# The Curriculum Foundations Reader

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*To all educators and their students past, present, and future engaged in making and (re)interpreting curriculum.*

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CHAPTER 1

# Introduction: Exploring the Enduring Questions of Curriculum in Context

In the late 1940s, Beatrice Doonan of the Groveland School in Wayzata, Minnesota faced a problem that is still familiar to teachers in today's classrooms. Ms. Doonan had a difficult time getting her fifth grade classroom of 18 boys and 11 girls to feel a sense of "unity" needed to facilitate a cooperative planning approach. Indeed, Ms. Doonan was tired of "hav[ing] to assume the role of a policeman" and felt she needed to make significant changes in order for the class to embrace "the freedom to experiment, and to make mistakes if necessary, and the opportunity to solve their problems, as they saw them" (Doonan, c.1947).

When we came across this document, an eight-page report about one teacher's attempt to remake her classroom in a rural school in the upper-Midwest just after World War II, we were immediately struck by how contemporary the challenges expressed by this educator seemed. As former teachers and current educational researchers, we have seen countless educators try to shift their classrooms from teacher-centered, "sage on the stage" setups to student-centered, cooperative learning spaces. And while the teachers engaging in this work tend to point out many similar challenges and impediments, the problems always seem contemporary, as if we educators are perpetually trying to figure out how to meet the same challenges within our classrooms.

Yet, over the past 100-plus years, there have been countless Ms. Doonans working in American schools: in big cities and small towns found in every corner of the country; in pre-schools, elementary schools, and high schools; and in communities that reflect the full range of the



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United States' demographic diversity. The work of these educators is part of a history of teaching that has played out in the daily experiences of students, teachers, and administrators. It is a past usually considered so mundane that it is not often archived, written about, or presented as relevant to our current efforts to improve education. We argue that the Ms. Doonans of the past are, in fact, vital to our future, perhaps more so than the major figures of traditional and typical educational and curriculum history.

Educators have long been wrestling with how to best harness the dynamics within the classroom. Philip Jackson's (1968) book, *Life in Classrooms*, directs educators to the importance of "the daily grind" of schooling: the routines, roles, and repetitions of classroom experience for teachers and students. For Jackson, the habitual features of teaching and learning could lull an observer into believing that education is a rather simple, unchanging endeavor. He wrote,

> Classroom life…is too complex an affair to be viewed or talked about from any single perspective…This means we must read, and look, and listen, and count things, and talk to people, and even muse introspectively over the memories of our own childhood. (Jackson, 1968, pp. vii–viii)

Simultaneously, as educators we know that the classroom is a space where many issues are wrestled with and lived out in messy and indeterminate ways. Maxine Greene (1988), drawing from her passion for arts and imagination, encouraged teachers and students to release their imagination and to look at lived experiences from *as-ifs* rather than from fixed realities. She states, "There are always vacancies: there are always roads not taken, vistas not acknowledged. The search must be ongoing; the end can never be quite known" (Greene, 1988, p. 15).

This leads us to one of the central paradoxes of the profession: teaching is full of both constants and changes. Becoming an insightful, incisive educator means understanding the dynamics between the persistent features of the classroom and the rapid developments within and beyond the school's walls. Put another way, a keen knowledge of how the educational environment in classrooms has developed and changed over time empowers educators to critically view current classroom life and informs efforts to support current and future students.

Decades before Jackson and Greene articulated these notions, Ms. Doonan and her fifth graders embraced a classroom life that was

complex, incomplete, and brimming with perspectives. Ms. Doonan described her effort to remake her classroom into a cooperative space as follows:

> This I did by continually setting up situations in which the whole class participated. The problems we discussed were real problems from the playground, the hallways, the lunchroom, and the classroom.… Through this continual process of sharing, the boys and girls gradually accepted more responsibility in carrying out their plans. I allowed them freedom to experiment and the opportunity to solve their own problems, as they saw them and to make mistakes if necessary.
>
> When we had a common problem to solve, we moved our seats into a circle. I also found a spot in the circle. It seemed that through changing the physical setup of our room, it fostered group participation. There seemed to be better participation. There seemed to be better interaction, or give and take among the members. Finally, when we arrived at a solution to our problem, it was the result of many ideas. (Doonan, c.1947)

Beatrice Doonan's life in her classroom became richer when she reflected on her subjectivities, her memories of teaching and learning, and her students' learning and teaching. Her reflections were part of an informal network organized by Neva L. Boyd, a pioneering, if often overlooked, educator who helped develop and promote play-based educational and therapeutic practices through her work at Hull House, Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and finally the Illinois Department of Public Welfare (Simon, 2011). During the postwar period, Boyd provided training for teachers and schools, such as Ms. Doonan at the Groveland School, who wanted to incorporate more cooperative and recreational learning experiences into their classrooms. Boyd collected reports from these schools as part of her own research, creating a record of these pedagogical experiments as well as spaces for educators to describe and reflect on the process.

## 1.1 Why We Need This Book

We teach curriculum foundation courses for general teacher education and graduate programs. In these courses, we introduce theoretical and historical analyzes of curriculum and education with the goal that teacher candidates and in-service teachers might explore curriculum from historical perspectives. We encourage students to use these broader historical

and theoretical contexts to inform their teaching and learning. When our students are provided opportunities to reflect the *histories* of teaching and learning within a historical context, most students find direct connections between curricular issues of the past and the present. This investigation promotes an in-depth, historical analysis of contemporary curriculum issues to reflect on their practice and thus to rethink their assumptions about teaching: that the ways they experience schooling is universal; that the way schools work today are how they have always worked; and, that teachers and students have limited influence on how schools function.

Our initial thought for writing this book originated from our experiences with and reflections on historicizing curriculum and reconnecting it with the present. Practitioners tend to consider theory-practice as a dichotomy, not as a coherent, interwoven curriculum inquiry. Consequently, many teacher education programs have eliminated foundations courses, as these classes do not provide practical knowledge for teacher candidates to readily implement in their classrooms. We argue that the history of education, but even more poignantly the history of curriculum, should be maintained as a crucial component of teacher education. By thinking about practice theoretically and considering theories practically, this book attempts to develop theory-practice as a coherent, interwoven framework for educational practitioners. In this manner, theory-practice is bound to teachers' and students' lived, educational experiences and involves making space to decipher and theorize our lived experiences. In the case of this book, we hope teachers and their students will theorize from the experiences of past educators and make connections to their own current realities. This *Reader* delves into the past, present, and future continuum of historical inquiry with the aim of developing historically conscious educational spaces. While engaging with this *Reader*, teachers examine unique experiences of individuals, groups, and institutions from the past through archival sources. Furthermore, they advance historical consciousness by making connections to similar issues over time through secondary source-based synthesis essays and related primary sources in this *Reader*. According to Rüsen (1993), historical consciousness entails learning "from the actions, ideas and mores of the past, recognizing how much things [change], yet still taking the past into account in facing the future" (Rüsen, 1993, as cited in Seixas, 2017, p. 596). This form of historical consciousness is genetic historical consciousness, that which requires historiographical

knowledge—reading multiple historical perspectives and interpretations—in order to come to one's own understanding. In this case, teachers review and rethink their experience today with the use of historical consciousness and thus take actions on our contemporary challenges with the assistance of these multiple understandings of the past.

This *Reader* provides comprehensive, inquiry-based analysis of curriculum issues by challenging the compartmentalized understanding of theory and curriculum foundations through multiple perspectives. A categorical division of curriculum foundations perpetuates the misconception that the theories and movements in curriculum history are clear, distinct, and almost partisan. This presentation provides the impression that one major movement controls people's ways of thinking rather than considering such movements as part of a larger zeitgeist. Furthermore, by representing one school of thought that is heavily reliant on a major thinker, problems can be generated as students may not only come to overly trust a prominent thinker, but they may also normalize the practices followed by that theorist. For example, progressive education is oftentimes conceived as a clear set of practices invented by Dewey. If a teacher cannot accomplish these practices, then the teacher cannot be progressive.

This book examines curriculum and teaching-learning drawn from historical documents and regards curriculum history as "in progress" rather than a ready-made, retrievable archive. As individual educational researchers with our own perspectives, we analyze educational, lived experiences of teachers and students by historicizing curriculum practices. The hallmark, curriculum question posed by Herbert Spencer, "What knowledge is of most worth?" is an epistemological question in curriculum studies. In addition to this inquiry, this book includes other critical curriculum questions: "What knowledge is most often taught?" and "What is actually learned or experienced in the classroom?"

The main focus of the curricular inquiry in this book encompasses the question of what curriculum looks like from the classroom perspective. Through historical artifacts we examine the lived experiences of teachers, students, parents, communities, and others across time and space. These artifacts offer multiple perspectives on key aspects of what classrooms look like from the experiences of a diverse range of youth and adults. Our central goal is to use these artifacts to craft a framework of curriculum inquiry that examines the relationships between the specific curriculum, teacher materials, and broader educational issues. This framework

helps us identify major curricular issues by examining curriculum materials, lived experience, and informal educational spaces in the past. While using historical artifacts to develop a curricular framework, this *Reader* emphasizes the importance of exploring curriculum practices theoretically. The curated sets of sources with each chapter intend to bring readers beyond the intellectual debates about an issue and study the actual ways an issue played out in and around schools and/or informal educational spaces.

An essential question in curriculum history is what curriculum materials are saved and retrievable. Textbooks are well preserved, but the actual materials used in teaching seem to be more ephemeral, such as lesson plans, handouts, assignments written on boards, instructions spoken, etc. Given this, what approaches and methods are curriculum historians left with who are intent on working not only at the classroom level, but also at the microlevel of teaching and learning? Questions such as these may cause preservice and current teachers to view their work through a historical perspective, thus altering the ways in which they preserve the artifacts of their own work in the classroom.

As Jackson (1968) guides us, the investigation of classroom practices is driven from the messiness and ambiguity of teaching, not from normalized and universalized curriculum and teaching. To avoid a universalized approach to curriculum, readers will explore diverse perspectives through theoretical and historical review of curricular practices contained within archival documents and curriculum materials. Our curriculum inquiry focuses on larger social forces as manifested through schooling and/or individual experiences. We analyze educational experiences from lived experiences with the use of autobiographies and oral history projects. These narratives underscore struggles to make voices heard and to promote equity. We also highlight political, sociological and cultural elements in articulating curriculum foundations by investigating the roles and relationships of a society in constructing education as well as examining habitual practices, materials, modes of expression, and values in education. A broader understanding of curriculum, from this larger context of lived educational experiences, creates a vision of curriculum as a verb (from its Latin origin currere), thus going beyond any fixed written documents/textbooks/teacher guidebooks. Curriculum in-the-making, rather than curriculum as ready-made text, looks at curriculum history as in-progress, rather than retrieving fixed archives.

