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 366. In her 1997 work on the Laboratory School, Laurel Tanner discusses this quote by Dewey, and concludes: "There is clearly a lesson to be drawn here, and Dewey as much as said it: Avoid extremes. We have not paid attention. He would have been troubled by the general lack of intellectual freedom for elementary teachers, on the one hand, and the failure to give teachers assistance where needed, on the other." Laurel Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School: Lessons for Today* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997), 69.
43. Such practices might also ensure that the teachers most interested in such roles remain in the profession. See Barbara Benham Tye and Lisa O'Brian, "Why Are Experienced Teachers Leaving the Profession?" *Phi Delta Kappan,* 84, 1 (September 2002), 24–32, for their claim that some teachers are leaving the profession because of standardization measures that diminish their intellectual freedom.
44. Nature of the report of third period, transcribed conversation among John Dewey, Anna Camp Edwards, and Katherine Camp Mayhew, box 22, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Historian Robert Crunden questioned the accuracy of the Mayhew and Edwards account of the school, claiming that from a distance of time, the sisters surely distorted the aims and results of the school. See Robert Crunden, "Essay," in John D. Buenker, John C. Burnham, and Robert M. Crunden, eds., *Progressivism* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1977), 103. But in his introduction to *The Dewey School,* John Dewey maintained, "The account of the Laboratory

School contained in the pages that follow is so adequate as to render it unnecessary for me to add anything to what is said about its origin, aims, and methods." He added that: "Because of their long connection with the school, the authors have a first-hand knowledge, while their responsible share in the work of the school has enabled them to make an authoritative statement of its underlying ideas, its development, and the details of its operation." See John Dewey's Introduction to Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* xiii. As archival records such as this recorded conversation attest, Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards worked closely with Dewey to complete the book, and relied heavily upon the written record of the school, including teachers'reports and published articles. Mayhew and Edwards solicited remembrances of the school from teachers, parents, and students, whom they quoted, along with Dewey, throughout the text. In several instances, they borrowed from articles published by the teachers in *The Elementary School Record* and *The Elementary School Teacher,* usually with citations, but occasionally without. When I have caught these unattributed cases, I have cited both the original and *The Dewey School* pages.

45. John Dewey, "Democracy in Education," 197. See Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* 89, for his discussion of this quote. For Jane Addams's related views, see Louise Knight, *Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 401; and Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism.*

## CHAPTER 1

1. John Dewey to Frank A. Manny, January **, 1897 (01871), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). For a discussion of a related assessment in Dewey's autobiographical essay, see Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (NY: W. W. Norton, 1995), 81. For this essay, see John Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" [1930], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *The Later Works, Vol. 5*: 1929–1930 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1984), 147–160.
2. My findings regarding the importance of such collective intellectual endeavors for Dewey stands in some contrast to the work of Neil Coughlan, who maintains that "provincial isolation" prevailed in the United States until the 1890s. See his *Young John Dewey: An Essay in American Intellectual History* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 108–112. My research indicates that during the years up to and including his Chicago period, Dewey indeed sought out associations with others engaged in various forms of social experimentation.

3. Fellow pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce is often credited with the phrase, and certainly the concept of, a "community of inquiry." See Matthew Lipman, *Thinking in Education* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 20; and Robert Westbrook, *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005). On Peirce, see also R. Jackson Wilson, *In Quest of Community* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968), 46. The teacher quoted is Katharine Andrews Healy, writing to Katherine Camp Mayhew, undated, but approximately 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
4. In the early part of the century, the Dewey family also visited Byrdcliffe, the Arts and Crafts colony in Woodstock, New York. See Tom Wolf, *Eva Watson-Schutze: Photographer* (New Paltz, NY: Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, State University of New York at New Paltz, 2009).
5. Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896–1903* [1936] (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transactions, 2007), xiii–xiv.
6. Jane Dewey, "Biography of John Dewey," in *The Philosophy of John Dewey,* P.A. Schilpp, ed. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 1939), 3.
7. John Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism." In their essay on John Dewey, Elizabeth Flower and Murray Murphey argue that both the autobiographical essay and biographical essay were "fudged." See the chapter on Dewey in their volume, *A History of Philosophy in America,* Volume 2 (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977), 813. Larry Hickman, Director of the Center for Dewey Studies, argues that these essays should be considered memoirs, and not error-free accounts of fact and chronology. (See private e-mail correspondence of October 13, 2008). In his introduction to the online resource *The Correspondence of John Dewey,* Vol. 1, 1871–1918, Hickman further argues that we must rely on Dewey's correspondence to "understand the man behind the writing." See John Dewey's letters, exhaustively edited by the Center for Dewey Studies and published in digital form as *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). In my discussion of Dewey's life, therefore, I will rely on more recent biographical studies, but will look to Jane Dewey's biographical essay, John Dewey's autobiographical essay, as well as the Dewey correspondence, when corroborated by the recent studies, to provide direct testimony from Dewey and his family regarding his own understanding of his life and influences.
8. For full-length biographical studies of John Dewey, see Coughlan, *Young John Dewey;* George Dykuizen, *The Life and Mind of John*

*Dewey* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1973); Jay Martin, *The Education of John Dewey* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Ryan, *John Dewey;* and Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

9. This study will also rely on the related body of work on the history of pragmatism. See Theo Anderson, "One Hundred Years of *Pragmatism*," *The Wilson Quarterly*, 31, 3 (Summer 2007), 27–35; Richard Bernstein, "The Resurgence of Pragmatism," *Social Research,* 59 (Winter 1992), 813–840; David Hollinger, "The Problem of Pragmatism in American History," *Journal of American History,* 67, 1 (June 1980), 88–107; James Kloppenberg, "Pragmatism: An Old Name for Some New Ways of Thinking?," *Journal of American History*, 83, 1 (June 1996), 100–138, and *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870–1920* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1986); Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001); C. Wright Mills, *Sociology and Pragmatism* (New York: Paine-Whitman, 1964); Robert Richardson, *William James: In the Maelstrom of American Modernism* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2006); Alan Ryan, "Deweyan Pragmatism and American Education," in Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, ed., *Philosophers on Education: New Historical Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 394–401; R. W. Sleeper, *The Necessity of Pragmatism: John Dewey's Conception of Philosophy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986); and Westbrook, *Democratic Hope*. My work here will be to integrate these often overlapping lines of analysis—bringing together biography with intellectual and social history.
10. See Mills, *Sociology and Pragmatism*, 75–76, on the family backgrounds of John Dewey, William James, George Herbert Mead, Charles Sanders Peirce, and James Tufts. While Dewey's family was friendly with such academics as James B. Angell, his father was a shopkeeper, and his mother, while from a more privileged background than his father, was steeped more in religion than in academic studies.
11. Coughlan, *Young John Dewey*, 10.
12. In his autobiographical essay, John Dewey addresses this risk; see his "From Absolutism," 150. See also Coughlan, *Young John Dewey,* 15–20; and Flower and Murphey, *A History of Philosophy,* 815. Coughlan discusses the struggles of George Herbert Mead and his brother-in-law, Henry Castle, and on their assessment of the problems of aspiring philosophers who were agnostics. (117)
13. Max Eastman, "John Dewey: My Teacher and Friend," in his *Great Companions: Critical Memoirs of Some Famous Friends* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1959), 258.
14. Arthur Wirth, *John Dewey as Educator: His Design for Work in Education* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966), 7.
15. Westbrook, *John Dewey,* 30.

16. See Ryan, *John Dewey,* on democracy and the scientific method in Dewey's formulation of pragmatism.
17. Jane Dewey, "Biography," 15. On the history of Johns Hopkins, see John Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univeristy Press, 2004), 112, 117.
18. On Dewey's early career, see Coughlan, *Young John Dewey*; Flower and Murphey, *A History of Philosophy;* Martin, *The Education of John Dewey;* Ryan, *John Dewey;* and Westbrook, *John Dewey.*
19. John Dewey, "From Absolutism," 22.
20. Lewis Feuer, "John Dewey and the Back to the People Movement in American Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 20 (1959), 555.
21. See Feuer, "John Dewey," on the Samovar Club and their reading of Turgenev, whom Feuer calls the "novelist of the Russian back to the people movement." (548)
22. Jane Dewey, "Biography," 20.
23. See Irene Hall, "The Unsung Partner: The Educational Work and Philosophy of Alice Chipman Dewey," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2005.
24. Jane Dewey, "Biography," 21.
25. Eastman, "John Dewey," 273.
26. Jane Dewey, "Biography," 25.
27. On Dewey and religion, Alan Ryan claims that 1891 was a "turning point" for Dewey ("insofar as anything so untroubled could be a turning point") when he ceased to be "conventionally religious." See Ryan, *John Dewey,* 29. On Mead's more anguished religious struggles, see Gary A. Cook, *George Herbert Mead: The Making of a Social Pragmatist* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1993), especially ch. 1.
28. See John Dewey's comments in a tribute to Mead after his death, 13–14, in George Herbert Mead memorial booklet, in George Herbert Mead Papers, Box 1a, Folder 18, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago.
29. Jay Martin, *The Education of John Dewey,* 119. See also Coughlan, *Young John Dewey;* Mills, *Sociology and Pragmatism,* ch. 5; Ryan, *John Dewey;* Westbrook, *John Dewey.*
30. On coeducation at the University of Michigan and elsewhere during this period, see Rosalind Rosenberg, "The Limits of Access: The History Of Coeducation in America," in John Mack Faragher and Florence Howe, eds., *Women and Higher Education: Essays from the Mount Holyoke College Sesquicentennial Symposia* (NY: W.W. Norton, 1988), 107–129. On the University of Michigan and President Angell, see Ruth Bordin, *Women at Michigan: The "Dangerous Experiment, 1870s to the Present* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Howard H. Peckham, *The Making of the University of Michigan, 1817–1992* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press,

1994); and Brian A. Williams, "Thought and Action: John Dewey at the University of Michigan," *Bentley Historical Library Bulletin,* 44 (July 1998), 1–36.

31. See ch. 2 on the Camp family.
32. Ryan, *John Dewey,* 107.
33. See Westbrook, *John Dewey,* 94. See also Williams, "Thought and Action."
34. John Dewey to Jane Addams, January 27, 1892 (00475) *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
35. Jane Dewey, "Biography," 29–30. Charlene Haddock Seigfried argues that Jane Addams was a pioneer in exploring, through her settlement house work, how the relation between democracy and morality developed into a pragmatist ethics. See Charlene Haddock Seigfried, "Introduction" to Jane Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002, first 1902), x. See also Seigfried's *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and "Socializing Democracy: Jane Addams and John Dewey," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences,* 29 (June 1999), 207–230. For an excellent biography of Addams, see Louise Knight, *Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005); on the early connections between Dewey and Addams, see 237–240. For an insightful explanation of the relationship between Dewey and Addams, see also Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* ch. 12.
36. William Knight, ed., *Memorials of Thomas Davidson the Wandering Scholar* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1907), 55.
37. See Knight, *Citizen*, endnote 26, page 478, on the likelihood that John Dewey and Jane Addams met through Dewey's University of Michigan colleague Henry Adams, who was also friends with Addams's friend Henry Demarest Lloyd. On Henry Demarest Lloyd and his work with the Glenmore Summer School, see Chester Destler, *Henry Demarest Lloyd and the Empire of Reform* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), 243. On the Farmington School of Ethics and Glenmore, see Knight, *Memorials of Thomas Davidson.*
38. Jane Dewey, "Biography," 30.
39. Mary Foster, "Recollections of Glenmore," in Knight, ed., *Memorials of Thomas Davidson,* 72.
40. Paul Schneider, *The Adirondacks* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997). George Prochnik has written an informative study of Putnam Camp: see his *Putnam Camp: Sigmund Freud, James Jackson Putnam, and the Purpose of American Psychology* (New York: Other Press, 2006). On her experiences in Keene Valley, see Charlotte Perkins Gilman,

*The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman* [1935] (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 229–231. See also Ryan, *John Dewey,* 123.

41. Dewey, "From Absolutism," 157. See also Dykuizen, *The Life and Mind of John Dewey,* 68; and Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory,* 44.
42. See Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 304–305, on Dewey's work on democratic theory during his Ann Arbor years. On Dewey's place in the context of the development of the American curriculum, and the influence of figures such as Francis Parker, William Torrey Harris, G. Stanley Hall, and Johann Friedrich Herbart, see Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893–1958* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986).
43. See Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* 87–88, on Dewey's idea of workplace democracy. For an early article on democracy, see John Dewey, "The Ethics of Democracy" [1888], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed. *John Dewey: The Early Works, 1882–1898*, Vol. 1 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), 227–249.
44. As Cheryl Misak asserts, in her review of Westbrook's *Democratic Hope,* "The pragmatist account of truth links truth with inquiry or deliberation." See "Review," *Transaction of the Charles Sanders Peirce Society,* 42, 2 (2006), 280. See also Ryan, *John Dewey.* On Dewey's Ann Arbor years, see also Willinda Savage, "The Evolution of John Dewey's Philosophy of Experimentalism as Developed at the University of Michigan," Unpublished dissertation, University of Michigan, 1950.
45. James Tufts quoted in Martin, *The Education of John Dewey,* 138.
46. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum,* ch. 3. See also Anna Camp Edwards's essay in Appendix I of *The Dewey School,* "The Evolution of Mr. Dewey's Principles of Education," 447.
47. On the Laboratory School, in addition to Mayhew and Edwards (1936), see also Martin Bickman, *Minding American Education: Reclaiming the Tradition of Active Learning* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003); Ida B. DePencier, *The History of the Laboratory Schools: The University of Chicago, 1896–1965* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1967); Anne Durst, " 'The Union of Intellectual Freedom and Cooperation': Learning from the University of Chicago's Laboratory School Community, 1896–1904," *Teachers College Record,* 107, 5 (2005), 958–984; James Scott Johnston, *Inquiry and Education: John Dewey and the Quest for Democracy* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006); Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "Experimenting with Education: John Dewey and Ella Flagg Young at the University of Chicago," *American Journal of Education,* 104 (May 1996), 171–185; Martin, *The Education of John Dewey;* Menand, *The Metaphysical Club;* Diane Ravitch, *Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reforms* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000); Aaron Schutz,

"John Dewey's Conundrum: Can Democratic Schools Empower?" *Teachers College Record,* 103, 2 (April 2001), 267–302; Laurel Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School*: *Lessons for Today* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997); Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*; and Arthur G. Wirth, *John Dewey as Educator: His Design for Work in Education (1894–1904)* (Huntington, NY: Robert E. Kreiger Publishing Company, 1979).

48. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 7–8.
49. John Dewey to Alice Dewey, November 1, 1894 (00218), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). See Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* and particularly his chapter on "Pullman and the Professor," for an excellent discussion of the beginnings of the Laboratory School. A number of the quotes from Dewey's letters that I cite here appear also in Westbrook's chapter.
50. John Dewey to Alice Dewey, November 1, 1894 (00218), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
51. John Dewey to Alice Dewey, November 22, 1894 (00236), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
52. John Dewey to Alice Dewey, November 1, 1894 (00218), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
53. See Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 112. On Rice's study of American schools, see Kliebard, *Struggle,* 20–24.
54. John Dewey to Alice Dewey, November 22, 1894 (00236), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
55. Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "The Plural Worlds of Educational Research," *History of Education Quarterly,* 29, 2 (1989), 195. See also Lagemann, *An Elusive Science: The Troubling History of Education Research* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000). On the Chicago community, see also Mary Jo Deegan, Introduction to George Herbert Mead, *Play, School, and Society* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), xxiii; and Jean Block, *Eva Watson-Schutze: Chicago Photo-Secessionist* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1985). On a similar "cooperative community," see Joyce Antler, *Lucy Sprague Mitchell: The Making of a Modern Woman* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).
56. See Knight, *Citizen,* 240.
57. This will be discussed further in later chapters. On Chicago reform thought, see Mary Jo Deegan, *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School, 1892–1918*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988).

58. John Dewey to Alice Dewey and children, July 12, 1894 (00158), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). See Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 318, for a discussion of this quote and Dewey's reaction to his new home. See also Menand's discussion of University of Chicago sociologist Albion Small's description of Chicago as a "vast sociological laboratory." (305)
59. Part of this time, Morris Dewey was in the care of his grandmother, Lucina Dewey. See Martin, *The Education of John Dewey,* 158–160, 180–181.
60. John Dewey to Alice Dewey and children, October 9, 1894 (00205), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
61. As Louis Menand argues, Jane Addams and the "sociology laboratory" she established in the settlement house were central to Dewey's formulation of pragmatism. See Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 312–315. For a review of Menand's text that focuses on his treatment of Dewey's Chicago years, see James Kloppenberg, "Teaching *The Metaphysical Club*," *Intellectual History Newsletter,* 24 (2002), 88–94.
62. George Herbert Mead, "The Psychology of Social Consciousness Implied in Instruction," *Science,* 31 (May 6, 1910), 691. Mead wrote that he was using "Professor Dewey's phrase." For a discussion of Mead's article, see Lipman, *Thinking in Education,* 84–85.
63. John Dewey to Alice Dewey and children, October 19 and 21, 1894 (00211), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). For a recent discussion of pragmatism that includes an analysis of "interpretation," see John Jacob Kaag, "Pragmatism and the Lessons of Experience," *Daedalus,* 138, 2(2009), 63–72.
64. See Menand, *The Metaphysical Club;* and Seigfried, "Introduction" to *Democracy and Social Ethics.*
65. Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 347. Menand (and others) maintain that Dewey preferred the term "instrumentalism," (see page 350), but he (and others) continue to use the term "pragmatism" to discuss the philosophy that Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, with participation by others, such as George Herbert Mead, James Hayden Tufts, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, fashioned in the period roughly between 1870 and 1910 (and beyond, of course, for the long-lived Dewey). Menand has a chapter titled "Pragmatisms," and the plural is important. With this in mind, I will also use the term "pragmatism," but with the understanding that many scholars, including Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory;* Menand, *The Metaphysical Club;* Ryan, *John Dewey;* and Westbrook, *Democratic Hope* and *John Dewey,* have illuminated its several incarnations. A full discussion of

the philosophy of pragmatism and its history is beyond the scope of this book.

66. Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 351.
67. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory,* vii.
68. Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 360.
69. John Dewey to H. Robet, May 2, 1911 (01991), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
70. See Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 322.
71. John Dewey, "The Bearings of Pragmatism upon Education," in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *The Middle Works, 1899–1924, Vol. 4* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1977), 188.
72. John Dewey, "Democracy in Education," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 4 (December, 1903), 194.
73. Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* 4. Westbrook goes on to say that "pragmatism—by virtue of its methodological commitment to experimental inquiry . . . has a powerful elective affinity with democracy" (8). On the "Chicago School" and the importance of the Laboratory School for the "dissemination of ideas from the Philosophy Department," see Darnell Rucker, *The Chicago Pragmatists* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 12.
74. This will be discussed in Ch. 3. See Nancy Hoffman, *Woman's "True" Profession: Voices from the History of Teaching* (Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, 1981); David Hogan, *Class and Reform: School and Society in Chicago, 1880–1930* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985); Victoria-Maria MacDonald, "The Paradox of Bureaucratization: New Views on Progressive Era Teachers and the Development of a Woman's Profession," *History of Education Quarterly,* 39, 4 (1999), 427–453; William J. Reese, *Power and the Promise of School Reform* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986); Kate Rousmaniere, *Citizen Teacher: The Life and Leadership of Margaret Haley* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005); and David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974).
75. As James Kloppenberg argues, "The discipline of thinking, as Dewey understood it, places enormous demands on teachers and students, because it requires exercising the radical intellectual freedom entailed by pragmatic philosophy." See Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory,* 375.
76. John Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey, November 22, 1894 (00236), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
77. John Dewey to Clara Mitchell, November 14, 1895 (00270), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).

78. John Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey, September 25, 1894 (00196), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). See also Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 306.
79. John Dewey to Clara Mitchell, November 24, 1895 (00271), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
80. John Dewey to Clara Mitchell, November 6, 1895 (00268), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
81. John Dewey to Clara Mitchell, November 12, 1895 (00269), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
82. Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* 26.
83. John Dewey to Clara Mitchell, November 29, 1895 (00272), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
84. John Dewey to Clara Mitchell, December 22 and 24, 1895 (00275), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
85. See Lagemann, "Experimenting with Education," 171; and Robert Westbrook, "The Authority of Pragmatism," *Intellectual History Newsletter,* 17 (1995), 22.
86. C. Wright Mills, *Sociology and Pragmatism,* 314.
87. John Dewey to Clara Mitchell, November 29, 1895 (00272), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). He wrote that: "*individual activity*," as "(1) based in *Nature* & (2) giving to *Society*," constitutes the "primary principle. That is, the starting-point is the concrete activity of child which (1) analyzed, reduced, = Nature & (2) connected, functioning = Society." This formulation appears in outline form; I have quoted the words without the form.
88. Ibid.
89. John Dewey to Frank Manny, May 10, 1896 (00524), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
90. John Dewey to Frank Manny, May 26, 1896 (00526), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
91. John Dewey to Frank Manny, March 16, 1896 (00519), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). The last phrase reads as follows: "sufficientl mental scope to be able to relate sthe special and technical acquirements to a general plan and uaim." In this letter and others, when the intended word is clear, I have deleted extraneous

letters for purposes of readability. I have also left out some editing notations that are included in the *Correspondence* edition.

## CHAPTER 2

1. Letter Missive, Anna Camp Edwards and Richard Edwards, 1950, box 44, in the Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. In his introduction to *The Dewey School,* John Dewey wrote of the book that "the entire history of the school was marked by an unusual degree of cooperation among parents, teachers, and pupils. It is particularly gratifying to have this living evidence that the cooperative spirit still continues." See Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896–1903* [1936] (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transactions, 2007), xiii.
2. Obituary of Althea Harmer Bardeen ("Wife of Dean Bardeen Dies"), *The Madison Democrat,* April 21, 1920.
3. Letter Missive, Anna Camp Edwards and Richard Edwards, 1950, box 44, in the Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. For compelling studies of the history of pragmatism, see Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001); and Robert Westbrook, *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).
4. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 312.
5. See John Dewey to Frank Manny, May 26, 1896 (00526) and 1896.05.10 (00524), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
6. Laura Runyon to Katherine Camp Mayhew, July 14, 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. University of Chicago graduate Laura Runyon was a teacher of history at the Laboratory School from 1898 to 1903, where she also served as editor of the *Elementary School Record,* a series of nine monographs on the Laboratory School. After leaving Chicago, she was an associate professor of history at the Warrensburg Normal Training School in Missouri. See Ewing Cockrell, *History of Johnson County, Missouri* (Topeka, KS: Historical Publishing Company, 1918).
7. In *Pragmatism and Feminism,* Charlene Haddock Seigfried discusses "what remain virtually anonymous women co-workers" in the books of Dewey. See *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 49–50. See also endnote 38 on page 288, where she cites Robert Westbrook's

discussion of the Mayhew and Edwards text in his *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

8. George Herbert Mead to Jane Addams, December 1, 1910, Jane Addams Collection, Swarthmore College (on microfilm). Mead referred in this letter to "the circle of your friends." The four teachers were selected for study for a number of reasons. First, Katherine Camp and Althea Harmer taught at the school for most of Dewey's years as director. Anna Camp, while not a teacher the entire time, was connected to the school for almost as long as her sister, as a substitute teacher and the tutor of Laboratory School student Josephine Crane. Mary Hill did not teach there as long as the others, but she represents the strongest link between the Laboratory School and Hull House, as she taught at the school while she was a resident at the settlement house. In addition, all four of the teachers were friends, and for periods of time, they were flatmates. Thus they made up a conscious social group while they were colleagues, and their relationships with the Laboratory School community were lasting. Finally, these teachers have left us with written records of their experiences and ideas about the Laboratory School. We have Mayhew and Edwards's *Dewey School,* their letters, and Katherine Camp's scholarly articles on the school; Althea Harmer's scholarly articles, and many reports of her activities in the Camps' letters; and Mary Hill's letters from this period, as well as a small number of later letters that touch on her experiences at the Laboratory School. Thus my research indicates that this was a core group of teachers, involved in the school and its community in social as well as professional ways. Several other teachers were also central to the workings of the school, most importantly Laura Runyon. I have been unable to locate any archival materials on Runyon, or on any of the others on the list of teachers included in *The Dewey School* appendix.
9. Katherine Camp and Mary Hill also took part in efforts to improve instruction in "number work," to be discussed in Ch. 4. And Hill did some instruction in handwork related to clay and pottery. See John Dewey and Laura Runyon, introductory materials, *The Elementary School Record,* I, 1 (February 1900), 1–2, for a list of the teachers and their degrees and institutions of higher education. On a related figure at the University of Chicago, Julia Bulkley, see Kathleen Cruikshank, "In Dewey's Shadow: Julia Bulkley and the University of Chicago Department of Pedagogy, 1895–1900," *History of Education Quarterly,* 38, 4 (Winter 1998), 373–406.
10. Cornell University's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections includes three collections that contain letters and materials from the Camp family: the Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), the Camp Family Collection (891), and the Edwards Family collection (1484). Althea Harmer married Charles Bardeen, Dean of the University of Wisconsin's Medical School, whose papers are held

at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Steenbock Library. This collection includes a small number of letters from Althea Harmer written after her marriage and move to Madison. One of her sons, John Bardeen, became a Nobel-prize winning physicist, and thus I have also relied on *True Genius: The Life and Science of John Bardeen* (Washington, DC: Joseph Henry Press, 2002), by Lillie Hoddeson and Vicki Daitch. In addition, I have been in correspondence and have met with William Bardeen, John Bardeen's son. The archives at both Pratt Institute and Drexel University, which Harmer attended, contain some limited information on her studies. Mary Hill married a fellow Hull House resident, Gerard Swope, who would go on to head General Electric. A recently donated collection of her letters from the Laboratory School years is held in the Special Collections at the University of Illinois-Chicago, and a smaller packet of her letters from this era is included in the Gerard Swope Collection held at the Institute Archives and Special Collections of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library. For information on Mary Hill's life, I have also relied on David Loth's *Swope of G.E.* (New York: Arno Press, 1976, reprinted from 1958), as well as the archives at Bryn Mawr College. I am in contact with several of Mary Hill Swope's relatives: her namesake Mary Hill Swope, Rachel Abbott, David Swope, and Kevin Swope.

11. On the benefits of biography in exploring the history of women in education, see Jane Martin, "The Hope of Biography: The Historical Recovery of Women Educator Activists," *History of Education,* 32, 2 (2003), 226. See also Peter Cunningham, "Innovators, Networks and Structures: Towards a Prosopography of Progressivism," *History of Education,* 30, 5 (2001), 433–451; Linda Eisenmann, "Creating a Framework for Interpreting US Women's Educational History: Lessons from Historical Lexicography," *History of Education,* 30, 5 (2001), 453–470; and Joyce Goodman, "Troubling Histories and Theories: Gender and the History of Education," *History of Education,* 32, 2 (2003), 219–232.
12. One of a list of "suggested titles" for the manuscript of *The Dewey School,* box 15, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
13. Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1986), 185. Some scholars credit author Henry James for naming the "New Woman"; the James brothers did have a knack for capturing a moment, or an idea, in words. Think of William James's "stream of consciousness." On Henry James and the phrase, see Ruth Bordin, *Alice Freeman Palmer: The Evolution of a New Woman* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 2. On William James and coining phrases, see Robert Richardson, *William James: In the Maelstrom of American Modernism* (New York: Houghton

Mifflin, 2006), 306. Scholar Lucy Bland claims that "feminist novelist Sarah Grand invented the term in an article in 1894" in England, and this seems to be the more commonly accepted view. See Bland, "The Married Woman, the 'New Woman' and the Feminist: Sexual Politics of the 1890s," in Jane Rendall, ed., *Equal or Different: Women's Politics, 1800–1914* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 143. On the "New Woman," see also Jean Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Women's Movement in America, 1875–1930* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 2003); and Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985).

14. Sally G. McMillen, *Seneca Falls and the Origins of the Women's Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 44–52.
15. Lucy Stone, quoted in McMillen, *Seneca Falls,* 48.
16. Bordin, *Alice Freeman Palmer*, 30; and Margaret A. Nash, *Women's Education in the United States, 1780–1840* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 101. See also Bordin, *Women at Michigan: The 'Dangerous Experiment,' 1870s to the Present* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1999); Karen LeRoux, "Veterans of the Schools: Women's Work in the United States Public Education, 1865–1902," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University, 2005; Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman*; Dorothy Gies McGuigan, *A Dangerous Experiment: 100 Years of Women at the University of Michigan* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1970); and Rosalind Rosenberg, *Beyond Separate Spheres: Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982). For an excellent discussion of the career of Alice Hamilton, see Barbara Sicherman, "Working It Out: Gender, Profession, and Reform in the Career of Alice Hamilton," in Noralee Frankel and Nancy S. Dye, eds., *Gender, Class, Race, and Reform in the Progressive Era* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 127–147.
17. Bordin, *Alice Freeman Palmer,* 34–35. On the teaching profession in the late nineteenth century, see also Leroux, "Veterans of the Schools," and Kate Rousmaniere, *City Teachers: Teaching and School Reform in Historical Perspective* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997). As the historian Carl Kaestle has shown, the common school reform movement of the mid-1800s, with its many costly improvements, paved the way for a growing acceptance of cheaper-to-employ women as teachers. See Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780–1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978).
18. Bordin, *Alice Freeman Palmer,* 34, 36. See also Lynn D. Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

19. Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education,* 2. See also Rosalind Rosenberg, *Divided Lives: American Women in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), 26.
20. On Clarke, see Rosenberg, *Beyond Separate Spheres.* On the fears engendered by the increase of women in higher education, see Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman*. For a discussion of similar developments for women in science, see also Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).
21. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Selections from the Author's Autobiography, The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman," in *The Yellow Wallpaper and Selected Writings* (London: Virago, 2009), 280–281.
22. See Rosenberg, *Beyond Separate Spheres,* especially ch. 2.
23. See Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct,* 177, on different generations of "New Women."
24. Bordin, *Alice Freeman Palmer,* 2–5. As Bordin argues, the concept of the "New Woman" was a fluid one, and in the 1890s, it was characterized by the career-minded, independent woman.
25. Anna Camp Edwards, Out of Old Virginia and New England: The Family Story of Jacob Andrus Camp 1823–1900, Elizabeth Francis Osborn Camp 1835–1920, written and copyrighted 1953, 1, box 11, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. In her essay in Appendix I of *The Dewey School,* "The Evolution of Mr. Dewey's Principles of Education," Anna Camp Edwards made a veiled reference to this influence. She wrote, "The parents of one of his students, many years before, had established conditions for an experiment in education, by moving from a city to a country home where their four children could at one and the same time carry on and learn about the fundamental activities of life. The father of this family treasured in his old age Mr. Dewey's acknowledgement of the value of this experiment in the formulating of his educational theories" (447).
26. Anna Camp Edwards, Out of Old Virginia and New England: The Family Story of Jacob Andrus Camp 1823–1900, Elizabeth Francis Osborn Camp 1835–1920, written and copyrighted 1953, 1,16–17, box 11, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. While the parents' support of public roles for their daughters was not linked (in their letters) to a desire for political equality, some evidence suggests that the Camp family was sympathetic with female suffrage. For instance, Elizabeth Francis Camp's sister Anna Williams wrote in 1906: "I see the National Woman Suffrage Convention is to meet in Chicago next winter, and mean to go so as to see you all at the same time." Anna O. Williams to Elizabeth Francis Camp, August 1,

1906, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

27. Anna Camp to William Camp, November 30, 1886, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Louisa May Alcott's sequel to *Little Men* was *Jo's Boys,* published in 1886.
28. Anna Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, April 13, 1889, box 7, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Henry Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* was published in 1883. Frank Camp was reading an issue of *Littel's Living Age,* a popular magazine of the time.
29. Author Biographies, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Frank Camp died as a young man, before he was able to complete his studies.
30. See Bordin, *Women at Michigan*; and McGuigan, *A Dangerous Experiment.*
31. Elizabeth Camp (Bess) to Elizabeth Francis Camp, February 17, 1891, box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. For accounts of the Dewey family in Ann Arbor, see Willinda Savage, "The Evolution of John Dewey's Philosophy of Experimentalism as Developed at the University of Michigan," unpublished doctoral dissertation, publ. No. 1999, University of Michigan, 1950.
32. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, October 26, 1889, box 7, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
33. Records of the association, box 1, Collegiate Sorosis Collection, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
34. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), October 4, 1889, and Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, November 1889, box 7, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
35. Elizabeth Camp (Bess) to Jacob Andrus Camp, November 19, 1890, box 7, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
36. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, March 1, 1891, box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
37. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, October 13, 1889, box 7, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
38. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, n.d., from Middletown, CT, so likely written in spring of 1894, box 10, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

39. Jacob Andrus Camp to Katherine Camp, March 28, 1894, box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. While Katherine Camp graduated from the University of Michigan in 1894, the evidence suggests that she was attending Wesleyan University for a semester, as there was a receipt for one-half year's tuition attached to that letter.
40. Author's Publicity Material, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
41. Correspondence from Paul Schlotthauer, Librarian and Archivist, Pratt Institute Libraries.
42. Katherine Camp to Frank Camp, September 25, 1894, box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
43. Katherine Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, November 4 [1894], box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
44. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, February 1, 1895, box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
45. Katherine Camp to Anna Camp, April 8, 1894, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
46. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, February 1, 1895, box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
47. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, n.d. likely 1894 or 1895, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
48. On Woods Hole, see Frank R. Lillie, *The Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944); David Hapgood, *Charles R. Crane: The Man Who Bet on People* (USA: Institute of World Affairs, 2000), 26; and Philip J. Pauly, *Controlling Life: Jacques Loeb and the Engineering Ideal in Biology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 75. See also archival records at the Marine Biological Laboratory, and correspondence from Diane Rielinger, Records Manager/Archivist.
49. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, April 28 [1895], box 8, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
50. John Dewey to Frank Manny, May 10, 1896 (00524), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
51. Katherine Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, May 12, 1896, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

52. Katherine Camp's official appointment letter from the University of Chicago, dated June 30, 1896, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
53. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, July 21, 1896 and Katherine Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, July 25, 1896, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
54. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess) and Anna Camp, June 1, 1902, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. She went on to write that "I would like to have some one take down her self conceit. She lives in so narrow a place and I fear she won't get out of it this summer."
55. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, July 12 [1896], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
56. Katherine Camp to Camp family (possibly her sister Bess), beginning of letter missing, but written in last week of September, 1896, box 10, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Frederick Smedley also conducted a series of physical and psychological tests at the Laboratory School, and went on to become Director of the Child Study Department of the Chicago Public Schools until his death in 1902. See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 295, 389.
57. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), October 9, 1896, box 18, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
58. Jacob Andrus Camp to Anna and Katherine Camp, November 24, 1897, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
59. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), October 9, 1896, box 18, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
60. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, November 22, 1896, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
61. Anna Camp Edwards, "Out of Old Virginia and New England: The Family Story of Jacob Andrus Camp 1823–1900, Elizabeth Francis Osborn Camp 1835–1920," written and copyrighted 1953, box 11, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
62. See e-mail correspondence from Jill Tatem, University Archivist, Case Western Reserve University; and Richard Baznik, excerpt from

"prose outline" for history of Case Western Reserve University, personal correspondence from the author.

63. In 1897, John Dewey wrote of Anna Camp: "I suppose she wants to come next year." John Dewey to Alice Dewey, July 18, 1897 (00318), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1999–2004).
64. By January of 1898, after just a few months of teaching history, Anna Camp had begun to tutor Josephine Crane. See Anna Camp to Jacob Camp, January 23, 1898 and February 2, 1898, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
65. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, May 12, 1901, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
66. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, n.d. [Jan. 1900 penciled in], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
67. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), January 15, 1901, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
68. Anna Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, January 23, 1898, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
69. Anna Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, January 23, 1898, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Her father's response is circumspect; he advised his daughter that "the 'Socialistic tea' might do for a novelty and an occasional 'break' but would hardly do for general habit." See Jacob Andrus Camp to Anna Camp, January 31, 1898, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
70. Hoddeson and Daitch, *True Genius,* 13.
71. I am indebted to William Bardeen, Althea Harmer Bardeen's grandson, for generously sharing the genealogical history of the Harmer family.
72. Edward D. McDonald and Edward M. Hinton, *Drexel Institute of Technology, 1891–1941* (Philadelphia, PA: Drexel Institute of Technology, 1942), 15.
73. Personal e-mail correspondence from Paul Schlotthauer, librarian and archivist at Pratt Institute Libraries, and Althea Harmer's student record from Pratt Institute for 1895–1896.
74. Caroline B. Weeks to Katherine Camp, April 20, 1897, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

75. See Hoddeson and Daitch, *True Genius,* and the letters of Althea Harmer Bardeen and her husband, Charles Russell Bardeen, in the Charles Russell Collection at the Steenbock Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Harmer married Bardeen in 1905, after she spent a year in Chicago as an independent businesswoman, in interior decorating. See also the letters of Helen Castle Mead, held in the George Herbert Mead Collection, and the letters of Eva Watson-Schutze, held in the Martin Schutze Collection, both at the Special Collections, Regenstein Library, the University of Chicago. On Eva Watson-Schutze, see Jean Block, *Eva Watson-Schutze: Chicago Photo-Secessionist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); and Tom Wolf, *Eva Watson-Schutze: Photographer* (New Paltz, NY: Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, State University of New York at New Paltz, 2009).
76. Anna Camp to Jacob Camp, February 13, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
77. On M. Carey Thomas, see Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *The Power and Passion of M. Carey Thomas* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994).
78. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 17, 1900, box 2, folder 13, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
79. Mary Hill Swope's granddaughter, also named Mary Hill Swope, who was very close to her grandmother, told me that the four sisters got along very well, and so this account of Jane Addams's visit to the sisters did not indicate any break in their relations. The sisters' father, John T. Hill, was involved in a financial scandal that broke after his death in 1891, and this may have made it difficult for some of the sisters to attend college.
80. P. G. (Pauline Goldmark in pencil), "In Memoriam," Bryn Mawr College, *Alumnae Bulletin,* 26, 2 (winter 1956), 32, held at the Bryn Mawr College Archives.
81. *Bryn Mawr College Program,* 1902, 154, held at the Bryn Mawr College Archives.
82. On Alice Hamilton, see Madeline P. Grant, *Alice Hamilton: Pioneer Doctor in Industrial Medicine* (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1967); and Barbara Sicherman, *Alice Hamilton: A Life in Letters* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).
83. Alice Hamilton to Agnes Hamilton, October 11, 1898, Hamilton Family Papers, on microfilm, held at the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study.
84. P. G. (Pauline Goldmark in pencil), "In Memoriam," Bryn Mawr College, *Alumnae Bulletin,* 26, 2 (Winter 1956), 32, held at the Bryn Mawr College Archives.

85. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, October 31, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 15, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
86. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, January 17, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 9, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
87. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, October 1 [1900 or 1901], Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 11, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
88. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 4, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 14, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
89. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, August 12, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 9, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
90. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, October 30, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 15, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
91. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, December 11, 1900, box 4, Gerard Swope Papers, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
92. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, October 22, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. On the Noon-Day Rest, see Perry Duis, *Challenging Chicago: Coping with Everyday Life, 1837–1920* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 159.
93. Mabel Wing Castle to unknown recipient, June 13, 1899, box 18, Elinor Castle Nef Collection, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
94. Anna Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, January 16, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
95. On William James, see Robert D. Richardson, *William James: In the Maelstrom of American Modernism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006). On Prince Peter Kropotkin, see Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House,* 263, 264.
96. Professor Patrick Geddes of Edinburgh, Scotland, was a philosopher and urban planner. See Helen Meller, *Patrick Geddes: Social Evolutionist and City Planner* (New York: Routledge, 1990).
97. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), April 30, 1899, box 10, Camp Family Collection (891), Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
98. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), January 8, 1901, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

99. Madeline Grant, *Alice Hamilton: Pioneer Doctor in Industrial Medicine* (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1967), 36.
100. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, October 1, 1898, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
101. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, January 19 [?1897], box 10, Camp Family Collection (891), Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
102. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), n.d., addressed from 5709 Kimbark, so likely 1901–1902, box 10, Camp Family Collection (891), Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
103. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, October 22, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
104. See Jane Dewey, "Biography of John Dewey," in P.A. Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 1939).
105. Anna Camp to family, January 28, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
106. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 373.

## CHAPTER 3

1. Many Dewey scholars have addressed this matter. Jay Martin, for instance, maintains that while seen as the father of progressive education, Dewey's ideas and his school differed substantially from schools of that label. See Jay Martin, *The Education of John Dewey: A Biography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 495–496. See also Philip Jackson, "Introduction" to John Dewey, *The School and Society* and *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1990); Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *An Elusive Science: The Troubling History of Education Research* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 42; Eric Margolis, "Teaching John Dewey: An Essay Review of Three Books on John Dewey," *Education Review,* 10, 14 (November 29, 2007), 1–15; Richard S. Prawat, "Misreading Dewey: Reform, Projects, and the Language Game," *Educational Researcher,* 24, 7 (1995), 13–22; Laurel Tanner, "The Meaning of Curriculum in Dewey's Laboratory School (1896–2904)," *Journal of Curriculum Studies,* 23, 2 (1991), 101–117.
2. For instance, see Diane Ravitch, *Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reforms* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 57.
3. John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Collier Books, 1938).