## 1.2 Historical Inquiry

Our approach to curriculum foundations largely consists of collecting and analyzing curriculum materials as examples of educators mediating problems and issues both in classrooms and other learning contexts. A larger sociopolitical context provides the background information to investigate these curricular practices through historical inquiry. In our investigation, we consider historical sources that raise questions such as: How did educators, parents, and students respond to curriculum changes in arts programming in a large urban district due to budget cuts? How did teachers and principals respond to the open education movement of the 1960s and 1970s? What voices were included in a nineteenth-century textbook created by an African American teacher? By using this approach, we are not analyzing curriculum-as-plan, but rather curriculum as a historical process full of continuities and discontinuities over the past century; therefore, we present curriculum as lived experience.

We have organized our investigation around several key questions that inform our approach to each of the chapters that follow: What frames are created and applied to understanding events? Who are the major players in (de)constructing the frames? In what ways are such voices recognized and appreciated? These questions have helped us move beyond what is commonly taught about curriculum history—largely, a small selection of major texts from major academics—to seek out a glaring silence in many educational archives: daily life in classrooms that includes such things as what students were doing, what educators were concerned about, what families and communities believed, and what curriculum materials were used. We believe that these intimate, ground-level histories provide much insight about how our present-day schools and education systems came to be and how educators can effectively work within them to the benefit of their students.

Historians engage the political elements of their work in decision-making through their research and representation in their writing (Tosh, 2013). To realize our intentions with this book, we ask readers to engage in "historical thinking" (Wineburg, 2001). Historical thinking is that which transcends chronological sequences of events by balancing historicism with presentism. As Wineburg (2001) explains, "achieving mature historical thought depends precisely on our ability

to navigate the uneven landscape of history, to traverse the rugged terrain that lies between the poles of familiarity and distance from the past" (p. 5). In other words, readers should not simply strive to understand the past on its own terms, nor should they simply see the past through the prism of contemporary ideas and attitudes. Instead, we have consciously asked questions of the past from our present-day positions so that the work of students and educators in the past might help us better understand the origins of our contemporary issues and ways we might better approach them. However, as Zinn (1970) points out, "the values may well be subjective (derived from human needs);…the instruments must be objective (accurate). Our values should determine the questions we ask in scholarly inquiry, but not the answers" (p. 10). Levisohn (2017) argues for understanding the past on its own terms, but connects the ideas of Wineburg and Zinn by reminding us that "it is more accurate to frame the requirement in more specific terms: good historical interpretation is a matter of being open to the right kinds of things, of asking the right kinds of questions, of appreciating the right kinds of evidence…" (p. 628).

In historical thinking, the connections between the past and the present must be included when reflecting on actual educational practices. The widely circulated curriculum readers are to some degree removed from the lived experience of teachers and students. By merely displaying the "canon" of curriculum theories written by predominantly White male luminaries, the actual work (or curriculum) and experiences of teachers are dismissed. While these documents are often highlighted in curriculum history, curriculum debates and thinking at the school- and classroom-levels—the very place where teaching and learning happen—is less explored. Understanding curriculum within a historical perspective is of real value. Wineburg (2001) warns against simply coming to know the past through our own "lived experience" and emphasizes the need for us to move past our own time in history to better understand those outside our experience (pp. 23–24).

Historical thinking in curriculum studies is carried out by studying a text within a sociocultural and historical analysis of knowledge *taught* and *learned* (or not). Historical thinking raises critical questions about urgent educational issues, as informed by solid evidence and its interpretation. Founded upon historical method, this book approaches curriculum history by focusing on urgent problems and issues in the field of curriculum. This rationale provides the criteria for selecting texts

for the inquiry. Laurel Tanner (1982) argued that history allows us to ask important questions about critical issues in education. "Our objective should be to build on earlier practical and theoretical knowledge. We have a paradigm (or model) that represents the historical evolution of key ideas in the field and that can serve as an instrument for solving problems…" (Tanner, 1982, p. 410).

## 1.3 Searching for and Selecting Sources

Our inquiry grows out of the notion that curriculum is constructed and not static. Curriculum materials and practices remain largely unexplored, and our goal is to historically analyze text embedded in educational practices. Our text works between the curriculum artifacts themselves and the ways in which educators implement curriculum ideas into educational discourses. In our inquiry, we expand the library of historical documents by including sources that reflect the ideas and debates across time for various major themes in education. We present introductory essays in each chapter to connect curriculum materials produced by a range of specific people to broader issues in educational discourse. In each chapter, we also use curriculum materials to mine themes of continuity and change over time.

In selecting the sources for historical analysis, we applied several principles. We valued actual artifacts and visual sources as solid evidence to investigate historical and cultural elements of curriculum. We kept the balance between ideas and practices articulated in both texts and actual practices. The scope of inquiry is the twentieth century, with some attention to the late nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twenty-first century. Multiple ranges of voice, perspective, space, and time were valued while defining education. In our inquiry, we encompassed informal and formal as well as public and parochial education. Also, we viewed curriculum from interdisciplinary and disciplinary approaches. We searched for relevant texts and archives of images, personal accounts (oral history), official documents, published texts, and representations from major libraries, online archival sites, and journals in the field. We gave pseudonyms to those people who we interviewed for contemporary perspectives or for archival documents when requested by the rights holder. In some cases, selected sources include language that may be considered dated or even offensive by today's standards but was acceptable language by some during the time the source was produced.

In terms of the sources, we must note that there are limited materials available to us from past classrooms. Little of what happens in education is considered to have much "archivability" (Mbembe, 2002, p. 19), that is, existing in a form that can be preserved, organized, and made accessible while also having significant perceived historical importance. For instance, consider how little classroom discussion is recorded; the actual content of conversations among students and teachers is almost completely lost to us. The same goes for teachers' work, such as lesson plans and assignments, and students' work, such as completed assignments and notebooks. The very materials of classroom life—not to mention informal educational spaces—are typically treated like trivial ephemera. This creates a particular "silence" in the archival record, which is an operation of power (Truilliot, 1995, p. 52); that is, there are a small number of people drawing on their contemporary ideas about what is historically significant. Since a large proportion of curricula has been deemed unarchivable, our grasp of what happened in past classrooms is generally weak. Nonetheless, we searched widely and imaginatively to collect historical sources that provide readers with a sense of curricula from the past.

An example of this comes by way of Chicago's Japanese American Service Committee, which holds a collection of children's paintings from the Granada Relocation Center, also known as Amache, located in Granada, Colorado. This was one of ten such facilities during the incarceration of Japanese American citizens throughout World War II (http://coloradopreservation.org/projects/current-projects/granada-relocation-center/). During the same decade that Ms. Doonan worked on the innovative technique of cooperative planning with her fifth graders, a teacher at Amache, Ms. Keio, asked her students to use painting to make meaning of their lived experience. Figure 1.1 illustrates one of the landscapes where a child powerfully interpreted the life in Amache including the ordinary alongside a military aircraft and a watchtower with armed guards. This painting, a curriculum artifact from some 75 years ago, allows us to see firsthand how curriculum reflects the trauma of children's lives and the demands of the teaching profession.

In examining such an artifact, we must consider the context in which it was constructed and the complexity of the circumstances. Understanding the political, social, economic, and other contextual factors that led to the situation where children were being schooled in internment camps is essential to ask questions that assist us in developing

**Fig. 1.1** Child's painting from Granada [Amache] Relocation Center, ca. 1943

theories about this particular curriculum artifact, but more broadly about curriculum that is developed during times of physical conflict, emotional trauma, and political violence. It may also lead to raising our historical consciousness and inform the curriculum choices we make in our educational spaces at present and in the future.

## 1.4 Organization of This Book and How Educators Might Use This Reader

*The Curriculum Foundations Reader* is organized around six central, enduring issues in education in the United States. Each issue is addressed in individual chapters that begin with an article-length essay outlining the issue's history starting around 1900. Three to four purposefully curated collections of historical sources are then used to illustrate the ways that the issue played out in actual learning contexts across time. The sources are selected to provide readers with a sense of educators' perspectives of a specific issue during different points in time. Further, we attempted to include sources that reflect the geographic and

demographic diversity of American schooling. As an example, Chapter 7 presents three sources discussing grading and assessment: one from a White superintendent in rural Arkansas in 1918, another from a White teacher in suburban St. Louis in 1945, and the last from a South Asian teacher in Chicago in 2016. Each of those sources is briefly introduced with a discussion of their historical context as well as some questions for readers to consider. We hope that this structure of historical essay and selected sources provides readers with a glimpse into curriculum as it was experienced in the past so that our present-day perspectives can be connected to those from educators in the past, thereby allowing a deeper sense of how our education systems came to be and how they might be shaped in the future. It is our expectation that educators apply their new understandings gained from this book to ask new questions of themselves, their students, colleagues, and schools-communities. Those questions may lead to new actions and initiatives to make curriculum more equitable and education more historically conscious.

We organized the historical analyses into six chapter topics after reviewing extant literature in curriculum studies and curriculum history. The following question guided our inquiry: What are topics that educators should know when analyzing the enduring issues in education? In answering this overarching question, we examine the location of teaching and learning, marginalization and resistance, sociopolitical and culturally centered curriculum, curriculum choice, language and culture, and assessment and grading.

Among multiple curriculum questions, Chapter 2 engages in a conversation about the geography of learning. By juxtaposing open schools and traditional schools, we interrogate the location of teaching and learning. Chapter 3 addresses the curriculum as an instrument of marginalization and erasure for ethnic, linguistic, and racial minorities in the United States. The same chapter examines how individuals and groups have resisted this reality by demanding space within the traditional curriculum or authoring separate curricula that challenges and critiques it. Following this mapping of written, hidden, and embodied curriculum, Chapter 4 examines the location of curriculum by asking "What is at the center of the curriculum?" We analyze the place and space of cultural and sociopolitical centered curricula by looking at educators attempts to fashion curriculum in response to the needs of children in the context of their social, economic, and political lives. An ongoing debate is that curriculum is related to "choice," and thus Chapter 5 is grounded

in the notion of curriculum choice in schools. The question of "Which curriculum?" guides readers to explore curriculum choice issues associated with the parochial school movement, supporting the arts in education through the music curriculum, and teachers' advocacy for whole language approaches in teaching literacy.