4. John Dewey, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," Appendix II in Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896–1903* [1936] (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transactions, 2007) 467. For the label of child-centered, one need look no further than article titles. See, for instance, Thomas Gallant, "Dewey's Child-Centered Education in Contemporary Academe," *Educational Forum,* 37, 4 (May 1973), 411–419. While in the text, Gallant qualifies his use of this label as applied to Dewey's philosophy, he nonetheless employs it in his article title. See also Ravitch, *Left Back,* 171. Ravitch writes, "The most influential model for child-centered schooling in the United States was the Laboratory School, founded by John Dewey and his wife, Alice, at the University of Chicago in 1896." While she also qualifies the use of this term as it applies to Dewey's ideas, such statements and titles serve to reinforce the association of "child-centered" with Dewey and, in Ravitch's case, with the Laboratory School as well.
5. Diane Ravitch argues that Dewey's ideas about content have been misconstrued, maintaining that "many of Dewey's disciples drew the wrong lessons from the Dewey School" (*Left Back,* 172). Yet her discussion of Dewey's ideas and of the Laboratory School serves to perpetuate such misunderstandings. For instance, Ravitch writes that "Dewey wanted schools to concentrate on problems and processes rather than academic subjects," explaining that Dewey advocated learning biology through experience (58). Her statement distinguishes between content and problem solving, whereas Dewey considered them to be integral parts of a whole—the educative experience. Later in the book she maintains that the Laboratory School teachers were "far from being hostile to subject matter," yet this appears in a chapter titled "Instead of the Academic Curriculum" (171). See Alan Ryan's review of *Left Back*: "Schools: The Price of 'Progress,' " *New York Review of Books*, 48, 3 (February 22, 2001), downloaded version. On Dewey's critics, including President Dwight Eisenhower, see Maurice R. Berube, *American School Reform: Progressive, Equity, and Excellence Movements, 1883–1993* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), 39. See also Robert Westbrook, *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); and "John Dewey (1859–1952)," *Prospects: The Quarterly Review of Comparative Education,* XXIII, 1/2 (1993), 277–291. For a recent discussion of the "pragmatic understanding of community," see John Jacob Kaag, "Pragmatism and the Lessons of Experience," *Daedalus,* 138, 2 (2009), 63–72.
6. Alice Dewey, typed manuscript titled "The University Elementary School," Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), box 12, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

7. On the Laboratory School and its organization, in addition to Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School*; see also J. J. Chambliss, *John Dewey's Laboratory School as a Social Experiment* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Buy Books, 2000); Brian Hendley, *Dewey, Russell, Whitehead: Philosophers as Educators* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986); Jerald Alan Katch, "Discord at Dewey's School: On the Actual Experiment Compared to the Ideal" (Unpublished dissertation, University of Chicago, 1990); Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "Experimenting with Education: John Dewey and Ella Flagg Young at the University of Chicago," *American Journal of Education,* 104 (May 1996), 171–185; Susan Laird, "Women and Gender in John Dewey's Philosophy of Education," *Educational Theory,* 38, 1 (Winter 1988), 111–129; Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001); Ravitch, *Left Back*; Laura Runyon, "A Day with the New Education," *Chautauquan,* 30, 6 (1900), 589–592; Dee Miller Russell, "The Passion That Precedes Knowledge: The Role of Imagination in John Dewey's Theory of Experience and in the Activities of the University of Chicago Elementary School, 1896–1904," unpublished dissertation, University of Georgia, 1996; Seymour B. Sarason, *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change,* especially ch. 12, "The Dewey School" (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1971); Laurel Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School: Lessons for Today* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997); Robert Tostbert, Educational Ferment in Chicago, 1883–1904 (Unpublished dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1960); Robert B. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); and Arthur G. Wirth, *John Dewey as Educator* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966). See also archival collections at the Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, and at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
8. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 464–468. For a discussion of the Laboratory School and Dewey's philosophy, see Melvin C. Baker, *Foundations of John Dewey's Educational Theory* (New York: Atherton Press, 1966, first published 1955), especially ch. 8 and 9. For a discussion of the importance of changes in both curriculum and organization at the Laboratory School, see Herbert Kliebard, "Fads, Fashions, and Rituals: The Instability of Curriculum Change," in Laurel N. Tanner, ed., *Critical Issues in Curriculum: The Eighty-Seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education,* Part I (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 16–34.
9. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* xiii.

10. See also Anne Durst, "The Union of Intellectual Freedom and Cooperation: Learning from the University of Chicago's Laboratory School Community, 1896–1904," *Teachers College Record,* 107, 5 (May 2005), 958–984, from which sections of this chapter are drawn.
11. This discussion draws upon the following studies: Nancy Hoffman, *Woman's "True" Profession: Voices from the History of Teaching* (Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, 1981); David Hogan, *Class and Reform: School and Society in Chicago, 1880–1930* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985); Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *An Elusive Science;* Karen Leroux, "Veterans of the Schools: Women's Work in United States Public Education, 1865–1902," unpublished dissertation, Northwestern University, 2005; Victoria-Maria MacDonald, "The Paradox of Bureaucratization: New Views on Progressive Era Teachers and the Development of a Woman's Profession," *History of Education Quarterly,* 39, 4 (1999), 427–453; William J. Reese, *Power and the Promise of School Reform* (Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986); Kate Rousmaniere, *Citizen Teacher: The Life and Leadership of Margaret Haley* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005); John Rury, "Who Became Teachers?: The Social Characteristics of Teachers in American History," in Donald Warren, ed., *American Teachers: Histories of a Profession at Work* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 9–48; Myra H. Strober and David Tyack, "Why Do Women Teach and Men Manage? A Report on Research on Schools," *Signs,* 5, 3 (1980), 494–503; David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974); David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot, *Learning Together: A History of Coeducation in American Schools* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990). See also Ella Flagg Young, *Isolation in the School* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1901).
12. Hoffman, *Woman's "True" Profession,* 212.
13. See Hoffman, *Woman's "True" Profession*; Hogan, *Class and Reform*; and Rousmaniere, *Citizen Teacher*.
14. See Hoffman, *Woman's "True" Profession,* on teaching as both rewarding and constraining for female teachers.
15. John Dewey, "Democracy in Education," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 4 (December, 1903), 194–196.
16. Lagemann, *An Elusive Science,* 51.
17. John Dewey, "Three Years of the University Elementary School," postscript to *The School and Society,* 166. Four of the questions dealt with: bringing the school in relation to the home; introducing subject matter in science, history, and art; instructing children in reading, writing, and mathematics in the context of the occupations; and providing adequate individual attention to children (166–169).

On the demands made of the teachers, see Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 147; and Westbrook, *Democratic Hope,* 90. On teachers' responsibilities, see Alan Ryan, *Liberal Anxieties and Liberal Education* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998).

18. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*, x. See John Dewey, "Creative Democracy—The Task Before Us" [1939], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Later Works, 1925–1953,* Vol. 14 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), 224–230.
19. Dewey, "Democracy in Education," 196.
20. Katharine Andrews Healy to Katherine Camp Mayhew, undated, but approximately 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Katharine Andrews Healy, born in Chicago in 1871, graduated from Smith College in 1894. She taught science at the Laboratory School from 1897 until her marriage to John Healy in 1900. See Smith College Alumnae Records, Smith College Library.
21. In *The Dewey School* appendices, the authors include a list of teachers and assistants, and of those listed, 80 were women and 31 were men. (In addition, two were listed just by initials, and one just by the title of Dr.) See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* Appendix III, 479–480. The spirit of gender equality was illustrated in several ways at the school. First, Alice Dewey collaborated with her husband from the very beginnings of the Laboratory School, and she and Chicago educator Ella Flagg Young held key positions of leadership at the school from 1901 to 1904. Lagemann, in *An Elusive Science*, argues that Young's work influenced Dewey's ideas on "cultivating the intellects of all teachers." (51) On Alice Chipman Dewey, see Irene Hall, "The Unsung Partner: The Educational Work and Philosophy of Alice Chipman Dewey" (Unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 2005). On Ella Flagg Young, see also Rosemary Donatelli, "The Contributions of Ella Flagg Young to the Educational Enterprise," unpublished dissertation, University of Chicago, 1971; Lagemann, "Experimenting with Education"; and Constance Heaton Goddard Goddard, "Ella Flagg Young's Intellectual Legacy: Theory and Practice in Chicago's Schools, 1862–1917" unpublished dissertation, University of Illinois—Chicago, 2005. Jane Addams, while less directly involved with the school, introduced Dewey to a living example of a working democracy at Hull House. On Jane Addams, see Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "The Plural Worlds of Educational Research," *History of Education Quarterly,* 29, 2 (1989), 185–214; and Charlene Haddock Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago, IL: University

of Chicago Press, 1996); and "Socializing Democracy: Jane Addams and John Dewey," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences,* 29 (June 1999), 207–230. Some examples of gender bias, of course, existed, of course. For instance, Katherine Camp told her mother that during talks over a reorganization of the school, they were looking for a man to take care of "refractory parents." See Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, March 23 [1900] (year not given), box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. And it was mostly the male teachers who took responsibility for building the clubhouse: Frank Ball, Mr. N. and Mr. G. Fowler, Clinton Osborn, and Harry Gillett, along with Lillian Cushman and Althea Harmer. See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 232.

22. A "suggested title" for the manuscript of *The Dewey School,* box 15, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
23. This theory was outlined in John Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" [1896], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Early Works, 1882–1898,* Vol. 5 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 96–109. See also Dewey's *Democracy and Education* [1916] (New York: The Free Press, 1966), ch. 11, "Experience and Thinking." As Louis Menand argues in *The Metaphysical Club,* the theory of the "organic circuit" was central to Dewey's thinking. Dewey "conceived of the [Laboratory School] as a philosophy laboratory . . . He was trying out a theory. It was a theory, as he said, of the 'unity of knowledge.' " As Menand puts it, "By 'unity of knowledge' Dewey did not mean that all knowledge is one. He meant that knowledge is inseparably united with doing." Menand argues, "Education at the Laboratory School was based on the idea that knowledge is a by-product of activity: people do things in the world, and the doing results in learning something that, if deemed useful, gets carried along into the next activity" (322).
24. George Herbert Mead, "The Philosophies of Royce, James, and Dewey in their American Setting," *International Journal of Ethics,* 40, 2 (1930), 228.
25. John Dewey, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 476. See also John Dewey, "The Reflex Arc." On the importance of this essay, see Ryan, *John Dewey,* 124–130; and R. W. Sleeper, *The Necessity of Pragmatism: John Dewey's Conception of Philosophy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), 57.
26. John Dewey, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 477. He is quoting from his own *Democracy and Education* here. See also Dewey, "The Reflex Arc"; Campbell, ch. 2; and Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey*

*School,* Appendix I, "The Evolution of Mr. Dewey's Principles of Education".

27. John Dewey, "Psychology of Occupations," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 3 (April 1900), 82.
28. Ibid., 83.
29. Anna Camp Edwards to Mrs. Pigman, March 5, 1935, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Mrs Pigman is listed in the preface to *The Dewey School* as "Marion Le Brun Pigman" and is thanked by the authors for "her aid in the first revisions of the manuscript."
30. Anna Camp Edwards to Mrs. Pigman, March 5, 1935, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. In this letter, "theory" appears as "teory" and "were" appears as "we re," and the last three commas in the sentence beginning "Together" were omitted. I have added the commas for readability. Edwards argues in this letter for the retention of the chapter (to become, at least in part, Appendix I) on the "organic circuit concept" because it is "so germane to the rest of the book that its [*sic*] like lopping of [*sic*] the book's head to leave it out." She goes on to express her wish that "it does get over to the average teacher; get over so that they are thrilled by it and the thought that they could in their own environment, physical and social, do something similar, and thus push the cause along."
31. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 366. In preparing to write the book, Mayhew and Edwards solicited recollections of the school from former teachers, students, parents, and other colleagues. Teachers such as Grace Fulmer, Mary Hill Swope, Laura Runyon, and Katharine Andrews Healy responded, and their views were incorporated into the sisters' book. The letters to the authors are collected in box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
32. John Dewey, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 464.
33. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 10–11.
34. Melvin C. Baker argues that the school experienced "three perhaps four stages in its career." He identifies them as the following: a six month trial and error period; a two year period of "growing experiences"; a longer, "more settled era," from 1898–1903; and then the final year, 1903–1904, of "uncertainty and insecurity." See Melvin C. Baker, *Foundations of John Dewey's Educational Theory* (New York: Atherton Press, 1966), 136.
35. Alice Dewey meant to write the history of the Laboratory School that Mayhew and Edwards eventually wrote. She wrote an article

on the kindergarten ("The Place of the Kindergarten," *The Elementary School Journal,* III, 5 [January 1903]), and a short history of the Laboratory School, drafts of which are held in the Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), boxes 12 and 22, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. In the draft found in box 22, an endnote (likely written by Anna Camp Edwards or Katherine Camp Mayhew or both) states, "In all the study and planning of those early years, Mr. and Mrs. Dewey worked together, Mrs. Dewey contributing much both as mother and thinker in the field of education."

36. For discussions of teachers and curriculum creation, see D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, "Teacher as Curriculum Maker," in Philip W. Jackson, ed., *Handbook of Research on Curriculum: A Project of the American Educational Research Association* (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 363–401. Clandenin and Connelly write, "We believe that proper historical studies of this period [the early twentieth century] would be illuminating; not only would they help us to understand the history of the teacher as curriculum maker but also they would provide a more balanced picture of the ways in which schools, colleges of education, faculties, consortia, and laboratories might work together" (378–379). See also William F. Pinar, *What Is Curriculum Theory?* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004).
37. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 41.
38. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School*, 372. On the importance of school organization, and Dewey's views on this, see Herbert Kliebard, *Forging the American Curriculum* (New York: Routledge, 1992), ch. 6, on educational reform; and David Tyack and Larry Cuban, *Tinkering toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), ch. 4, on what the authors call the "grammar of schooling."
39. See Richard S. Prawat, "Misreading Dewey: Reform, Projects, and the Language Game," *Educational Researcher,* 24, 7 (1995), 15; and Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School.*
40. John Dewey, January 1899 draft of "Three Years of the University Elementary School," p. 11, in the Katherine Camp Mayhew Papers, Series I, Box 4, Volume 11, originally held at Teachers College, now held at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
41. Alice Dewey, typed manuscript titled "The University Elementary School," box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
42. Katherine Camp wrote to her family: "Miss Mitchell has left. Dr. D. said if she went it would be on her own responsibility—she evaded

the point—telegraphed—'Thanks, for my release!!!'—The thing was unfortunate through out—the crisis being brot [*sic*] on unexpectedly by Miss M. asking for directions for next year." She explained that Clara Mitchell did not want to continue in the current school year if she was not wanted for the next. It seems that Dewey had determined at that point that in the future, teachers would be specialists, and that he would not ask Mitchell back. See Katherine Camp to family, n.d., but sometime in 1897, box 10, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

43. Katherine Camp Mayhew, notes taken at mother's luncheon, October 15, 1928, box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
44. Dewey, "The Chicago Experiment," in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 469.
45. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 374. See also John Dewey and Laura Runyon, introductory materials, *Elementary School Record,* I, 1 (February 1900), 1–2; and John Dewey, "Three Years of the University Elementary School," postscript in John Dewey, *The School and Society* and *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 174–177.
46. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 376. In this text, the middle chapters cover the curricular focus of the eleven groups, which are described as follows: Groups I and II (ages four and five); Group III (age six); Group IV (age seven); Group V (age eight); Group VI (age nine); Group VII (age ten); Group VIII (age eleven): Group IX (age twelve); Group X (age thirteen); and Group XI (age fourteen to fifteen). See John Dewey on grouping of students: "Three Years of the University Elementary School," 174–177, postscript in John Dewey, *The School and Society* and *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990). On both of these shifts, see also Tanner, "The Meaning of Curriculum."
47. Katharine Andrews Healy to Katherine Camp Mayhew, n.d., but 1930s, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
48. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 376.
49. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 372; Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 98
50. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 8–9. Georgia Bacon, a 1897 graduate of the University of Michigan, taught history at the Laboratory School and then taught at the Horace Mann School in New York City. See University of Michigan Alumnae Records, Bentley Library, University of Michigan.

51. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, January 8 [1900 in pencil], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
52. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), March 5, 1901, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
53. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, May 8, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
54. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, October 22, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
55. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, November 2, 1899, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 12, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
56. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 386.
57. Ibid., 383.
58. Ibid., 382.
59. Ibid., 387.
60. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Anna Camp, January 7, 1902, box 52, Edwards Family Collection (1484), held at Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections.
61. George Herbert Mead to Helen Castle Mead, May 25, 1901, folder 5, box 1, George Herbert Mead Papers, held at the Special Collections Research Center, The University of Chicago Library.
62. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Anna Camp, February 10, 1902, box 52, Edwards Family Collection (1484), held at Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections.
63. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), February 5, 1903, and Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), February 8, 1903, both letters in box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), held at Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections.
64. It is difficult to assess the success of this organizational structure, for it did not last long in this final form. The Deweys left for New York in 1904, and Young and most of the original Laboratory School teachers who were still there left the school at that time. Furthermore, during the two years preceding that departure the school community was preoccupied with matters of a different sort—its merger with three other schools in the newly reorganized School of Education at the University of Chicago. The merger of the Laboratory School with Colonel Francis Parker's school will be discussed in the last chapter, as will the Deweys' departure from Chicago.

65. Dewey credits her with coming up with the name, but he may have been overly generous; as we have seen, he called the school a laboratory from the start.
66. On Ella Flagg Young, see Lagemann, "Experimenting with Education," and *An Elusive Science*; John T. McManis, *Ella Flagg Young and a Half Century of the Chicago Public Schools* (Chicago, IL: A.C. McClurg, 1916); and Joan K. Smith, *Ella Flagg Young: Portrait of a Leader* (Ames, IA: Educational Studies Press, 1979).
67. Ella Flagg Young, *Isolation in the School* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1901), 33.
68. Ibid., 93.
69. Ibid., 106–107.
70. Ibid., 107–108.
71. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 366.
72. Ibid.
73. Lagemann, "Experimenting with Education," 177.
74. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 370–372. See also McManis, 120; and Lagemann, "Experimenting with Education," 177.
75. [Katherine Camp Mayhew] to John Dewey, September **, 1929 (15851), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). William James referred to Ella Flagg Young as someone "whom I always feel like calling 'Colonel.'" See William James to John Dewey, March 23, 1903 (00799), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
76. Grace Fulmer to Anna Camp Edwards, undated, but written in the years before the 1936 publication of the sisters' book, box 44, Edwards Family Collection, (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. An edited version is included in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 394. Grace Fulmer taught kindergarten at the Laboratory School from 1900 to 1902, and went on to direct her own school in Los Angeles. See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 394.
77. Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 71.
78. See Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 65, on current lesson plans as a "bureaucratic device."
79. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 374. See also Wirth, *John Dewey as Educator,* 188–189.
80. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 1, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
81. "Scheme for reports," in the Laboratory Schools Work Reports, box 1, folder 2, Special Collections Research Center, University of

Chicago Library. (See also Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 73–74, on the teachers' reports.)

82. "Scheme for reports," in the Laboratory Schools Work Reports, box 1, folder 2, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
83. David Tyack in Sarah Mondale and Sarah B. Patton, eds., *School: The Story of Public Education* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001), 75. For a discussion of schools of the time in contrast to the Laboratory School, see also Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 459.
84. Laboratory Schools Work Reports, box 1, folder 2, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
85. Teacher's Circular No. 1, 1899, held in the Katherine Camp Mayhew Papers, Series I, Box 4, Volume 12, originally held at Teachers College, now held at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
86. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 69–70.
87. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 367.
88. Ibid., 370.
89. Teacher's Circular No. 1, 1899, held in the Katherine Camp Mayhew Papers, Series I, Box 4, Volume 12, originally held at Teachers College, now held at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
90. Laboratory Schools, Work Reports, box 2, folder 2, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
91. Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 72–75, 102–103.
92. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 381–382.
93. Ibid., 375.
94. John Dewey, "Democracy and Educational Administration" [1937], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Later Works, 1925–1953,* Vol. 11 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 222. See also James Campbell, *Understanding John Dewey* (Chicago, IL: Open Court, 1995), ch. 5.
95. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 368–370. In the book, this meeting is noted as having taken place in 1899, although partial notes exist in the archival record that date the meeting to April 22, 1901. See Teachers Meeting, April 22, 1901, box 17, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. See also John Dewey, *The Educational Situation,* Part I: "As Concerns the Elementary School" [1901], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Middle Works, 1899–1924,* Vol. 1 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), 260–282, especially 272, and his "Democracy in Education."

96. March 11, 1929, Suggestions for Mr. Dewey's Chapter II, box 17, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
97. John Dewey, quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 370.
98. "Nature of the report of *third period,*" Transcription of a conversation among John Dewey, Anna Camp Edwards, and Katherine Camp Mayhew, box 22, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
99. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 225; Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 55.
100. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 225–226; Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 55.
101. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 10.
102. Ibid.
103. George Herbert Mead, "The Basis for a Parents' Association," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 6 (February 1904), 375–391.
104. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 399.
105. Ibid.
106. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 372.
107. As Dewey explained in 1936, "Experience has convinced me that there cannot be all-around development of either teachers or pupils without something for which the only available word is departmental teaching, though I should prefer to speak of lines of activity carried on by persons with special aptitude, interest, and skill in them." In Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 372. See also Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 98
108. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 367. See also Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*, ch. 4.
109. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 371–372.
110. Althea Harmer, "Textile Industries," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 3 (1900), 79. Dewey uses the term "constructive imagination" in *The School and Society,* 11. See Campbell, *Understanding John Dewey,* 45–53, on Dewey's "pattern of inquiry."
111. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 372–373.

## CHAPTER 4

1. John Dewey, Introduction to Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896–1903* [1936] (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transactions, 2007), xiv. Sections of this chapter are drawn from my

article on the Laboratory School: Anne Durst, "'Venturing in Education': Teaching at the University of Chicago's Laboratory School, 1896–1904," *History of Education*, 39, 1 (2010), 55–73.

2. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 372–373.
3. Ibid., 41.
4. John Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 464–468.
5. John Dewey, "The Psychology of the Elementary Curriculum," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 9 (December 1900), 222.
6. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 43. Several documents from the school's early years discuss the school and its ideas from the teacher's standpoint and from the child's standpoint. (See, for instance, School Plan and Notes, No. 1, The University of Chicago School, October 16, 1896, I, 1,1, held previously in the Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection at the Teachers College Library, now held at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.) While I consider both standpoints, my focus in this study is on the teachers' experiences and perspectives. In addition, my examination of the school's curriculum will focus on the social occupations of cooking and textile work, and their connections to history and science, on the one hand, and the traditional subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics. Left out of this discussion are art and music, manual training or shop-work, Latin, French, and German, and the kindergarten or subprimary class. On the occupations, see also John Dewey, *The School and Society* [1899] (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990).
7. John Dewey, "Psychology of Occupations," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 3 (April 1900), 82. On the occupations at the Laboratory School, see Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893–1958* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 69–74.
8. Developmental stages of growth were not routinely considered when devising curriculum during this time. Indeed, while many twenty-first-century teachers have studied Jean Piaget's stages of development, the Swiss psychologist was born in 1896, the year the Laboratory School opened. On Piaget in the context of American research on education, see Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *An Elusive Science: The Troubling History of Education Research* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 173, 213. On developmental stages in the Laboratory School, see Laurel Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School: Lessons for Today* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997), especially ch. 7, where she outlines Dewey's two conceptions of developmental stages, the first of which was devised during the Laboratory School years and will be the focus of the discussion in this chapter. See also Arthur Wirth, *John Dewey as Educator: His*

*Design for Work in Education (1894–1904)* (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 1966), especially ch. 8. On teachers and decision-making at the Laboratory School, see Alan Ryan, *Liberal Anxieties and Liberal Education* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 115–117.

9. Frank H. Ball, "Manual Training," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 7 (October 1900), 177–185. Ball was also a resident of Hull House.
10. Reports of Meetings, *Manual Training Magazine* (October 1899), 39.
11. Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1880–1990* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), 37.
12. Cuban, *How Teachers Taught,* 26.
13. John Dewey, "Democracy in Education," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 4 (December, 1903), 200–201.
14. Harriet A. Farrand, "Dr. Dewey's University Elementary School," *Journal of Education,* 48, 10 (1898), 172. From the genealogical records (geneology.com), it seems that Harriet Augusta Farrand was related to teacher Georgia Farrand Bacon, who began teaching at the Laboratory School in 1897. If I have interpreted the genealogical records correctly, Harriet's grandfather and Georgia's mother were siblings. If the two were related, it is possible that Farrand's review of the Laboratory School, which was very positive, may have been influenced by this connection. For John Dewey's observations on the atmosphere of the school, see his *The School and Society,* 15.
15. John Dewey to William Rainey Harper, November 7, 1902 (00766), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
16. The Laboratory School Work Reports are collected at the Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. Two of the women under study here—Althea Harmer and Katherine Camp- wrote articles published in *The Elementary School Teacher* and *The Elementary School Record* during their time at the school. Both journals were published by the University of Chicago. *The Elementary School Record* (A Series of Nine Monographs), was published in connection with the Laboratory School during the year 1900. *The Elementary School Teacher* began as *The Course of Study* in 1900 and was "Devoted to the work of The Chicago Institute." When Colonel Francis Parker came to the University of Chicago, the journal came with him. It was renamed the *Elementary School Journal* in 1910.
17. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, September 6 [1901], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University.
18. See University of Chicago, The Annual Register, 1899–1900, Department of Pedagogy, 160. Katherine Camp taught a course on

Elementary Education: Science; Althea Harmer taught courses on Educational Value and Uses of the Domestic Arts, and Educational Uses of the Domestic Arts.

19. Anna Camp to Jacob Camp, January 16, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
20. John Dewey, "The Bearings of Pragmatism upon Education" [1909], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *The Middle Works, 1899–1924, Vol. 4* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1977), 188.
21. Child Study Questions, I, 2, 6, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection previously at the Teachers College Library, now held at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
22. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 379.
23. On parents and the Laboratory School, see Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* ch. 19; and Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* 114–119.
24. Helen Castle Mead to Anna Camp, June 5, 1901, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
25. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, April 26 (year not stated), Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 12, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
26. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, April 16, 1900, box 4, Gerard Swope Papers, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
27. Laura L. Runyon, "A Day with the New Education," *Chautauquan,* 30, 6 (March 1900), 592.
28. Katherine Camp, "Household Occupations in Primary Grades," *Manual Training Magazine,* III (October 1901), 20, 23. Camp cites John Dewey's "The Psychology of the Elementary Curriculum." In *Dewey's Critical Pragmatism,* Alison Kadlec argues that Dewey "adopts three main psychological principles" that are very similar to those outlined by Camp. See Alison Kadlec, *Dewey's Critical Pragmatism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), 22.
29. The stages of growth corresponded to the groups at the Laboratory School. They were as follows: First stage, Groups I, II, and III (ages 4–6); Transition stage, Groups IV and V (ages 7–8); Second stage, Groups VIII, VI, VII (ages 9–10); Transition stage, Groups VIII and IX (ages 11–12); and Third stage, Groups X and XI (ages 13–15). See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 55. See also John Dewey, "Reflective Attention," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 4 (May 1900), 111–113.
30. Dewey, *The School and Society,* 152.
31. Ibid., 56.
32. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 8.

33. Ibid., 43. On occupations in the Laboratory School, see James Scott Johnston, *Inquiry and Education: John Dewey and the Quest for Democracy* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006), especially ch. 4; Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* especially ch. 4; and Wirth, *John Dewey as Educator,* especially ch. 9.
34. John Dewey, "The Place of Manual Training in the Elementary Course of Study," *Manual Training Magazine,* 11, 4 (July 1901), 198. Mayhew and Edwards borrow closely from this text in *The Dewey School,* 310.
35. Althea Harmer, "Textile Work Connected with American Colonial History," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 9 (May 1904), 671–672.
36. Katherine Camp, "The Place of General Ideas as Controlling Factors," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 6 (February 1904), 381.
37. Katherine Camp, "Science in Elementary Education," *Elementary School Record,* I, 6 (1900), 166.
38. Katherine Camp, "Elementary Science Teaching in the Laboratory School," I, *The Elementary School Teacher,* III, 10 (June 1903), 661–662.
39. Robert Westbrook, *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 26. Westbrook is discussing Charles Peirce here.
40. Katherine Camp Mayhew, "Purpose of Education," undated, box 17, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University. See also Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 271.
41. As discussed in the first chapter, Felix Adler and the Ethical Culture School were in Dewey's orbit in the Adirondacks. J. F. Reigart is listed for 1897 as the Superintendent of the Ethical Culture School, which was previously named the Workingman's School. See the *Ethical Culture School Record,* published by the Alumni Association in 1916, 27.
42. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 1, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
43. John Dewey, "The Psychology of the Elementary Curriculum," 226.
44. John Dewey to William Rainey Harper, April 13, 1901 (00720) *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
45. Alice Dewey, The University Elementary School, box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
46. See Kim Tolley, *The Science Education of American Girls: A Historical Perspective* (New York: Routledge Falmer, 2003).