Framed by the question "Which language(s)?", Chapter 6 considers linguistic politics and curriculum as crucial cultural discourse. The legal aspects needed to sustain linguistic and cultural heritage are reviewed over time. Chapter 7 concentrates on grading and assessment issues in examining the ways in which educators know what students have learned in the classroom. The artifacts of the grading systems in U.S. curriculum history provides an angle to analyze the birth and evolution of grades and standardized testing. In the final chapter, in the format of a conclusion, we focus on the ongoing curriculum lessons offered by the sources presented in this book. There is a discussion of how those sources help us question the prevalent assumptions made about curriculum. We also examine the implications they have for classrooms and finally, the need to collect broad and diverse archives on the lived experience of those engaged in teaching and learning around the enduring questions of curriculum.

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CHAPTER 2

# Where Do Teaching and Learning Happen?

In 1968, University of Chicago educational psychology professor Philip Jackson argued that students' classroom experiences were the same or virtually the same across time and space in the United States with few exceptions (Jackson, 1968). Although this generalization could be argued to apply to the experiences of a subset of students, there is little evidence that all American school-age children experience or experienced uniformity in education. Jackson (1968) claimed that schools from the early republic through the 1960s and from rural one-room school houses to suburbia to large cities all resembled one another. In a sense, his argument held that the American schoolhouse as a place was unique as an institution and therefore each school possessed a sameness with one another. However, he also acknowledged that American schools also possessed "differences, and sometimes very extreme ones, between any two settings" (Jackson, 1968, p. 6).

This chapter focuses on where teaching and learning took place for American students in the late nineteenth century and across the twentieth century. It begins with offering some context by examining the locations of education prior to the late 1800s, and then offers an overview of the twentieth century illustrated by primary sources that focus on several places and spaces where children and youth learned and adults taught during these eras.



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In the colonial period and early years of the new American republic, teaching, and learning largely happened in homes and churches for much of the population. During this time, education focused on learning to provide for one's family and learning the ways of one's religious faith. This was true for most Americans except for those who were intentionally denied education, as was the case for Indigenous Peoples and enslaved African Americans, or for those whose education was limited, such as White women. Those who were denied education by others with social and political power at times sought out education on their own, often at a risk to their own safety. For them, teaching and learning happened in clandestine spaces.

With the maturation and evolution of the nation came the slow growth of public school systems, private academies, and private schools largely with religious affiliations. These schools developed more quickly in the northeast, mid-Atlantic, and Midwest and slower in the south and west. The initial form that schools took usually consisted of multi-aged, one-room school houses, or something similar (Zimmerman, 2009). It was not until the mid-1800s that age-graded classrooms came into being. It took some time before these proliferated in the United States. When they did, they eventually developed into schools with multiple graded programs or individual schools sponsoring one or two programs: kindergarten, elementary, junior high or middle school, and high school, with kindergartens and high schools not growing in considerable numbers until the twentieth century. The movement into these different configurations was not predestined, indeed they were more often contested. The idea of graded classrooms took some time for local communities to adjust to, as did the idea of sending children to schools at all. Although many families accepted the idea of elementary school, families that depended on income from their children's labor—rural families with the need for extra hands on the farm or the land they worked and immigrant families under the crush of poverty—needing their children to bring in vital extra capital to make ends meet. Schooling oftentimes represented a loss of revenue instead of a promise of opportunity. Even when children attended schools, they were likely segregated by race and/or ethnicity and class, not to mention gender. This segregation persisted throughout most regions of the United States even after the *Brown vs. the Board of Education* decision in 1954.

## 2.1 The Schoolhouse in the Early Twentieth Century

The increase in the school-age population at the turn of the twentieth century meant an increase in the number of school buildings, especially in urban areas (Tyack, 1974). For example, Chicago saw its school population grow from 27,000 to 250,000 between 1870 and 1900 (Rury, 2005). The rise in the number of school-age children was driven by child labor laws, compulsory school attendance laws, and increases in immigration to the United States. The increase in the number of students in schools also gave rise to the fear of the spread of disease, especially in large urban areas with burgeoning numbers of rural migrants and new immigrants entering cities.

One of the more creative solutions to this dilemma was the open air school movement that was originally popularized in Europe and found its way over to the United States in the early twentieth century (see Associated Sources A1 and A2). Designed to give "vulnerable" children, particularly those susceptible to tuberculosis or similar ailments, classrooms with adequate ventilation, the open air school movement also supported students educationally. However, the curriculum offered in these programs offered academic programs complemented by manual training. Manual training consisted of a set of nonspecific skills that did not prepare a student for a particular vocation, but rather focused on enhancing basic skills that made one "ready" for the industrial economy. Manual training was usually a part of open air schools since it was believed that the students placed in these programs were generally below grade level and had hope for little else.

Many school-age children, especially those considered White at the time, went to public or Catholic schools where the curriculum they encountered was largely academic in focus. This was not the case for African American or Indigenous students. Many African American school-age children in the South had limited access to schooling, but oftentimes were steered toward or forced to attend schools with facilities and curriculum that ill-prepared them for the changing economy of the early twentieth century. This was similar to the circumstances of children of Indigenous People who were forced at times to attend boarding schools run by White sponsors, largely in the Midwest and West. Both types of schools were known for their focus on manual training, which aimed to keep these groups of people in subservient roles so as to

not disrupt the social order of the time, all the while giving these same groups a false sense that they were progressing by giving them access to schooling (Anderson, 1988).

In the early twentieth century, schools focused on increased efficiency, mirroring the rapid industrialization of the era, and organizing teaching and learning with the built environment (Tyack, 1974). The aims of the school began to focus on preparing students for the jobs that they would need to fulfill in the mechanized society that lay awaiting them upon graduation. As a result, the classroom as we generally picture it now, that which Jackson (1968) describes so vividly as "The Daily Grind," took shape and proliferated as the nation matured into the twentieth century. Curriculum historian Larry Cuban (1993) captured the homogenized aesthetic endemic in urban schools in his depiction of New York City's school architects design for classroom spaces at the turn of the twentieth century—"48 desks bolted to the floor for grades 1 through 4, 45 desks for grades 5 and 6, and 40 for grades 7 and 8" (p. 55). The sameness of school architecture was driven in part by the sheer demand for schooling by the nation's school-age population across the twentieth century. Across the United States, just over 50% of school-age children attended school in 1900, which increased to 75% in 1940 and to over 90% by the 1990s (Snyder, 1993).

## 2.2 Extending the Reach of the Schoolhouse at Mid-Century and Beyond

In addition to structuring classroom activities, schools focused on structuring how youth played through the purposeful arrangement of playgrounds and the management of recess time (Chudacoff, 2007; Frost, 2010). Informal learning continued to expand in scope and kind across the twentieth century. Religious institutions, social services, cultural institutions, special interest groups, media outlets, and universities all provided programs for children and youth to supplement school curricula (Coughlan, Sadovnik, & Semel, 2014). Another important development during the 1920s and 1930s was the use of the field trip or excursion as a teaching strategy (see Associated Source B). This coincided with the growth of museums in this era (Rader & Cain, 2014). Informal learning continued to develop as the economy grew more sophisticated and the need for before and after school programs to address, among other things, childcare needs as more women entered

the workforce. In urban districts, schools adopted community school programs, which leveraged federal funds to bring programs and services to children and their families into the school. Significant support for this came in 1998 when the Clinton administration established the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program through the U.S. Department of Education (Rogers, 1998).

As teaching and learning expanded beyond the school day and the classroom, the methods used to deliver instruction and the ways in which learning was demonstrated changed in response. In addition, classroom technologies changed rapidly after WWII to include filmstrips, handheld calculators, video cassettes, desktop computers, the Internet, laptop computers, tablets, and more, but this varied by the resources available in communities. As these technologies entered classrooms, they reshaped how teachers taught and students learned, but also where students learned as technologies connected students to the Internet and online learning.

The structure of some schools changed drastically in the late 1960s and into the 1970s with the onset of the open school movement that promoted large unstructured spaces with movable walls or other partitions, as opposed to walled off classrooms, in which students directed learning by self-selecting materials and content (see Associated Source C). Jonathan Zimmerman (2009) asserted that open schools, which peaked in the 1970s and waned considerably by the 1990s, appealed to many because they harkened back to the approach of the much romanticized ungraded one-room schoolhouse. Proponents of this movement, such as Herb Kohl, encouraged schools to rethink their physical structures and create open spaces without walls within the schoolhouse. This radical shift in the architectural landscape of U.S. schools took root in predominantly suburban schools. With a surge in suburban populations in the post-WWII era and a need for new school buildings, architects, and districts took advantage of the moment to experiment with this new idea; although some open schools did find their way into urban and rural districts. Cuban (1993) highlighted the open classrooms in Fargo, North Dakota and New York City in his book *How Teachers Taught*. Cuban (1993) detailed how schools that supported open classrooms also emphasized more progressive, child-centered pedagogies. This included learning centers or stations, project-based activities, and small-group instruction. Open schools were largely an elementary school phenomenon, but there were some secondary configurations that were often characterized as

alternative schools. In Chicago, Metro High School, the School without Walls, was founded in 1970 and did not close until 1991. New York City's City-As-School came along in 1972 and remains open today (see http://www.cityas.org/about/). Few others survived the back-to-basics movement of the 1980s, which promoted more traditional curriculum and conventional school buildings.

The early twenty-first century has seen movement toward the increased use of technology with digital badging and competency-based learning, where the schoolhouse and even teachers, at least in their more traditional sense, are dismissed almost entirely. With this change, the question of "where does (or will) teaching and learning take place" continues to be as relevant as it was in the late nineteenth century. However, the answer to this question may be less predictable as educators increasingly consider where teaching and learning should take place to best support students of all backgrounds.

## 2.3 Introduction to the Sources

The following sources provide a glimpse into some nontraditional spaces where teaching and learning took place at different moments during the twentieth century. The first focuses on the open air schools and examines one of the Elizabeth McCormick open air school in Chicago during the 1911–1912 academic year. The second source is an excerpt from a state superintendent's bulletin published in 1938 extolling the benefits of the school journey method of teaching (the field trip). The passage highlights one particular teacher's advice on how to make the most of the method and how to use it to motivate students. The last source includes reflections by teachers and administrators published in 1975 on the open classroom and examines the advantages and disadvantages of open education. Each of the sources provides a window into how educators tried to move out of the schoolhouse or reinvent the schoolhouse in some way to offer a more informal learning environment for students over the course of the twentieth century. In this way, educators in each of these eras pushed against the notion of the "The Daily Grind" as characterized by Jackson (1968). As you read each source consider the following questions and be sure to entertain your own:

1. How did advocates of each approach understand the approach's relationship to the formal school curriculum?

2. To what extent did the particular approach reflect a more formal or informal way to teach and learn?
3. Jackson (1968) argued that U.S. classrooms reflected a "highly stable" environment. How does each of these sources support and/or question this assertion?
4. What themes, theories, or practices from these approaches are found in how we configure twenty-first-century schools?

## 2.4 Associated Sources

### *2.4.1 Source II.A: Open Air Schools*

The following sources provide context around the open air school movement of the early twentieth century. The first is an excerpt from the 1913 report of the Elizabeth McCormick open air school in Chicago. It was written by Sherman Kingsley, a social worker, who moved into administrative roles to advocate for progressive causes within social and charitable institutions such as the Elizabeth McCormick Memorial Fund. This particular report is not Kingsley's first. He wrote regular reports like these in years prior and after to offer insight to those interested in, as well as skeptical of, open air schools. His description was decidedly to sway readers of the value of open air schools and their methods. In this attempt to convince others, he emphasized the voices of teachers in open air schools as instructional authorities to help support his argument.

Also presented is a photo of one of the open air schools located at the famed Hull House in Chicago. The photo was taken sometime between 1900 and 1920. As noted in the caption, the students were at rest on the roof of the building to take in the fresh air. It is essential to note that open air schools in Chicago at this time, as documented by Kingsley's text, were located throughout the city and served students diagnosed with tuberculosis who were from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. In the 1911–1912 academic year, a total of 367 students attended the Elizabeth McCormick Open Air Schools in Chicago (Kingsley, 1913, p. 54).

**Source II.A.1. Open Air Crusaders**
Kingsley, S. C. (1913). *Open air crusaders: The individuality of the child versus the system*. Chicago, IL: The Elizabeth McCormick Foundation Memorial Fund.

When the first Elizabeth McCormick Open Air School was started on the roof of the Mary Crane Nursery, Wyburn was a mere baby of four who, with his six-year-old brother, attended the day nursery. Both boys were pale and undersized, with a family history of tuberculosis. When the six-year-old was admitted to the roof school, Wyburn came too. As the teacher says: "Wyburn was too young to enter school but he was allowed to gather whatever crumbs of knowledge he was able to assimilate. He learned to read and write a little but care was taken not to over tax his strength." He spent all his afternoons asleep on the roof. Now, at six, he has completed the second grade, and his physical condition is far better than when he entered. He has learned without effort and easily, largely from hearing the recitations of the other pupils. He has not been compelled to spend a third of his time in review work, nor has his active little brain been befogged by bad air or exhausted by effort too prolonged.

Another advantage which comes from close contact with older pupils and seeing the work of the upper grades is the desire which is aroused in the mind of the pupil to complete a full school course. In the Chicago schools, sixty-one percent [sic] of the fourteen year-old pupils drop-out as soon as they have reached the coveted "work certificate age." Investigation has shown that the pressure is not wholly economic. In many, perhaps the majority, of these cases the children might remain in school if they really wanted to.

William E. Wirt, superintendent of the schools at Gary, Indiana, recognizes this fact when he places his primary room next to the eighth grade and his fifth grade next to the high school. "Let the youngsters see something interesting just ahead of them. Introduce them early to the laboratory and workshop which may enter when they are ready—arouse their interest and their desire to learn and you will have no difficulty in holding them through the course," says Mr. Wirt.

The open air school children profit by the opportunity of absorbing from the upper grades much of the information which under other conditions they would have drilled into them. The task of instruction is proportionately easier for the teacher, and it is the testimony of the supervising principal that the quality of the work done in the ungraded rooms compares very favorably with that done in the more closely graded rooms.

The teacher of an open air school has unusual opportunities for knowing her pupils. She is not swamped at the outset by large numbers.

Twenty-five individualities can be borne in mind where forty-five would leave only a blurred impression.

"Jensa can concentrate for ten minutes, and no longer," say the teacher of one open air school—"At the end of that time her attention wavers. Her writing grows unsteady and fatigue begins. But if she can have a few moments of rest from mental work, spent either in relaxation or exercise, she is ready to take up her studies again with interest and efficiency." The flexible arrangements of the open air school permit this, which might be demoralizing to discipline in an ordinary school, and the small number of children gives opportunity for close observation.

The program of the open air school requires the teacher to spend more time with her pupils outside of school hours than is customary. The ordinary teacher never sees her children loose from a desk or a "line" unless they have been "bad." The open air school teacher eats at the same table with her youngsters three times a day; she sees them laughing under the shower-bath, and learns to look for the weekly gain in weight as eagerly as they; she watches them as they lie asleep on their canvas cots.

Where a few towns fortunate enough to have medical inspections can hope for perhaps one cursory examination of each child a year, and the teacher's chief source of information is her own observation, the open air school children are constantly under the care of a physician who secure treatment for adenoids and bad teeth and defective vision and all the other minor ailments which hinder proper development. The close relationship between body and mind can hardly be more clearly demonstrated, and it is a relationship to which teachers, as a class, need to give special attention. With the actual physical condition of each child, then, the teacher cannot help but be familiar. The nurse keeps her equally well informed on the homes from which the pupils come—Joe ceases to be a "rather stupid little boy who sat in the third seat from the front last year and failed to pass," and becomes a timid underfed lad from an insanitary rear tenement where bad air and lack of sunshine are doing their best to choke out the ambition which brought father and mother to America to make a chance for the children and by the time various agencies have been induced to lend a hand in reestablishing this ambition under more favorable conditions, the relationship between teacher and Joe is many degrees beyond that which is usual in the school-room.

Says Miss Kate Kellogg, supervisor of the open air schools, in her report to the Chicago board of education: "When a teacher has

twenty-five pupils who represent anywhere from two to seven different grades; when her recitations are interrupted by the call for a physician or nurse; when entire classes are put to rest for the day at the menacing demand of a 'rise in temperature,' she is obliged to meet the situation with clearness and calm. How is she enabled to do this? Not alone because she is breathing the purest of air this smoky city can bestow, but because her small number of pupils, her comprehensive knowledge of their physical, mental and home conditions, her interest in their all-around development have brought her into a close human relationship with them not often attainable under the conditions of the ordinary school-room. She is their intimate friend as well as their teacher."

The reflex action of the outdoor life on the teacher can best be stated by those who have experienced it. "Those who have tried the outdoor work have been capable of more prolonged labor with far less fatigue," says the teacher of the first Boston open air school. "The work is heavier in an open air class but I feel much more able to accomplish it. After the day's work I now return home fresh and do not suffer from the usual headache and dryness of throat that follow teaching in the ordinary room" comes from New York, while an Elizabeth McCormick open air school [sic] teacher testifies that backache, extreme fatigue, and nervousness have been overcome by the fresh air and sunshine on the roof.

Any teacher who has known the experience of holding down a roomful of restless children on a rainy day will be interested in an account of one such day on the roof when the superintendent of schools made an official call. A cold freezing rain had been drizzling for twenty-four hours, the roof was slippery, the day was gray, and air full of a profound chill. The electric lights in the study tent had been turned on. It was one of those discouraging days when it is difficult not to feel blue and when the teacher learns to anticipate poor lessons, listless pupils, and an uncomfortable time. The visitors to the open air school found the discouragement of the day routed by the unaffected good spirits of the children. They heard wide-awake recitations, saw a group of alert and attentive children. One or two who came to scoff remained to take notes. The conference which followed set the stamp of official approval on the open air school idea.

When the same children, a little later, refused to take a vacation at Christmas time and came back, every one of them, to ask that school be continued through the holiday week, it was only typical of the changed attitude toward things scholastic which lessens so greatly the nervous

**Fig. 2.1** *Rest period, Elizabeth McCormick Open Air School No. 2, on roof of Hull House boys club*

strain on the teacher. Guiding enthusiasm is much less strenuous than evoking it (Fig. 2.1).

**Source II.A.2. Rest Period**
Burke-Atwell (Photographer). (ca. 1900–1920). *Rest period, Elizabeth McCormick Open Air School No. 2, on roof of Hull House boys club* [digital image]. Retrieved from http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/98504827/.

### *2.4.2 Source II.B: Expanding the Classroom*

In the early twentieth century the United States looked to Germany and England for many ideas on how to improve its educational systems. In addition to open air schools, another borrowed idea was the excursion teaching method, also known as field trips or school journeys. In the late

1930s, researchers and practitioners alike tested and documented this teaching method (Atyeo, 1939). The following source is from a 1938 publication of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction promoting school journeys as a teaching method.

Superintendent Lester K. Ade and his colleagues focused on how teachers could make "real world" connections with classroom instruction. The publication offered advice on how to establish and evaluate a school journey program and then provided an extensive section on "What Teachers Say." Teacher Robert Nixon from Wayne, Pennsylvania (about 17 miles outside of Philadelphia) advised teachers about conducting school journeys based on his teaching of high school economic geography. His advice to educators on these field experiences stemmed from those he and his students took related to his specific course, but clearly had relevance for other content areas and teaching and learning more broadly.

**Source II.B.**

Dech, A. O. (1938). *Expanding the classroom*. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction.

**The School Journey Motivating and Suggesting Worthwhile Activities**

In conjunction with the teaching of economic geography at Radnor High School, Wayne, Pennsylvania, it is customary to take pupils on a field trip to the Commercial Museum in Philadelphia. One year a wide-awake tenth-grade girl saw in the Museum the splendid map of the World on which was placed postage stamps of all the principal countries. She asked the teacher why Radnor could not have such a map.

As Radnor needed many new maps at that time, the suggestion to make maps was very timely. Class time was allotted to the project. Time after school and even some evenings had to be spent to finish the maps in time for the close of the school year. The project was carried to completion by tenth, eleventh, and twelfth year pupils electing economic geography. The school furnished large slabs of beaver board and the necessary paints, brushes, and inks. There was cooperation in this respect from the art department, but the work was done by the pupils without the actual assistance of the art teacher. This involved planning maps for size, blocking out areas of large sheets of paper, transferring the finished drawing to the beaver board, painting and research necessary to place the proper products in the right places. Cities were not labeled but a thumb

tack indicated the proper spot or location. This was to allow the use of maps for tests for locations in recitation periods.

Among the finished maps appeared, as suitable for class use, a world map with postage stamps representative of the larger and more important countries. The persons making the map sorted out thousands before finding the best. Other pupil groups made a map of Europe with products or pictures of products attached, a map of Asia, and another of South America. A group of workers had decided upon a map of North America, but it failed to satisfy geographic standards of accuracy because one temperamental student of "artistic" nature decided to shape it as his mood for the day or week directed. The teacher allowed the map to be finished but never used it.

Another time we visited the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. The staff of the Museum has always proved more than helpful, and on this particular trip the children were looking for suggestions for term projects. At Radnor we try to have term projects which will be utilized in teaching others. The children like this idea for their names are placed on each project, and when we use their projects we always announce who made them to encourage others; and then, too, the boys and girls go home to tell the young folks who may have been graduated that they saw their project that day.