47. As Katherine Camp argued in her article on "Science in Elementary Education," instruction focused on experimentation carried the child through the first period of growth (roughly ages four to eight), "in which he is interested in the activity for its own sake, when he uses forces in imitating processes carried on about him"; through the second period (ages nine to twelve), in which the child has "an arising consciousness of the separation of process from end, and a beginning of direction, with the invention of means of control of various natural forces"; and into the third period (ages thirteen to fifteen), "when the child is able practically to control processes to bring about a desired end, though not able independently to formulate and abstract principles." The aim of their work was to develop the ability of all students to "work out consciously the control of these forces to some social end." See Camp, "Science in Elementary Education," 165–166. On these stages, see Dewey, *The School and Society,* ch. 4.
48. Camp, "Science in Elementary Education," 159, 162.
49. Ibid., 165–166.
50. Katharine Andrews Healy to Katherine Camp Mayhew, undated but 1930s, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
51. Katherine Camp, "Elementary Science Teaching in the Laboratory School," II, *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 1(September 1903), 7–8.
52. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 219.
53. Laboratory School Work Reports, written by Katherine Camp, June 20, 1900, Group VIII, Science, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
54. On the backgrounds of Katherine Camp, Anna Camp, Mary Hill, and Althea Harmer, see the second chapter. Brief biographical sketches of other teachers who feature in this chapter will be included, when information is available, in endnotes.
55. Katharine Andrews, "Experiments in Plant Physiology," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 4 (May 1900), 107.
56. Ibid., 109–110.
57. Willard Gore to Katherine Camp Mayhew, July 16, 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. This letter was quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 402. See Laboratory School Work Reports, written by Katherine Camp, October 14, 1899, Group V, sections a and b, Science, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
58. John Dewey, "Reflective Attention," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 4 (May 1900), 113.

59. John Dewey, "The Place of Manual Training," *Manual Training Magazine,* II, 4 (July 1901), 198. See also Dewey's chapter on "The Aim of History in Elementary Education" in his *The School and Society.*
60. John Dewey, "The University Elementary School, Studies and Methods," University Record, May 21, 1897, quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 29–30.
61. See Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School,* ch. 4, and especially pages 46–48, on the concept of a horizontal and vertical organizing theme for the curriculum.
62. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 313.
63. Ibid., 141.
64. Ibid., 317.
65. Laura Runyon, "Elementary History Teaching in the Laboratory School," II, *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 1 (September 1903), 36. Text very close to this, yet undocumented, appears in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 317.
66. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 100–105.
67. Dewey quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 470–471.
68. Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001).
69. Laura Runyon, "Elementary History in the Laboratory School," I, *The Elementary School Teacher,* III, 10 (June 1903), 694, 698.
70. Georgia Bacon, "History," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 8 (November 1900), 206.
71. Ibid., 206. A list of the courses Georgia Bacon took at the University of Michigan is not available, so it isn't possible to ascertain college work that would have prepared her to teach history.
72. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, May 3, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 15, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections. On Jane Addams's notion of "sympathetic knowledge," see Maurice Hamington, *The Social Philosophy of Jane Addams* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), ch. 4; and Charlene Haddock Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 200.
73. Laura Runyon, "The Teaching of Elementary History in the Dewey School" (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1906), 55.
74. Anna Camp to family, January 28, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. On imperialism in the cultural history of this era, see Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877–1920* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009).
75. Ball, "Manual Training," 178.
76. Josephine Crane Bradley, as quoted in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 405. The clubhouse is discussed in Irene Hall, "The

Unsung Partner: The Educational Work and Philosophy of Alice Chipman Dewey," unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 2005, 90.

77. See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 232.
78. Althea Harmer is likely the teacher Alice Dewey meant here, as she was head teacher in domestic sciences and wrote articles on teaching textiles. Mary Hill also taught textiles at the school, though she was listed as a teacher of science.
79. Alice Chipman Dewey, "The Program of the Early Years in Relation to the Principles as Described by Mrs. Dewey," manuscript held in box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University. In the manuscript, persevering is spelled "perservering."
80. Althea Harmer, "Textile Work Connected with American Colonial History," 661.
81. Ibid., 663.
82. Ibid., 666.
83. Ibid., 671.
84. Laboratory School Work Reports, written by Althea Harmer, October 21, 1899, Group IV a and b, Textile Work, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. For a discussion of similar work, and its significance as an "active center of scientific insight into natural materials and processes," see Dewey, *The School and Society,* 19.
85. Althea Harmer, "Textile Industries," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 3 (April 1900), 79.
86. Ibid., 80.
87. Althea Harmer, "Introduction to the Primitive Textile Work in the Laboratory School," *The Elementary School Teacher,* III, 10 (June 1903), 712.
88. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 297.
89. Runyon, "A Day with the New Education," 591.
90. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School*, 51.
91. Althea Harmer, "Elementary Cooking in the Laboratory School," *The Elementary School Teacher,* III, 10 (June 1903), 706.
92. Laboratory School Work Reports, November 18, 1898, Group I, Cooking, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
93. Laboratory School Work Reports, October 28, 1898, Group IV, Cooking, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
94. Laboratory School Work Reports, October 12, 1900, Group VIII, Cooking, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
95. Harmer, "Elementary Cooking," 708.

96. Alice Chipman Dewey, The University Elementary School, box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
97. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), January 15, 1901, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
98. See Dewey, *The School and Society,* 112–113; and Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 381. See also Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893–1958* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 77–79.
99. Runyon, "A Day with the New Education," 590–591.
100. Alice Dewey, The University Elementary School, box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
101. "Daily Administration," Laboratory School Work Reports, box 2, folder 2, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
102. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 80–85.
103. Bacon, "History," 207.
104. Ibid.
105. Andrews, "Experiments in Plant Physiology," 108.
106. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 167–168.
107. Laura Runyon, 1928, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
108. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, January 26 [1900 penciled in later], box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
109. See Laboratory School Work Reports for October 28, 1898, Group VI, written by Georgia Bacon, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
110. Laboratory Schools, Work Reports, box 1, folder 16, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
111. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, April 2, 1900, box 4, Gerard Swope Papers, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
112. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, April 30, likely 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 12, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
113. See Laboratory School Work Reports for June 1, 1900, Group VIII, written by Mary Hill, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
114. See Laboratory School Work Reports for October 5, 1900, Group IX (a), written by Katherine Camp, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

115. University Records of the University of Chicago from 1901 indicate that Clinton Osborn earned his master of arts in education and philosophy in June 1901, and then took a position as instructor at the Ethical Culture School in New York. See *University Records* for May 31, 190, VI, 9, 18, pp. 18 and 120; June 28, 1901, VI, 13, p. 72.
116. See Laboratory School Work Reports for October 5, 1900, Group IX (b), written by Clinton Osborn, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
117. See Laboratory School Work Reports for October 12, 1900, Group IX (a), written by Clinton Osborn, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
118. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, March 23 [1900] (year not given), box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
119. Anna Camp Edwards and Richard Edwards, letter to children, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
120. Katharine Andrews Healy to Katherine Camp Mayhew, undated, but approximately 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
121. "Here is a Novel School," *Sunday Chronicle,* April 15, 1900, held in Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (I, 1,1), previously at Teachers College, now at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
122. George Herbert Mead to Helen Castle Mead, May 25, 1901, George Herbert Mead Collection, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
123. March 11, 1929, Suggestions for Mr. Dewey's Chapter II, box 17, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
124. Anna Camp to Jacob Camp, January 23, 1898, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
125. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), January 15, 1901, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
126. Althea Harmer, "Basketry," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 1 (September 1903), 119.
127. Andrews, "Experiments in Plant Physiology," 109–110.
128. John Dewey, "School Reports, A. General principle of work, educationally considered," *The Elementary School Record,* I, 1 (February 1900), 14–15.

## CHAPTER 5

1. George Herbert Mead to Jane Addams, December 1, 1910, Jane Addams Collection, Swarthmore College (on microfilm).
2. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, November 8 [likely 1900], Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections. Similarly, in 1896, University of Chicago sociologist Albion Small wrote, "Action, not speculation, is the supreme teacher." See Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 305. For a recent discussion of pragmatism and experience, see John Jacob Kaag, "Pragmatism and the lessons of experience," *Daedalus,* 138, 2 (Spring 2009), 63–72.
3. Alice Hamilton to Agnes Hamilton, September 15, 1899, Hamilton Family Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study.
4. Alice Hamilton to Agnes Hamilton, [June/July 1902], Hamilton Family Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. This letter is included in Barbara Sicherman, ed., *Alice Hamilton: A Life in Letters* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 142–144. She went on to tell Agnes about her relief at having found a job that enabled her to feel certain that she could "always earn my living." See also Sicherman's "Working It Out: Gender, Profession, and Reform in the Career of Alice Hamilton," in Noralee Frankel and Nancy S. Dye, eds., *Gender, Class, Race, and Reform in the Progressive Era* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 127–147.
5. William James, *Pragmatism* [1907] (New York: Meridian Books, 1964), 167.
6. Laura Runyon to Nellie Griffiths, January 31, 1927 (08292), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
7. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Anna Camp, February 10, 1902, box 53, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. On these material transformations, see Thomas J. Schlereth, *Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life, 1876–1915* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991).
8. Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967). On the Progressive Era, see also Kevin Mattson, *Creating a Democratic Public: the Struggle for Urban Participatory Democracy During the Progressive Era* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998); Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870–1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003); and Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*

(Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1998). Of the Progressive Era, Rodgers argues that Americans "did not swim in problems–not more so, at any rate, than Americans who lived through the simultaneous collapse of the economy and the post–Civil War racial settlement in the 1870s. It would be more accurate to say that they swam in a sudden abundance of solutions, a vast number of them brought over through the Atlantic connection" (6–7).

9. Bertha Johnston, "Social Settlement Life in Chicago: Some Phases of the Daily Work at Hull House, Chicago Commons, University Settlement," *Kindergarten Magazine,* 13, 7 (March 1901), 384.
10. Robert G. Spinney, *City of Big Shoulders: A History of Chicago* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University, 2000), 128. This figure represents those Chicagoans who were born outside of the United States. Other histories of the city report an immigrant population of 60 percent at this time; it is likely that this refers to the foreign-born and their children. See Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 308.
11. William Reese, *The Power and the Promise of School Reform* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986). See also Robin Bachin, *Building the South Side: Urban Space and Civic Culture in Chicago, 1890–1919* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004). In her study of Chicago's South Side, Bachin examines "how various groups sought to establish cultural legitimacy and authority" (6).
12. On the "pragmatist notion of experimentation," see Charlene Haddock Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 196.
13. William Reese, *The Power and the Promise,* xxi.
14. Ella Lyman Cabot, *Volunteer Help to the Schools* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914), 33.
15. Helen C. Putnam, "Vacation Schools," *The Forum,* 30 (December 1900), 492.
16. Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House* [1910] (New York: Signet Classics, 1961), 83. As Dewey biographer Alan Ryan writes in a review of *Citizen,* Louise Knight's biography of Jane Addams, "Whether by accident or design, [Addams] turned [Hull House] into the center of more social, cultural, and political experiments than it is easy to describe." See Alan Ryan, "Founding Mother," *New York Review of Books,* 53, 8 (May 11, 2006) (downloaded version).
17. Hilda Satt Polacheck, *I Came a Stranger: The Story of a Hull-House Girl* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 74.
18. See Jean Bethke Elshtain, "A Return to Hull-House," introductory essay to her edited collection, *The Jane Addams Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2002); and Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "Jane Addams: An Educational Biography," introductory essay to her edited collection, *Jane Addams on Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1985), 1.

19. Johnston, "Social Settlement Life," 385.
20. Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877–1920* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009), 225–226. On this era, see also John Higham, "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890s," in John Higham, ed., *Writing American History: Essays on Modern Scholarship* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1970), 73–102.
21. See McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent,* xiv, on the "basic questions of human life" as posed by Progressives.
22. John Dewey to Alice Dewey, August 25–26, 1894 (00178), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). This letter is also quoted in Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 319.
23. Lloyd Morris, *Postscript to Yesterday; America: The Last Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1947), 41.
24. Ibid., 40.
25. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings,* 4. As Rodgers asserts, the period between the 1870s and World War II was a time when "other nations' social politics, in short, were *news.*"
26. In her study of Chicago reform, Laura Westhoff calls the city "a laboratory for democracy." See *A Fatal Drifting Apart: Democratic Social Knowledge and Chicago Reform* (Columbus, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007), x.
27. Katherine Camp to Camp family, nd., but likely end of September, 1896, addressed from 5717 Madison Avenue "not far from where we were Worlds Fair time," box 10, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
28. See Spinney, *City of Big Shoulders,* 113–120.
29. See Jeanne Madeline Weimann, *The Fair Women* (Chicago, IL: Academy Chicago, 1981) on women's contributions to the World's Columbian Exposition and on the controversy over the exclusion of black women from the Board of Lady Managers and the response of the African-American reformer Ida Wells Barnett.
30. On Chicago history, see Perry R. Duis, *Challenging Chicago: Coping with Everyday Life, 1837–1920* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Donald L. Miller, *City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996); Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); and Spinney, *City of Big Shoulders.* While the World's Fair did promote a sense of optimism, it occurred during the depression years of the mid-1890s, and the workers who had jobs during the fair were left stranded and unemployed in Chicago after the fair and its buildings were dismantled. On this dynamic, see Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation,* ch. 5.