We summarize the value of the field trip or school journey as a mode of motivation of pupil projects in geography as follows:

*Independent Observation*

If the teacher will outline a trip or journey and tell pupils what may be seen on such a journey, yet not tell the pupils just where to find each thing, they will see many things otherwise overlooked. The World Postage Stamp Map was not included in the trip, but it thrilled one youngster and she, because of her own enthusiasm, motivated all the projects for that year.

*Originality*

The teacher must not limit selection of projects to particular topics. Our models were suggested by the pupils themselves after seeing the originals at the University Museum. The groups who make the Andean Village, Fujiama [sic] models, Great Wall of China, and Industrial Development of the three great European Industrial Powers wanted to do something different, as did a boy who alone constructed a working model of a hand loom [sic], even to weaving a piece of cloth upon it.

*The Teacher as a Guide*
The teacher must always be in the background as a helper and adviser. He must *show* how to pour plaster, even teach the application of paint, and suggest ways to overcome difficulties in making natural-looking vegetation from such materials as sawdust, dyed green, etc. [emphasis original]. It is *not* the duty of the teacher to *make* the project for the pupil [emphases original]. The project is the pupil's problem resulting from his school journey. Even the less gifted find some particular part of the project in which they are most skilled. For example, one girl, now studying art, made all the little figures which appeared in the original models when completed.

*Human Relations*
We allow the pupils to select leaders of the groups responsible for each project, after pupils have volunteered to develop particular projects. It is interesting to note how the pupils will often find they have made a mistake in selection of a leader, and how quickly another steps into his "shoes" when the group has deposed the incompetent leader. It is also almost astounding how a group of workers will complain to the "chief" (teacher) when a worker shirks a task and take the necessary steps to make the one hindering their progress produce the required work.

*Use of Other Subjects*
Pupils soon learn there is a use for skills and knowledges gained in use of shop materials, art, library references and museum, even in an often quite bookish subject such as geography.

*Pride in Community Contribution*
Pupils feel, after an experience resulting from a school journey, that they have made the journey with a purpose and not merely as a lark. Many pupils come back after graduation and ask if we still have their models and are using them. They have pride in their contributions to their school, contributions which are beyond the average purse of even the largest school systems.

### *2.4.3 Source II.C:* Open Education

The final source for this chapter examines the open education movement of the 1960s and 1970s that focused on open classrooms and schools. Professor Vincent Rogers of the University of Connecticut

and Bud Church, a teacher in an alternative program in North Haven, Connecticut, edited a book on open education examining the relative strengths and weaknesses of this model of education after a decade in practice (Rogers & Church, 1975). This text includes a short history of open education and a series of studies on several schools using the open classroom approach.

Rogers and Church (1975) acknowledged that, similar to the open air schools and the excursion method, open classrooms, and schools were mostly inspired by educational theorists and events from abroad, not by experiences of teachers and students within the educational contexts of the United States. The sources that follow are from a chapter of the book entitled "Teachers and Principals Speak" (Rogers & Church, 1975, pp. 67–81). The comments consist of educators reflecting on the open education movement over time. These practitioners offered insight into why educators were both drawn to the movement, but at the same time found it challenging.

**Source II.C.**
Rogers, V. R., & Church, B. (1975). Teachers and principals speak. In V. R. Rogers & B. Church (Eds.), *Open education: Critique and assessment* (pp. 67–81). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

I think my worst moments have been those times when I have felt alone and isolated. While I am willing to accept (and am rather proud) that my classroom may be different and unique, I am uneasy with the possibility that I may be, not only in my own boat, but on my own sea as well. Being within a public school framework, I want to feel a part of the whole and have parents, colleagues, and administrators feel this too. But when a parent requests his child be removed from my care; when a colleague reproaches my work without taking the time to understand it; when students from other classes talk down our program; or when one of our students takes a downward turn either academically, emotionally, or socially—all of these situations tend to elicit a feeling of frustration and isolation, even though I know that such circumstances are part of teaching.

When I decided to structure my classroom in a radically different way from what is considered normal for this age group, I realized that pressures would be intense. The pressure of personal failure and failure of the program tended to increase my sense of isolation and alienation from

the whole. The longer our program is in operation, however, the more I have been able to accept such negative moments. As I absorb the impact of these experiences, I have often been able to understand more about myself and the strengths and weaknesses of my teaching.

* * *

Five years later we remain hopeful but angry, not with our students, not with the parents, but rather we are angry with the built-in inhibitors—the educational bureaucracy. The educational bureaucracy resists change not only in the area of curriculum, it resists violently any movement to better understand itself. It can be reported that five years later the bureaucracy has slowed the pace of change for me, not direction of change within me.

* * *

I remember one year I was having to put a lot of energy in on that class to set them sailing on their own, so much that I guess I didn't realize it had happened or was not emotionally ready myself for the release until one day when I had joined a group planning a play. I came equipped with my shorthand notebook, ready to write down their script for them. I just sat there, pencil poised, listening. Two children also had pencil and paper. They were trying to write the script very slowly, missing parts, asking how to spell words—very laborious kind of task, I thought. Shortly one of the little girls said to me softly, "Mrs. Murray, maybe some other group needs you." Was this what I had been working for? Hoping for? Looking forward to? I had a very strange feeling inside of me. She must have read my expression well because then she put her hand gently on my arm and added, "We'll come and get you if we need you, honest we will."

This declaration moved me out of their way. The play and their script (I could have done so much better!) progressed as they would have it. Their production was a great success. There is a fine line between being a facilitator of learning and a deterrent. These children had the dictating and writing experience that came right from them—but I, of course, could have done a much smoother job, and so much more efficiently! Oh well … [ellipses original]

* * *

As the administrator of a large (910) K-6 rural, poverty-pocket school that is serving some 185 more children than it has any right to do, I have been an organic part of, as well as witness to, a miracle.

A school as unwieldy as ours, situated in a rural town ill-equipped to finance poorly conceived program and trendy ventures, must be very sure of its direction. We try to recognize our problems, cope with them, alleviate them, dissipate them.

Somewhere along this continuum of frustration we looked at the child, took a firm resolve that his/her needs do, indeed, come first and resolved at the same time to do more than discuss the situation.

We began with ourselves, our philosophy, our objectives, our personal characteristics, our teaching style, our educational expectations, our dissatisfactions. We began an opening process—opening our minds, sharing ideas and findings—and we began to look for help. Arriving at this point was not easy for a staff of 47 teachers. For some it as proved, to date at least impossible; however [sic] we keep moving on in a dogged, determined way.

When we, indirectly, and perhaps inadvertently, became an advisory school with the University of Connecticut Center for Open Education, we had taken the boldest and best step in the 14-year history of our "new" school.

We found people who are child advocates. These people … came to the rural Northeast. In a low-profile, unjudging manner, they accepted us as we were. We began to allow ourselves the luxury of trusting them, and slowly we began to believe in ourselves.

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CHAPTER 3

# Who Is Excluded? Who Is Empowered? Marginalization and Resistance in the Curriculum

*Michael Hines*

The curricula taught in U.S. schools have both reflected and shaped larger societal battles over identity and inclusion over time. As Castnell and Pinar (1993) state, arguments over the curriculum are also at their core "debates over who we perceive ourselves to be" (p. 2). Because educational spaces in the United States have been dominated by White, male, heterosexual, and middle-/upper-class voices, U.S. school curricula have historically acted as a "master script," reinscribing these identities and histories as normative while marginalizing other voices and experiences (Swartz, 1992). School curricula in the United States have historically silenced or diminished the voices of women, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, Indigenous Peoples, immigrants, African Americans, and gender and sexual minorities, among others. This chapter examines this marginalization and, more crucially, how affected groups have resisted, creating spaces in the curriculum for their own voices and values.

In many instances, knowledge about those deemed *other* has been and continues to be omitted from the curriculum. However, even

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A. M. Ryan et al., *The Curriculum Foundations Reader*,
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when marginalized groups are incorporated into school curricula, it is often in ways that are simplified, stereotyped, or stripped of critical context. One example is the tendency of U.S. social studies curricula to approach the issue of slavery in a way that ignores the histories, values, cultures, and traditions that enslaved Africans carried with them, spiritual and intellectual resources which informed not only their strategies for survival but also came to underlay much of what we now identify as American culture. Another is the positioning of Indigenous Peoples in history curricula so that their importance derives not from their own rich and independent existence, but by how they helped or hindered White settlement and colonization. In both of these examples, the result is to set Western culture and Whiteness at the center of the American story and by extension legitimate the unequal political, economic, and social power between Whites and other groups in the present (Sleeter, 1996). Importantly, while these curricula contribute to the preservation of White political and economic dominance, they harm not only students from marginalized groups, but also White students who are presented with an incomplete, inaccurate, and impoverished understanding of the nation in which they live (Castnell & Pinar, 1993).

While school curricula have often been used to limit and circumscribe ideas about American identity, it is critical to realize that this process has never occurred without struggle or opposition. As Tyack (1999) reminds us, there has simply never been a historical moment where a single story about American identity stood alone or unchallenged. Instead, what constitutes the official curriculum has constantly changed as the result of challenges both from within and outside the formal structure of schooling, as marginalized groups have found ways to resist the erasure of their identities and authored counter narratives in order to center themselves and their voices (Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2016). This chapter illustrates this resistance over the course of the twentieth century, highlighting efforts from African Americans, Mexicans and Mexican Americans, and Indigenous Peoples to confront and challenge the American educational system.

## 3.1 African Americans

The curricula afforded to African Americans at the beginning of the last century were largely designed to limit their economic power and political participation. After the seismic changes wrought by the Civil War and emancipation, White policy-makers from both the north and the south retreated

from the promise of African American equality and citizenship, in part by supporting restricted and segregated forms of Black education premised on self-help, Christian moralism, and vocational and agricultural training. This education functioned to ensure Blacks continued to occupy the lowest rungs of the American society, despite their freedom from direct enslavement (Anderson, 1988; Watkins, Lewis, & Chou, 2001). Part and parcel of this curriculum were narratives of inferiority that justified the lower status of African Americans in U.S. society, including depictions of Black people as primitive and savage tribesmen, simple and contented slaves, or ignorant and irresponsible freedmen. As Brown (2010) states, school curricula overwhelmingly "silenced, omitted, truncated, or inaccurately rendered" the histories and experiences of African Americans (p. 55). The result of these omissions and blatantly racist depictions was that, as scholar, sociologist, and civil rights leader W. E. B. Dubois (1935) observed, the average Black student would most likely leave school with little to no conception of the importance of their race in the history of the nation or the world at large.

In response to the racist distortions and misrepresentations they found within the official curriculum, African American educators, scholars, and political and social leaders took action (see Sect. 3.6.1). These efforts began well before the twentieth century, but became increasingly sophisticated and well-organized in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Individual educators and authors like Edward Johnson, Merle Epps, and Lelia Amos Pendleton fashioned school texts which countered racist depictions and stereotypes and emphasized the importance of Black contributions to American history and culture (King, 2014). The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, the brainchild of Harvard trained historian, educator, and publisher Carter G. Woodson, acted to promote and disseminate new scholarship and popularize the study of Black culture and history through campaigns like Negro History Week, the precursor to the present-day Black History Month (Bair, 2012). In addition to the Association, civil rights organizations like the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) campaigned aggressively for changes in school books and curricula, and created their own materials for school-age children. The combined efforts of Black scholars, educators, and activists produced what Murray (2018) has termed an "alternative black curriculum," which stood in stark opposition to the official curriculum of U.S. schools by emphasizing Black ability and agency (p. 3).

The struggle over the representation of African Americans in the curriculum continued through the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and the

Black Power movement of the 1960s and 1970. Increasingly disillusioned with the slow progress and violent backlashes that met attempts at educational integration, many African Americans turned to an emphasis on community control, and toward curricula which reflected an unapologetically Afrocentric focus. By the end of the century these viewpoints coexisted alongside renewed calls for multiculturalism and cultural relevant materials within the mainstream educational discourse (Watkins, 2001).

## 3.2 Mexicans and Mexican Americans

The struggle of Mexicans and Mexican Americans to secure curricula that reflects their culture, language, and history parallels that of African Americans to some extent, while also introducing unique contexts and considerations. The history of what is now the Southwestern United States, and the fact that the American presence there was built on centuries of preexisting Indigenous, Spanish, and Mexican influence, has meant that Mexicans and Mexican Americans have often occupied an indistinct place in a nation where they are to some extent both native and foreign (Madrid, 2008). Complicating matters more, Mexicans and Mexican Americans have also been forced to occupied a racial "middle ground" between "Whites (or Anglos) on the one hand and Indians and Blacks on the other" (Au, Brown, & Calderon, 2016, p. 92). These two realities have combined to shape how Mexicans and Mexican Americans have been treated in American society at large, and American schools in particular.

In the early twentieth century, the struggle for Mexican and Mexican American education focused on the interrelated issues of school segregation and access to rigorous and relevant curricula. Mexican American students, while formally categorized as White, were nevertheless isolated from majority Anglo Americans, forced to attend separate schools or into separate classes within shared school facilities. This separation, at first justified by explicitly racist notions of biological inferiority, was later excused as necessary to address the supposed cultural and linguistic deficiencies of Mexican American students, ones which required their separation from native English speakers. This "pedagogical segregation" functioned as an excuse to exclude Mexican and Mexican American students (Blanton, 2003, p. 51), and to provide them with deeply unequal funding, facilities, and curricula. Furthermore, because the separation of Mexican and Mexican American students was premised on the assumption that their culture and language were deficits or barriers to be overcome, these aspects of students' identity were avoided or openly disparaged in a push

for Americanization. As San Miguel (2013) states, this "subtractive curriculum" worked, both historically and today, to "divest the children of their Spanish language and their cultural heritage" (p. 7).

In response to exclusion and derision, Mexican and Mexican American communities have fought for and created curricula rooted in their own culture, history, and language (see Sect. 3.6.2). Social scientists like George I. Sanchez pushed back against the biased justifications used to separate Mexican and Mexican American students. Parents like those who filed *Alvarez v. Lemon Grove* (1931), "the nation's first recognized court ordered school desegregation case," challenged the logic and legality of segregating Mexican and Mexican American students and demanded access to equal educational opportunities (Madrid, 2008, p. 15). By the 1960s and 1970, students in cities like Los Angeles, Houston, and Chicago, joined and propelled this activism forward, engaging in walkouts and protests and demanding not only access and funding but changes to the curriculum to include their own histories and contributions (San Miguel, 2013). These debates continued into the later decades of the century, and set the stage for present-day struggles.

## 3.3 Indigenous Peoples

At the turn of the twentieth century, Indigenous Peoples faced a curriculum explicitly geared toward their assimilation and subordination. As Lomawaima (1999) states, while Indigenous Peoples maintained their own systems of education long before European contact, the education imposed by European nations was meant to uproot these existing systems in order to "transform Indian societies" and "eradicate Indian self government, self-determination, and self education" (p. 5). These objectives were evident in every aspect of the schooling process, from the removal of Indigenous children from their homes and their placement in boarding schools, to the use of military discipline and uniformity of dress, hair, and personal appearance to break down unique cultural identities. Further, the formal curriculum taught students to idealize and embrace Western culture while forsaking the supposedly backward or uncivilized traditions of their own peoples (Adams, 1995).

Resistance to this process of forced assimilation and subordination, what Au et al. (2016) term "curricular genocide," took many forms. Indigenous students in boarding schools in the United States and Canada, for example, took advantage of the limited opportunities for defiance available to them by continuing to practice rituals and speak

native languages in secret or among themselves, feigning ignorance or purposefully slowing the pace of schoolwork in order to avoid complying with the demands of teachers and administrators, and, when no other solution sufficed, escaping oppressive institutions altogether by running away (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006).

At the same time, Indigenous scholars, activists, and community leaders throughout the twentieth century organized to regain control of both the methods and content of education within their communities. While federal policy toward Indigenous education vacillated (and continues to do so) between heavy-handed, top-down control and more open and equal engagement with communities, pressure from groups like the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) has led to increased recognition of Indigenous People's voices in setting and carrying out educational policy. One result of this shift has been the emergence and growth of tribally controlled schools and colleges starting in the mid-twentieth century, which are far more likely to incorporate native languages and cultures within the curriculum (Tippeconnic, 1999). These movements provide proof that the ultimate goal of colonial education, the erasure of Indigenous culture and identity, was never accomplished, as Indigenous People s have found ways to sustain their own educational traditions, preserve their existing identities, and imagine new ones in the face of incredible obstacles (see Sect. 3.6.3).

## 3.4 Conclusion

The efforts of marginalized groups to alter the substance and story of the official curriculum, or to create alternatives to it, continue unabated in the present. Unfortunately, this is often because many of the voids and silences which drove educators and activists to speak out in earlier generations also persist today. As Yosso reminds (2002) us that even today, "barring textbooks or teachers who bring a multifaceted version of U.S. History to the curriculum, students have little access to academic discourses that decenter White/middle class experiences as the norm" and that "traditional curriculum discourses" still "tend to marginalize the knowledges of students of color" (p. 94). Whether exemplified in battles over Mexican American Studies courses in the Southwestern United States, or the insistence of the Black Lives Matter movement on the inclusion of Black history and culture within the curriculum, new

generations of activists academics, students, parents, and educators have taken up the call and continue to fight for their voices and those of their communities.

## 3.5 Introduction to the Sources

In keeping with the larger themes of this reader, the three sources presented here come from a mix of figures both familiar and relatively unknown, including theorists, educators, and students themselves. These examples illustrate resistance to dominant curricular narratives by African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Indigenous Peoples during the early and mid-twentieth century. The sources are necessarily limited and are intended to act as one of many possible starting points for conversation and reflection, giving readers a broader sense of how different communities have responded to inequities in the official curriculum over time. The sources also compel us to consider how these issues continue in the present and how educators might engage with students and communities in their efforts to reclaim and reenvision the curriculum.

1. What silences or misrepresentations within the official curriculum do these sources identify or address?
2. What are the implications of these silences or distortions for students?
3. How does each source seek to challenge or correct curricular misrepresentation?
4. How do the themes and tensions raised in these sources exist in present-day school curricula?

## 3.6 Associated Sources

### *3.6.1 Source III.A: A School History of the Negro Race in America, from 1619 to 1890*

This source comes from a history textbook authored by Edward A. Johnson (1860–1944). Johnson was a pioneer in many fields. Born into slavery in North Carolina, he rose to successfully navigate the worlds of business, law, and politics, eventually becoming the first African American elected to the New York State Assembly in 1917 (King, 2014, p. 5). From 1883 to 1891 he worked as an educator, first as a teacher at the Mitchell

Street School in Atlanta, and then as a principal at Washington School in Raleigh, North Carolina. It was this experience, especially his observation that the textbooks in use at the time showed other races "represented by the best types and best facts, except the Negro," that pushed him to attempt to provided "a better text" for his students ("Life Work of Edward A. Johnson," 1933, p. 81). The resulting work was *A School History of the Negro Race in America, from 1619 to 1890, With a Short Introduction as to the Origin of the Race; Also a Short Sketch of Liberia*, originally published in 1890 and reprinted several times throughout the early twentieth century. This text, the first by a Black author that was approved by the North Carolina State Board of Education, was adopted and used in public and private Black schools throughout the state, and is one of the many early attempts by Black educators to provide curricula that told the story of the African American experience. The sections below include Johnson's preface to the text as well as a portion of a chapter which discussed slave revolts and insurrections.

**Source III.A.**
Johnson, E. A. (1894). *A school history of the Negro race in America, from 1619 to 1890*. Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton.

Preface

To the many thousand colored teachers in our country this book is dedicated. During my experience of eleven years as a teacher I have often felt that the children of the Negro race ought to study some work that would give them information on the many brave deeds and noble characters of their own race. In this particular our school histories are generally deficient. It must indeed be a stimulus to any people to be able to refer to their ancestors as distinguished in deeds of valor, and peculiarly so to the colored people. Patriotism and valor under such circumstances as those under which they lived to possess a peculiar merit and beauty. Though a slave, the Negro shed his blood in the defense of the government in those days when a foreign foe threatened its destruction. In each of the American wars the Negro was faithful, yes, faithful to a land not his own in point of rights and freedom.

May I not hope that the study of this little work by the boys and girls of the race will inspire in them a new self-respect and confidence? Much, of course, will depend on you, dear teachers, into whose hands I hope to place this book. By your efforts, and those of the children, you are to teach from the truth of history that complexions do not govern patriotism, valor and sterling integrity.

My endeavor has been to shorten this work as much as I thought consistent with clearness. Personal opinions and comments have been kept out. A fair impartial statement has been my aim. Facts are what I have tried to give, without bias or prejudice; and may not something herein and hasten on that day when the race for which these facts are written, following the example of the noble men and women who have gone before, shall raise themselves to the highest pinnacle of all that is noble in human nature?

I respectfully request that my fellow-teachers will see to it that the word Negro is written with a capital N. It deserves to be so enlarged, and will help, perhaps, to magnify the race it stands for in the minds of those who see it.