31. Jane Addams, "A Toast to John Dewey," *Survey,* 63 (1929), 203. On the mutual influence of Addams and Dewey upon each other, see Christopher Lasch, ed., *The Social Thought of Jane Addams* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1965), 176; and Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism.*
32. On Hull House, see the following works by Jane Addams: *Twenty Years at Hull-House*; *Democracy and Social Ethics* [1902] (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2002); *My Friend, Julia Lathrop* [1935] (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004). See also Mary Jo Deegan, *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School, 1892–1918* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988); John C. Farrell, *Beloved Lady: A History of Jane Addams' Ideas on Reform and Peace* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967); J. David Greenstone, "Dorothea Dix and Jane Addams: From Transcendentalism to Pragmatism in American Social Reform," *Social Service Review* (December 1979), 527–559; Louise Knight, *Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Lagemann, ed., *Jane Addams on Education*; Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club*; Dorothy Ross, "Gendered Social Knowledge: Domestic Discourse, Jane Addams, and the Possibilities of Social Science," in Helene Silverberg, ed., *Gender and American Social Science: The Formative Years* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 235–264; Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism;* and Kathryn Kish Sklar, "Hull House in the 1890s: A Community of Women Reformers," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* 10, 4 (1985), 658–677.
33. Alice Hamilton, "Jane Addams of Hull-House, Chicago," *Social Service: A Quarterly Survey,* 27, 1 (June-August 1953), 12–13.
34. John Dewey to Jane Addams, January 19, 1896, Jane Addams MSS, as quoted in Lasch, ed., *The Social Thought of Jane Addams,* 176. See also Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 89. On "A Modern Lear," see also Louise Knight, "Biography's Window on Social Change: Benevolence and Justice in Jane Addams's 'A Modern Lear,' " *Journal of Women's History,* 9, 1 (Spring 1997), 111–138.
35. Jane Addams, "A Modern Lear," in Elshtain, ed., *The Jane Addams Reader,* 175–176. The essay was completed in 1896, but not published until 1912.
36. See Menand, *The Metaphysical Club,* 315.
37. Addams wrote further of what called the "noble fibres" in each person. In modern society, Addams argued, "to pull these many fibres, fragile, impalpable and constantly breaking as they are, into one impulse, to develop that mere impulse through its feeble and tentative stages into action, is no easy task, but lateral progress is impossible without it." See Addams, "A Modern Lear," in Elshtain,

*The Jane Addams,* 176. See also Lagemann, *Jane Addams on Education,* 2–3. On Addams's idea of "lateral progress," see Maurice Hamington, *The Social Philosophy of Jane Addams* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 43–47.

38. John Dewey quoted in Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896–1903* [1936] (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transactions, 2007), 473.
39. Florence Kelley, "Hull House," *New England Magazine* (July 1898), 554, 559.
40. Anne Firor Scott, introduction to *My Friend, Julia Lathrop,* xvi-xvii.
41. *Hull-House Maps and Papers: A Presentation of Nationalities and Wages in a Congested District of Chicago, Together with Comments and Essays on Problems Growing Out of the Social Conditions,* By the Residents of Hull-House, a Social Settlement (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007), first published 1895. On this groundbreaking study, see Rima Lunin Schultz, "Introduction to *Hull-House Maps and Papers,*" 2007 edition; and Kathryn Kish Sklar, "*Hull-House Maps and Papers*: Social Science as Women's Work in the 1890s," in Silverberg, *Gender and American Social Science,* 127–155.
42. Addams, *My Friend, Julia Lathrop,* 84.
43. Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, January 26 [1900 added in pencil], and [Katherine Camp] to Elizabeth Francis Camp [1899 added in pencil], box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Anna Camp to Camp family, January 28, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Miss Fenton was likely Frances Fenton, who earned a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Chicago in 1911, with the dissertation "The Influence of Newspaper Presentations upon the Growth of Crime and other Anti-social Activities."
44. See Elizabeth Francis Camp to Anna Camp, February 10, 1902, box 53, Edwards Family Collection (1484); and Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, n.d., likely 1901, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
45. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, May 4, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 15, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
46. Alice Hamilton to Agnes Hamilton, July 3, 1898 and July 2, 1898, Hamilton Family Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. On the bicycle craze in late nineteenth-century Chicago, see Duis, *Challenging Chicago.*

47. At this time, few historians were pursuing research in the field of social history; a number of those who were doing so were women. On women pursuing studies of social history, see Julie Des Jardins, *Women and the Historical Enterprise in America: Gender, Race, and the Politics of Memory, 1880–1945* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); and Ellen Fitzpatrick, *History's Memory: Writing America's Past, 1880–1980* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
48. See John Dewey, *The School and Society* [1899] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 22.
49. Althea Harmer, "Basketry," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 1 (September 1903), 119.
50. Althea Harmer, "Textile Work Connected with American Colonial History," *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 9 (May 1904), 670–671.
51. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 195.
52. Addams, *Twenty Years,* 156–157. On the Labor Museum as an "applied experiment," see Mary Jo Deegan, "Play from the Perspective of George Herbert Mead," Introduction to George Herbert Mead's *Play, School, and Society* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), lxxviii.
53. John Dewey, "The School as Social Center," *Elementary School Teacher,* III, 2 (October 1902), 78–79.
54. Addams, *Twenty Years,* 155–156.
55. Polacheck, *I Came a Stranger,* 65–66.
56. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 17, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 13, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
57. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 26, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 9, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
58. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 22, 1900, box 4, Gerard Swope Papers, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
59. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, July 23 [1900], box 4, Gerard Swope Papers, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
60. "First Outline of a Labor Museum at Hull House, Chicago," page 7, Hull House Association Records, II. Hull-House Activities and Events, C. Clubs, 30. Labor Museum, in Jane Addams Papers, microfilm resource.
61. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, November 14, 1900, box 4, Gerard Swope Papers, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
62. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, January 23, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.

63. "First Outline of a Labor Museum at Hull House, Chicago," p. 2, Hull House Association Records, II. Hull-House Activities and Events, C. Clubs, 30. Labor Museum, in Jane Addams Papers, Microfilm resource. See also *Hull-House Bulletin,* IV, iii (Autumn 1900), 8; and Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, October 28 [1900], Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 15, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
64. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, November 8 [1900], Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
65. Polacheck, *I Came a Stranger,* 63–64.
66. See Hamington, *The Social Philosophy of Jane Addams,* 160. Hamington points out that in *No Place of Grace,* the historian Jackson Lears is critical of the Labor Museum for its promotion of a "therapeutic approach" to industrial work. Hamington maintains that "Lears's critique would be appropriate if the Labor Museum were removed from its multifaceted theoretical context," which included "programs on 'trade unionism' and histories of collective worker activities" (160). See T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 80. On Dewey and industrial democracy, see Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy,* 178–179.
67. Frederick Taylor's classic work is *The Scientific Principles of Management* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911). On the influence of Taylor on schools, see Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893–1958* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 94–97. See also Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*, 185–189.
68. John Dewey, "Democracy in Education." *The Elementary School Teacher,* IV, 4 (December, 1903), 193.
69. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 195.
70. Laboratory School Work Reports, May 26, 1899, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. On the connections between the Labor Museum and the Laboratory School, see Farrell, *Beloved Lady,* 94. Mary Hill brought a Laboratory School class to the textile room, and described it as a "pretty awful expedition," but does not provide an explanation. See Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, January 22, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 14, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
71. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum,* 85.
72. John Dewey, "Psychology of Occupations," *Elementary School Record,* I, 3 (April 1900), 83.
73. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 312.

74. As Mayhew and Edwards wrote of this shifting of perspectives, "There is constant need for her to be agile in her change from one to the other." See *The Dewey School,* 312.
75. Jane Addams to Mary Rozet Smith, July 28, 1899 (11777), in *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
76. Jane Addams to Vida D. Scudder, April 25, 1900 (11780), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
77. On Anita McCormick Blaine, see Gilbert A. Harrison, *A Timeless Affair: The Life of Anita McCormick Blaine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979).
78. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, November 2, 1899, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 12, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
79. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, December 29 [1899], and January 2, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
80. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, December 29 [1899], Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
81. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, January 10, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
82. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, January 16 [1900], Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 9, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
83. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, February 2, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 14, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
84. This is conjecture, as I did not find evidence in the teachers' letters of connections between the Labor Museum and the idea of the J.D. H.H. school.
85. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 10, 1901, Gerard Swope Papers, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
86. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 18, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 11, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
87. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), March 11, 1901, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
88. "To Train Backward Children," *The New York Times,* August 27, 1899; and "To Work on Stunted Minds," *The New York Times,* September 30, 1899. Mary Hill seemed to struggle with the

terminology used to label the children of the Physiological School. In one letter, she writes that one group is called "high-grade imbeciles," but she didn't know what the second group was called. See Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, January 15, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 9, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.

89. Advertisement for the Chicago Physiological School, appearing in *Pediatrics,* 9 (1900), x.
90. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, January 10, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
91. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, February 19, 1900, and February 20, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections. I was not able to ascertain that Winifred Miller was a student at the Laboratory School, though from this account it seems that she was. There was a Janet Miller listed in the records I have located on student enrollment, but no evidence that the two were related. See List of students enrolled, box 2, volume 6, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection, held previously at Teachers College Library, now held at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
92. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, May 15, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 15, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections. Camp spoke on correlation; see John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed" [1897], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Early Works, 1882–1898,* Vol. 5 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 84–95.
93. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 26, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 9, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
94. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, October 31, 1900, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 15, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
95. On George Herbert Mead's involvement in the Physiological School, see Deegan, *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School,* 111–112; and Mary Jo Deegan and John S. Burger, "George Herbert Mead and Social Reform: His Work and Writings," in Peter Hamilton, ed., *George Herbert Mead: Critical Assessments,* Volume 1 (New York: Routledge, 1992), 171–183.
96. Reese, *The Power and the Promise,* xxi. On vacation schools, see his ch. 6. See also F. Spencer Baldwin, "Boston Vacation Schools," *The School Journal,* 65, 5 (August 16, 1902), 108–110; Ella Lyman Cabot, *Volunteer Help*; Kenneth Gold, "From Vacation School to Summer School," *History of Education Quarterly,* 42, 1 (Spring 2002), 18–49; and Clarence Perry, *Wider Use of the School Plant* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1910).

97. D.J. Milliken, "Chicago Vacation Schools", *American Journal of Sociology,* IV, 3 (November 1898), 305.
98. See Putnam, "Vacation Schools."
99. Reese, *The Power and the Promise,* 161.
100. See "Chautauqua: A System of Popular Education, Program of the 27th Annual Assembly," *The Chautauquan,* 31, 4 (July 1900).
101. On the Chautauqua Institution, see Andrew C. Rieser, *The Chautauqua Moment: Protestants, Progressives, and the Culture of Modern Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003). On William James's reaction, see 216–217.
102. See Katherine Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, February 18, 1900**,** box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
103. Katherine Camp to Jacob Andrus Camp, February 18, 1900**,** box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. On the course titles, see "Chautauqua: A System of Popular Education, Program of the 27th Annual Assembly," *The Chautauquan,* 31, 4 (July 1900), 398–417.
104. "Chautauqua: A System of Popular Education, Program of the 27th Annual Assembly," *The Chautauquan,* 31, 4 (July 1900), 416.
105. Laura Runyon to George Vincent, May 2, 1900 (17457), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
106. John Dewey to George Vincent, May 12, 1900 (00629), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
107. Laura Runyon to Nellie Griffith, January 31, 1927 (08292), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004). Runyon returned the next summer, and conducted the school for a second year with an assistant.
108. Margaret Copeland to Miss Boydston, September 11, 1968, held at the Chautauqua Institution Archives, Smith Library, Chautauqua, New York.
109. Laura Runyon wrote an account of the Chautauqua vacation school experience, but I was unable to locate it. See Laura Runyon to Nellie Griffith, January 31, 1927 (08292), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
110. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Anna Camp, October 1, 1901, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
111. See Cornelia James Cannon, "The History of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union: A Civic Laboratory," 1927, held in the Women's Educational and Industrial Union Collection, Schlesinger

Library, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. On the WEIU see also Sarah Deutsch, *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870–1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

112. Sarah Stage, "Ellen Richards and the Social Significance of the Home Economics Movement," in Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 27. On Richards, see also Caroline Hunt, *The Life of Ellen H. Richards* (Boston, MA: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1912).
113. Elizabeth Camp (Bess) to Katherine Camp [spring 1901], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
114. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp [c.1901 in pencil], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Harry Gillett (sometimes spelled Gillette) taught science at the Laboratory School. He remained at the Laboratory School long after the Deweys left Chicago, assuming administrative positions there. He also ran Camp Highlands, a summer camp in Wisconsin. Alice Lachmund was born in 1877 in St. Louis, and while a member of the Smith College class of 1899, she didn't graduate; she received a Ph.B. from the University of Chicago. See historical background information for the William Carbin's Letters to Miss L. Collection, 1913–1916, Archival Collection in Five College Archives and Manuscript Collections.
115. Cabot, *Volunteer Help,* 36–37.
116. "Hot Weather School," undated *Boston Herald* newspaper article included in letter from Elizabeth Camp (Bess) to her mother, Elizabeth Francis Camp, July 17, 1901, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
117. One reason for the scholarly neglect of the Junior Republics is likely that the founder, William R. George, was found guilty of misconduct with young girls in 1914.
118. Baldwin, "Boston Vacation Schools," 108.
119. Detlev Bronk, "Marine Biological Laboratory: Origins and Patrons," *Science,* 189 (August 22, 1975). 613–614. See also Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 86–88.
120. See June Edwards, *Women in American Education, 1820–1955: The Female Force and Educational Reform* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), ch. 4, "Ellen Swallow Richards: Science Education for School, Home and Society."
121. See Katherine Camp to her family, July 16, 1899, box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484); Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, July 5, 1902, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891);

Anna Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, June 21, 1903, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), all located in the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Katherine Camp was in Woods Hole for all the above summers (1899, 1902, 1903); the letters verify that Althea Harmer was there in 1899, though she may have accompanied Camp during the other summers as well. According to the MBL records, Katherine Camp enrolled officially in 1899 and 1902; Althea Harmer did not enroll in either of these years. Email correspondence with Diane Rielinger, Records Manager/Archivist, MBL. On Woods Hole, see Frank R. Lillie, *The Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944); David Hapgood, *Charles R. Crane: The Man Who Bet on People* (USA: Institute of World Affairs, 2000), 26; Jane Maienschein, *100 Years Exploring Life, 1888–1988* (Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 1989); and Philip J. Pauly, *Controlling Life: Jacques Loeb and the Engineering Ideal in Biology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 75.

122. Katherine Camp to the Camp family July 16 [1899 in pencil], box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
123. Katherine Camp to the Camp family July 16 [1899 in pencil], box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), and Katherine Camp to Anna Camp, July 27, 1899, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
124. Elizabeth Francis Camp to William Camp (step-son), June 5, 1902, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
125. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, July 5, 1902, box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
126. See Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America,* xvi.
127. George Dykhuizen's notes from George Herbert Mead's 1926 seminar on John Dewey, 19, box 7, George Herbert Mead Collection, Special Collections, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago. The text under discussion was John Dewey's *Experience and Nature* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1926), 157.
128. Dewey, "The Theory of the Chicago Experiment," in Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 466.
129. Katherine Camp to Elizabeth Francis Camp, [1901?], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. On Loeb, see Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 10. See also Philip J. Pauly, *Controlling Life: Jacques Loeb and the Engineering Ideal in Biology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

130. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, April 20, 1900, box 4, Gerard Swope Collection, Institute Archives and Special Collections, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Library.
131. Robert Westbrook, *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 34.