E. A. J.

## CHAPTER XVIII. NAT. TURNER AND OTHERS WHO "STRUCK" FOR FREEDOM.

Nathaniel Turner is well remembered by many of the older people of Southampton, Virginia, as being the leader of the famous "Nat Turner Insurrection" of that county. He was an unusually bright child, having learned to read and write with such skill and rapidity that his own people and the neighbors regarded him as a prodigy. It is said that his mother predicted in his presence one day that he would be a prophet, and he remembered her prediction till he grew older. Turner devoted himself to the study of the scriptures and the condition of his people. He believed his lot was to set them free. He said he had visions of White and Black spirits fighting in battle. He imagined a voice spoke thus to him in a vision: "Such is your luck; such you are called to see; and let it come rough or smooth you must bear it." He thought, while laboring in the fields, "he discovered drops of blood on the corn, as though it were dew from heaven," and he thought he saw on the leaves of trees pictures of men written in blood.

**A Plan of Insurrection** was devised in the month of February 1831. Nat, together with four of his friends, Sam Edwards, Henry Porter, Nelson Williams, and hark Travis, held a council of war, as it were, in some lonely, desolate spot in the woods, where they discussed the project of freeing the slaves. Nat said, in his speech, that his purpose was not to shed blood wantonly; but in order to arouse his brethren he believed it necessary to kill such of the Whites as would be most likely to give them trouble. He, like John Brown, expected his slave brethren to join him.

**The Fatal Stroke** was given in the month of August 1831. The first house visited was that of a Mr. Joseph Travis. While on the way, a slave from this plantation joined Nat's party. He was a giant man, athletic, quick, and "best man on the muscle in the county," and was known as "Will." The slaves were armed with axes and knives, and they killed, indiscriminately, young and old, fifty-seven White persons, before they themselves were killed or captured.

**Several Artillery Companies** from Richmond, Petersburg, Norfolk, and Portsmouth, with one cavalry company, were ordered out to take Nat and his followers. In a hand-to-hand struggle "Will" fell. His last words were "Bury my axe with me." Nat escaped with some others to the swamps, where he eluded the Whites for nearly three months. After surrendering, he was brought into court, and answered *Not Guilty* to the inquiry of the judge. The trial was gone through with. Nat was convicted and condemned to die on the gallows. He received the sentence with total indifference, but made a prophecy that on the day of his execution unusual occurrences would appear in the heavens; the sun would be darkened and immense clouds would appear, and threatening lightning. Many of the people believed it. The sheriff could find no one willing to cut the rope; but a drunken sot, crazed by liquor, did the act for pay. The day of the execution, strange to say, as Nat had prophesied, was one of stormy and gloomy aspect, with terrible thunder, rain, and lightning. Nat kept up his courage to the last; and his neck in the noose not a muscle quivered, or a groan was uttered. He was, undoubtedly, a wonderful character. Knowing, as he did, the risk he ran, what an immense courage he must have had to undertake this bold adventure. He was thus spoken of by a Mr. Gray, who interviewed him: "It has been said that he was ignorant and cowardly, and that his purpose was to murder and rob. It is notorious that he was never known to have a dollar in his life, to swear an oath, or drink a drop of spirits. He can read and write, and for natural intelligence and quickness of apprehension is surpassed by few men I have ever seen."

### *3.6.2 Source III.B: Latin American Manifesto of Harrison High School Presented by the Students*

This source was written by members of the Organization of Latin American Students (OLAS) at Harrison High School, located in Chicago's Lawndale community. During the 1960s, White resistance to school integration in many American cities, including Chicago,

led Black and Brown activists to adopt new strategies aimed not at forcing desegregation but instead demanding community control, including increased say in decisions around funding, curriculum, instruction, and staffing. In October 1968 tensions over overcrowded classrooms, crumbling infrastructure, a lack of diverse faculty, and culturally irrelevant curricula led to massive walkouts and protests involving hundreds of students, which quickly spread to other city high schools in the ensuing weeks (Danns, 2011). Mexican and Mexican American students played a pivotal role in these struggles, organizing independently as well as acting in concert with other student groups with overlapping agendas. The demands of Mexican and Mexican American students at Harrison speak not only to their bravery and determination, but also as Alanis (2010) states, to a "political consciousness" and "increased racial and cultural pride" that flowed through many communities during this period (p. 136). The extent to which student organizing and protests were recognized as politically powerful and potentially threatening to the status quo is evinced by the fact that this source was taken and eventually preserved by the Chicago Police Department's Red Squad, a specialized unit formed to keep tabs on activity seen as politically radical within the city.

**Source III.B.**

Intelligence Division, Chicago Police Department. (1968). *Latin American Manifesto of Harrison High School Presented by the Students. Red Squad Records* (Box 211). Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, IL.

We the Latin American students of Harrison High School feel that the administration of our school has not been sensitive to our needs nor willing to make the necessary changes which are badly needed. We feel that the needs of the students are creating an atmosphere in the school where little learning is possible. The administration must bear much of the responsibility for the present situation. The administration must provide for the needs of the Latin American students. We comprise 35–40% of the student population, yet we are receiving an inferior education that will undoubtedly cripple our chances for future success. The administration had not and is not sympathetic toward our problems. The fact that many of us do not speak or understand English well is a source of frustration. Our frustration is even greater when we realize that the administration refused to establish programs to meet this need. Instead, the administration ignores us. The administration has not begun to understand the importance of having people of our own cultural background

as teachers, counselors, and administrators in the school. We need these people with whom we can identify and emulate. It is our feeling that the Board of Education system tries to make us inferior by its failure to institute Latin American History courses and other social studies that portray our significant contributions.

WE THEREFORE SUBMIT OUR FOLLOWING DEMANDS:

1. We demand qualified bilingual Latin American counselors to be assigned by November 1, 1968 (We demand counselors not disciplinarians).
2. We demand two required years of Latin American culture and history, and taught by qualified bilingual Latin American teachers. We further demand that books will be used which have an open point of view of history that will contribute to the dignity and respect of Latin American people.
3. We demand that special TESL classes be instituted for the non-English-speaking students and that these classes become an integral part of the school curriculum.
4. We demand that special programs be developed by local universities to meet the special needs of Spanish-speaking students' problems.
5. We demand a Spanish–American assistant principal.
6. We demand two bilingual persons be assigned as teacher aides and two bilingual school community representatives.
7. We demand that monthly Spanish meetings of the PTA be conducted by a community authorized Spanish-speaking person.
8. We demand that the administration recognizes the soccer team and provide a qualified instructor and necessary equipment for the team's participation in a city-wide competition.
9. We demand that this Organization of Latin American Students of Harrison be recognized by the school administration as an official mediator and bargaining agent for Latin American students and their problems.

WE DEMAND THAT OUR PRESENT GRIEVANCES BE GIVEN IMMEDIATE ATTENTION BECAUSE WE THE LATIN AMERICAN STUDENTS OF HARRISON ARE UNITED AND DETERMINED TO INSURE THAT THESE URGENT PROBLEMS ARE MET FOR THE WELFARE OF OUR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY.

Better teachers: Higher Standards

1. Competent teachers preferably bilingual.
2. Courses in history geared to instill pride in our cultural heritage.
3. Bilingual counselors, community representatives, and teacher aids.
4. Initiate program recruitment with a pay incentive.
5. No reprisals.

### *3.6.3 Source III.C: Culturally Relevant Early Education Programs: Hearing Before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs*

This source comes from testimony given in 1987 before the Senate's Select Committee on Indian Affairs. In this hearing, Indigenous educators from Hawaii and the American Southwest expressed the importance of culturally relevant curricula. Among the speakers were representatives from the Rough Rock Demonstration School in Rough Rock Arizona. Rough Rock, established in 1966, made history as the first "American Indian community controlled school" in the nation (McCarty, 2002, p. 83). Repudiating the legacy of centuries of colonial education which had devalued and disregarded Indigenous cultures, the founders of Rough Rock saw education in holistic and communal terms and aimed for "the cultivation of local leadership, economic development, and the promotion of Navajo language and culture" (McCarty, 2002, p. 76). Pursuing such ambitious goals would not be easy, however, especially in the face of bureaucratic pressures and shifting political agendas. By the 1980s, Rough Rock faced pressure both from budget cuts leading to uncertainty about the physical survival of the institution, and from new federal mandates stressing basic skills and accountability that threatened to replace the school's bilingual-bicultural philosophy with a rigid basic skills curriculum. Looking for models to help address these problems, teachers at Rough Rock partnered with the Kamehameha Elementary Education Project, a program that taught native Hawaiian students reading and language arts in a way that drew deeply on their own cultural resources. Below, officials from both programs share their reflections on the collaboration, its importance, and its results.

**Source III.C.**
*Culturally Relevant Early Education Programs: Hearing before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Senate*, 100th Cong. 2 (1987).

# CULTURALLY RELEVANT EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1987

U.S. SENATE,

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,

*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, 2:00 p.m., in room 485, Russell Senate Office Building, K. Inouye (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Inouye and Melcher.

## STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL K. INOUYE, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII, SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The CHAIRMAN. We gather this afternoon to a subject of utmost importance to Native Americans: education. To date, it would appear that Government has failed to provide meaningful education for native Americans, and I think these statistics speak for themselves.

Academic achievement is low. School dropout rates are high. As adults, Indians and Hawaiians rank at the bottom of every socioeconomic indicator, from low rates of employment to extremely poor health characteristics.

There are many reasons for education programs having failed. I think one is that either by accident or deliberately we have ignored the differences between the cultures of White America and Native America. In fact, public school education has sought to wipe out cultural differences by trying to assimilate native Americans into White social and cultural mainstreams.

It wasn't too many decades ago when this land we call America was the residence of hundreds of different native Americans Nations, each with a distinguished and glorious heritage and culture, and each with a different, distinct language that had been passed down to them for centuries. In our attempt to teach these native peoples the so-called

American way of life, we banned Native languages and sent children away from their homes and people to Government boarding schools. This was the way it was done. These efforts were a failure, but they nevertheless took their toll, leaving those Native Americans who didn't assimilate, confused, depressed, and without a clear concept of who they are or where they belong.

Today, cultural education often means only a token class in Indian culture or one short session a week with a kupuna in the classroom, designed to give Native students academic instruction about their past.

Fortunately, efforts are being made this day to reverse this trend of cultural denial. Significantly, these efforts are coming from native people themselves. Creating programs based on the recognition that culture is the basis of how children learn assures a much greater chance of providing meaningful education.

Speaking a Native language was once seen as a handicap, but educators are now beginning to understand that it is, instead, the key to cultural survival. native cultures can only be perpetuated through understanding and enhancing knowledge about oneself. When Native peoples regain a firm sense of self-identity, then they will truly be able to achieve self-determination.