## CHAPTER 6

1. "The Modest John Dewey: The Philosopher at 80 Objects to Another 'Canonization,' " *Newsweek,* IV, 17 (October 23, 1939), 33.
2. John Dewey to Anna Camp Edwards, October 24, 1949, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
3. Mary Hill Swope to John Dewey, October 11, 1949 (11284), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
4. Lillie Hoddeson and Vicki Daitch, *True Genius: The Life and Science of John Bardeen* (Washington, DC: Joseph Henry Press, 2002), 14–15.
5. Laura Runyon to Nellie Griffiths, January 31, 1927 (08292), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
6. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, February 28, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 1, folder 9, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
7. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, March 4, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 14, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
8. Elizabeth Francis Camp to Elizabeth Camp (Bess), February 21 [1901], box 45, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
9. Max Eastman, "John Dewey: My Teacher and Friend," in his *Great Companions: Critical Memoirs of Some Famous Friends* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1959), 274–275.
10. Elizabeth Camp (Bess) to Katherine Camp [spring 1901], box 9, Camp Family Collection (891), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
11. Herman Lukens to John Dewey, April 20, 1901 (00735), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
12. G. W. A. Luckey to John Dewey, April 22, 1901 (00736), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
13. Myron T. Scudder to William Rainey Harper, April 19, 1901 (00734), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).

14. On parents, see Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School: The Laboratory School of the University of Chicago, 1896–1903* [1936] (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transactions, 2007), 397–401; and Mrs. William Kent to Anna Camp Edwards, February 18, 1933, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. See also Ida B. DePencier, *The History of the Laboratory Schools: The University of Chicago, 1896–1965* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1967).
15. Mary Hill to Gerard Swope, May 9, 1901, Mary Hill Swope Papers, 1899–1933, box 2, folder 13, University of Illinois at Chicago Library, Special Collections.
16. George Herbert Mead to Helen Castle Mead, May 16, 1901, George Herbert Mead Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
17. Robert McCaul, "Dewey, Harper, and the University of Chicago, April 1902-May 1903," ch. 5, in William Brickman and Stanley Lehrer, eds., *John Dewey: Master Educator* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1966, 2nd ed.), 51. See also Director's Report. School of Education., written by John Dewey after the 1902–1903 academic year, box 22, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. The School of Education included, along with the two merged elementary schools, the Chicago Manual Training School and the South Side Academy. See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 14.
18. On the last three years of the Laboratory School, see DePencier, *The History of the Laboratory Schools;* George Dykuizen, *The Life and Mind of John Dewey* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1973); Nellie Lucy Griffiths, "A History of the Organization of the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago," unpublished master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1927; McCaul, ch. 4, 5, and 6, in Brickman and Lehrer, eds., *John Dewey: Master Educator*; Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School;* Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995); Charlene Haddock Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), ch. 4; Laurel Tanner, *Dewey's Laboratory School: Lessons for Today* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997); and Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).
19. In *The Dewey School* appendices, the authors include a list of teachers and assistants, and of the 114 listed, 15 were married women. Some may have been widows; Ella Flagg Young was, for instance. See Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* Appendix III, 479–480.
20. On the biographical backgrounds and source materials for the four teachers, see Ch. 2. When gravely ill with breast cancer (treated at the

time with extensive x-rays), Bardeen spent time at the Mead home in Chicago recuperating from her treatments, where, her husband wrote, Helen Mead was "doing everything possible for her." See Althea Harmer Bardeen to Charles W. Bardeen (her father-in-law), undated, on the naming of her daughter; and Charles R. Bardeen to Charles W. Bardeen, December 23, 1915 and February 24, 1920, on Althea Harmer Bardeen's visit to the Meads, held in the Charles R. Bardeen Papers, Steenbock Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

21. Flora Cooke, "Review of *The Dewey School*," *Progressive Education,* XIV, 3 (March 1937), 218. Cooke worked with Francis Parker at the Cook County Normal School, and then was appointed principal of the Francis Parker Elementary School on the city's North Side.
22. See Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "Jane Addams: An Educational Biography," introductory essay to her edited collection, *Jane Addams on Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1985), 35, on gender, sociology, and social work; William Reese, *The Power and the Promise of School Reform* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986) on vacation schools; and Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), on women's place in the sciences.
23. Kevin Mattson, *Creating a Democratic Public* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 106.
24. See Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 378, who argues, "Progressives struggled with themselves over the choice between professionalism and grassroots democracy, though in the end professionalism would win out."
25. See Jonathan Alter, *The Defining Moment: FDR's Hundred Days and the Triumph of Hope* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 92. On the influence of John Dewey's ideas on the New Deal's Federal Art Project, see Victoria Grieve, *The Federal Art Project and the Creation of Middlebrow Culture* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), especially ch. 1.
26. T. J. McCormack, "Review of *School and Society*," *Open Court,* 14 (1900), 564, 569.
27. John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 10.
28. John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 214. In *Dewey's Laboratory School: Lessons for Today,* Tanner's subtitle indicates her extensive discussion of the implications of the Laboratory School for current school improvement efforts.
29. This in-service experience happened a few years before my discovery of Louis Menand's *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), which pointed me in the direction of my study of the Laboratory School teachers. For a

discussion of the efforts of Teach for America to define, recruit, and prepare "great teachers," see Amanda Ripley, "What Makes a Great Teacher?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, 305, 1 (January/February 2010), 58–66.

30. Ryan, *John Dewey,* 367.
31. John Dewey, "What Is the Matter with Teaching?" *Margaret Haley's Bulletin,* III, 2 (September 30, 1925), 1, 23, 38.
32. John Dewey, *The Educational Situation,* Part I: "As Concerns the Elementary School" [1901], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Middle Works, 1899–1924,* Vol. 1 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), 268. This essay was first published as "The Situation as Regards the Course of Study."
33. Dewey, "The Educational Situation," 272–273. Dewey cites Ella Flagg Young's *Isolation in the School* here. See Ella Flagg Young, *Isolation in the School* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1901).
34. John Dewey, "The Relation of Theory to Practice in Education", in C. A. McMurry, ed., *The Relation of Theory to Practice in the Education of Teachers,* Third Yearbook of the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education, Part 1 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1904), 16.
35. Dewey, "The Educational Situation," 273–280.
36. George Herbert Mead, address of 1907, held in Jane Addams Papers, Peace Collection, Swarthmore College Library. For a similar argument from our times, see Theodore Sizer, "A Better Way," *Daedalus* (summer 2002), 26–29.
37. Laura Runyon to Katherine Camp Mayhew, July 14, 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
38. Currently, states vary in their teacher certification requirements, with some requiring a fifth year of college to earn a credential and others incorporating the certification into a normal four-year college degree program. For a recent report critical of teacher education programs, see Arthur Levine, "Educating School Teachers," The Education Schools Project, September 2006.
39. The first teacher was Johanna Kirkman, a colleague of mine in California, and the second was my younger daughter's first and second grade teacher, Becky Briles.
40. Gloria Ladson-Billings, *Crossing Over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2001).
41. For a discussion of the benefits of specialist teachers at the elementary level, see Liping Ma, *Knowing and Teaching Elementary Mathematics: Teachers' Understanding of Fundamental Mathematics in China and the United States* (Matwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999).
42. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 375.

43. Harold W. Stevenson and James W. Stigler, *The Learning Gap: Why Our Schools Are Failing and What We Can Learn from Japanese and Chinese Education* (New York: Touchstone, 1992); and James W. Stigler and James Hiebert, *The Teaching Gap: Best Ideas from the World's Teachers for Improving Education in the Classrooms* (New York: Free Press, 1999).
44. See Barbara Benham Tye and Lisa O'Brian, "Why Are Experienced Teachers Leaving the Profession?" *Phi Delta Kappan,* 84, 1 (September 2002), 24–32.
45. Katharine Andrews Healy to Katherine Camp Mayhew, August 20 (year not given, but approximately 1930), box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
46. Katharine Andrews Healy to Katherine Camp Mayhew, June 15, year not given, but approximately 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
47. Notes taken at Mothers' Luncheon, October 15, 1928, box 12, Katherine Camp Mayhew Collection (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
48. Grace Fulmer, account of her Laboratory School experience, year not given, but approximately 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
49. Louise Knight, *Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 275–277.
50. In an article on health care reform, the physician Atul Gawande held up the example of the Mayo Clinic, where "the doctors and nurses, and even the janitors, sat in meetings almost weekly, working on ideas to make the service and the care better, not to get more money out of patients." See Atul Gawande, "The Cost Conundrum," *The New Yorker,* June 1, 2009, 43.
51. It is perhaps enough to point out the existence of what have become known as "dropout factories": the almost 2,000 high schools in the United States, with largely minority student populations, which graduate less (sometimes much less) than 60 percent of their students. See Robert Balfanz and Nettie Legters, "Locating the Dropout Crisis," Report from the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk and Johns Hopkins University, September 2004.
52. Katherine Camp Mayhew, "Purpose of Education," n.d., box 17, Katherine Camp Mayhew Papers (6561), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Throughout this book, I have presented arguments from the teachers' writings that indicate that the work of the school was based on connections made to the "real-world" social occupations at the heart of the curriculum.

Some scholars argue, on the contrary, that the Laboratory School was not true to its idea of a "real-world" curriculum. See Lee Benson, John Puckett, and Ira Harkavy, *Dewey's Dream: Universities and Democracies in an Age of Education Reform* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2007).

53. Anna Camp Edwards to Mrs. Pigman, March 5, 1935, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Mrs. Pigman is listed in the preface to *The Dewey School* as "Marion Le Brun Pigman" and is thanked by the authors for "her aid in the first revisions of the manuscript."
54. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 307–308.
55. According to a preliminary study of the program, the students seemed more enthusiastic about attending school and showed an increase in their grades in math and science. Such programs address another urgent problem plaguing twenty-first-century American children—what the Center for Ecoliteracy's director Zenobia Barlow calls "diet-related disease in children," including obesity and asthma. The remedy, according to both Waters and Barlow, is to "transform eating habits" and "bring [children] into a vital relationship with food." To do this, they argue, we must also transform the school lunch program, which as parents of public school children know all too well, is dominated by processed food. See Jane Ciabattari, "The Incredible Edible Schoolyard," *NRTA Live and Learn,* Spring 2005. See also Larry Hickman, "The Edible Schoolyard: Agrarian Ideals and Our Industrial Milieu," in Paul B. Thompson and Thomas C. Hilde, eds., *The Agrarian Roots of Pragmatism* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000), 195–205. For an article critical of the Edible Schoolyard program, see Caitlin Flanagan, "Cultivating Failure," *The Atlantic Monthly*, January/February 2010, 101–111.
56. Corby Kummer, "Fixing Lunch," *The Atlantic Monthly,* July/August 2009, 32.
57. John Dewey, *School and Society* [1899] (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 91.
58. Recent reports indicate that math scores have remained stagnant since NCLB, even as the focus on reading and math has crowded out subjects like history, science, and the arts. On math scores, see Sam Dillon, "Sluggish Results Seen in Math Scores," October 15, 2009, *The New York Times,* A18–20.
59. Javier C. Hernandez, "A Moo-Moo Here, and Better Test Scores Later," *The New York Times,* October 20, 2009, A1.
60. E. D. Hirsch makes the case for a "common core curriculum in the early grades." See, among other works, E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *The Making of Americans: Democracy and our Schools* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 186.

61. Mattson, *Creating a Democratic Public,* 1.
62. Edwin Bjorkman, "Pragmatism—What Is It? By Professor William James," November 3, 1907, *The New York Times,* SM8.
63. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*. Similarly, in *Democratic Hope,* Robert Westbrook discusses "Revitalizing Democratic Publics." See his *Democratic Hope: Pragmatism and the Politics of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 234–240.
64. See Paul Tough, *Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008).
65. John Dewey, "The School as Social Center," *The Elementary School Teacher,* III, 2 (October 1902), 86.
66. John Dewey "Cut-and-Try School Methods" [1913], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Middle Works, 1899–1924,* Vol. 7 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), 106. To an extent, some charter schools represent this kind of experimental approach to education.
67. John Dewey, "Experiment in Education" [1917], in Jo Ann Boydston, ed., *John Dewey: The Middle Works, 1899–1924,* Vol. 10 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976), 123.
68. John Dewey to William Rainey Harper, April 13, 1901 (00720), *The Correspondence of John Dewey* (electronic resource) (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999–2004).
69. Michael Sandel, *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality in Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 186.
70. Sandel, *Public Philosophy,* 187.
71. Deborah Meier argues similarly that teachers who make important decisions in schools are models, for students, of informed citizens in a democracy. See Meier, *Will Standards Save Public Education?* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2000).
72. Dewey, *School and Society,* 93–94.
73. DePencier, *The History of the Laboratory Schools,* 42.
74. To promote excellent teaching in these ways and to apply the findings of these laboratory schools, all schools would require adequate resources for rich curriculum creation. Conditions such as those described in Jonathan Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* diminish the self-worth and learning capacities of the children unlucky enough to attend underfunded schools. These conditions also signal disrespect for the teachers who call such schools their places of work. The profession must be more visible in its unwillingness to tolerate inferior conditions in the workplaces that are also centers of learning for our children. See Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1991).
75. DePencier, *History of the Laboratory Schools,* 34–36, 22–23.
76. Mayhew and Edwards, *The Dewey School,* 373.

77. Herbert Kliebard, "Success and Failure in Educational Reform: Are There Historical 'Lessons'?" in his *Forging the American Curriculum: Essays in Curriculum History and Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 101. He quotes John Dewey's *The Sources of a Science of Education* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1929), 28, 30.
78. Kliebard, "Success and Failure," 110.
79. Grace Fulmer, account of her Laboratory School experience, year not given, but approximately 1930, box 44, Edwards Family Collection (1484), Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

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