This afternoon, we will hear from Indian educators who are developing culturally relevant education programs. Most of these programs are directed at the young and have been in existence for only a few years. It remains to be seen how these students will turn out when they grow older. But certainly there is a very good reason to be optimistic.

When I assumed the chairmanship of this committee, my first policy announcement was that I will seek answers to Indians' problems by going out to Indian country. I have done this, and this afternoon's hearing will demonstrate that answers do in fact lie with the Native people themselves.

Our first panel consists of the trustee of Kamehameha Schools, Bishop Estate, Honolulu, Mr. Myron Thompson; the president of Rough Rock School Board, Inc., of Arizona, Mr. Ernest Dick; and the director of education, Rough Rock Demonstration School, in Arizona, Mr. Gary Coan.

Will you step forward, please?

I am pleased to have you with us, and I would like to receive your mana'o, as we would say in Hawaii, your wisdom. We would like to know what Kamehameha Schools and Arizona have in common.

## STATEMENT OF MYRON THOMPSON, TRUSTEE, KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS, BISHOP ESTATE, HONOLULU, HI

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon. My name is Myron Thompson, and I would like to thank you for this opportunity to appear before your committee again. I am here for three reasons: No. 1, to support your interest, your continued interest, in early childhood education; No. 2, to seek your assistance for the Rough Rock Demonstration School; and No. 3, to ask for your support of the Intermountain Consortium for Native American Education.

Early childhood programs are critical to the prevention of educational underachievement and related long-term social and economic problems. It is overwhelmingly more cost-effective to prevent than to remediate. A newly released report entitled "Children in Need: Investment Strategies for the Educationally Disadvantaged," cites the following statistics.

Every $1 spent on prenatal care can save $3 in short-term hospital costs. Every $1 spent on comprehensive prenatal care for Medicaid recipients saves $2 in first-year care. Every $1 investment saves $3.38 the cost care for low-birthweight infants. Every $1 spent on childhood immunizations saves $10 in later medical costs. Every $1 spent on preschool education can save $4.75 in later social costs.

These statistics, compiled and reported in a document by prominent business leaders from companies such as Procter and Gamble and Honeywell, speak for themselves and give support to your interest in early education.

This report also gives additional impetus to our efforts at Kamehameha Schools in early education which began some 15 years ago. At that time my fellow trustees had noted increasing and overwhelming evidence of poor achievement performance by young Hawaiian children, most of whom were in indigent circumstances and attending public schools. These children were not being served in any way by Kamehameha. Yet, it was clear in the instructions and the will of our benefactor, Bernice Pauahi Bishop, the trustees were "to devote a portion of each year's income to the support and education of orphans and others in indigent circumstances."

Therefore, in keeping with her desires, we established the Kamehameha Elementary Education Program, with the acronym of KEEP. KEEP's

mission was to develop curriculum and teaching methods for reading and language arts that would better meet the needs of native Hawaiian elementary students who were at risk to educational failure and more often than not were orphaned or in indigent circumstances.

We have found success. Where Hawaiian children were once scoring consistently below the 25th percentile as a group, we are now approaching the 50th percentile. KEEP's answer was not a simple curriculum guide or materials, but a process of developing culturally appropriate teaching methods, selecting curricula, and creating an environment which would enhance achievement.

Thus, our relationship with the Navajo Nation and Rough Rock Demonstration School [sic]. Rough Rock became interested in our KEEP process about 6 years ago. They invited us to assist them in the development of a KEEP-Rough Rock reading and language arts program. We welcomed this challenge. We have worked with Rough Rock over 5 years and have assisted them in creating a reading and language arts program which is individually theirs, culturally compatible to Navajo children.

We ask that the Congress support the request of the Rough Rock Demonstration School to extend their Rough Rock elementary education program. We understand that other Southwest Indians Nations have indicated an interest in utilizing the KEEP process model. I wholeheartedly support the efforts of the Intermountain Consortium to facilitate this effort. We must prepare our children to succeed educationally.

Senator, I am inspired by your continued interest in early education and the promise of collaborative work between Kamehameha and the Southwest Indian Nations. We ask that you give every consideration to the merits of early education programs…

## STATEMENT OF GARY COAN, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ROUGH ROCK DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL, ROUGH ROCK, AZ

Mr. COAN. Thank you very much, Senator. My name is Gary Coan. I am the Director of Education for Rough Rock Demonstration School. For over 16 years now I have been on the Navajo Reservation. I was raised with the Penobscot Tribe Pleasant Point Band, in the State of Maine.

First of all, I would like to thank and congratulate you for having these hearings. The topic of discussion this afternoon as far as I know has never before been considered in hearings like this. It is a topic in sore need of more active consideration in the classrooms. It is a topic which, if not regarded and acted upon, will most assuredly continue to create children with more than abused self-concepts.

So, I thank you and respect you for doing so.

The need for the design and delivery of culturally compatible Indian education is very real and tragic. We out there in the field have known this for a long time. The Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and the public schools, at least on the Navajo Reservation, make no pretense to design or deliver culturally compatible education to their students. That has not been their forte. It is not now, and as far as I know it is not among their plans.

Indeed, we used to be able to do more than we are able to do now. As you know, Rough Rock is a Public Law 93-638 school, and as you know, many of the Public Law 93-638 schools on the Indian reservation took the contract school way primarily and initially due to concerns for the culture and linguistic appropriateness of the education being delivered to the children in their communities. And we used to be able to do more than we can now.

In recent years, however, given the change in Title VII regulation, which has changed what used to be bilingual education into now ESL–English as a second language—up to and including the third grade and that's it. We no longer have those funds to operate truly bilingual education.

Title I moneys—Chapter 1, excuse me—Chapter 1 moneys used to be able to be used in a more appropriate way in whole-school application. Those regulations have changed. I understand that there is consideration of changing them back to allow what used to be, but that is not the case now.

The defunding and the increased competition for title IV moneys has wreaked havoc upon what we used to be able to do with those moneys in terms of cultural education. So, indeed I need to let you know that the schools who historically were and still are in the forefront, on the cutting edge of culturally compatible education in the field, we did better 10 years ago than we are able to do now, given contemporary regulation and funding.

We need funding that is not of a competitive nature. I do not feel that we can give the welfare of the building of culturally appropriate

education over to the kind of funding that may run out if a given grant proposal is not funded.

At the same time, English-based and biased, Anglo-based and biased education, as delivered on the Navajo reservation anyway, has put parents and children where they have just simply lost faith. This is evidenced by statistics. I live and work in the Chinley agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and we recently did a study of dropouts. About 28% of the first-graders who are supposed to be in school are not sent to school because their parents have lost faith in the schools. That increases to 58% by the twelfth grade.

Reservation wide, absentee rates run at 50%. And it is very plain and simple to see that the Anglo-based education has simply ill-prepared the students and put students out on the street. Even a large percentage of those who do graduate are ill-prepared and basically nonfunctional other than for entry-level, low-paying jobs, not of a professional nature. Thank goodness there are exceptions to that.

I will simply cite, and not bore you, with the research that has been done in psycholinguistics, which we have known of for years. We have known that if we do not teach a student in their first language, if we do not use the cultural framework which they bring to school, if we do not capitalize upon the culturally specific cognitive style that they are taught as children in their own homes, then we are not anything other than professionally fraudulent. We have known the variables for many years. The research has been there. We have simply had to ignore it or it has been ignored.

Thankfully, at Rough Rock, with which I am proud to be affiliated, thankfully at Rough Rock, through the benevolence of Kamehameha Foundation, Bishop Estate, we have been able to turn the tide, locally. I would like to share a few of the results of our program at Rough Rock.

The results thus far are:

No. 1, the development of a framework within which the curricular construct of Rough Rock bilingual, bicultural program can be knowledgeably and empirically considered;

No. 2, identification and implementation of center-based, small-group instruction which best utilizes our children's mode of learning developed at home;

No. 3, a construct for continual development of curriculum;

No. 4, a construct in which we examine and modify all aspects of instruction when and where necessary;

No. 5, a construct demanding curricular accountability;

No. 6, an instructional rallying point for staff, including planning, material development, problem-solving, and evaluation;

No. 7, continued faculty training, both formal and college classrooms, and more often informal by way of the workshop at Rough Rock; and

No. 8, most importantly, happier children who learn more, who think and feel more healthily about themselves, and who demonstrate this by maintaining a learning environment in the school, more so than has ever been true before.

I think it is important to note that among statistics that I have already given to you, we have a 94% attendance rate, and our enrollment is up 37% this year over last.

Mr. Chairman, these are not just the results of our work. These are the kinds of building blocks upon which programs are built, and they must continue…

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CHAPTER 4

# What Is at the Center of the Curriculum?

What is at the center of the curriculum? Educators have faced this vexing question over the course of the twentieth century and continue to wrestle with this question in today's classrooms. Although school curricula have generally taken up the traditional subject matters such as math, science, and the like, pedagogical methods have moved from traditional teacher-centered approaches to progressive child-centered ones and back again (Franklin & Johnson, 2008). There has also been a consistent drive to make curricula more responsive to the realities of students' lives. This chapter examines how educators have attempted to modify the curriculum by re-centering it in response to the child, especially to reflect sociocultural and political elements of children's lived experiences. In examining these appeals for curriculum that is more responsive to all students, this chapter asks how educators have attempted to make curricula more equitable over the course of the twentieth century.

## 4.1 Tradition or Progress?

As schools and school districts became more organized and bureaucratized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, so did the curriculum (Tyack, 1974). As urban centers saw an increasing number of immigrants and migrants, school districts began to employ strategies for "managing" these new students. They often employed newly found scientific means to determine the curriculum promoted by looming figures such as Professor Franklin Bobbitt of the University of Chicago,



A. M. Ryan et al., *The Curriculum Foundations Reader*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34428-3_4

who encouraged school administrators to mimic the practices of business leaders (Tyack, 1974). The child study movement, with roots in the late nineteenth century, became one of the significant methods promoted by educators during this period. Prominent psychologist G. Stanley Hall advocated the use of child study—psychological and medical examinations of children—to ascertain how to better educate them. The practice flourished in the early twentieth century with public school districts establishing whole departments devoted to its implementation. By 1902, the Chicago Public Schools had a full-fledged Child Study department that focused mostly on children who they believed to be "backward" (Ryan, 2011). However, as Franklin (1994) found, many children identified as "backward" were labeled as such based on the self admittedly inaccurate and biased methods of the testers. The child study movement signaled the beginning of what we now call special education, but not in the more inclusive ways stemming from 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142; Rury, 2002).

In the early twentieth century, most schools depended on a classical curriculum consisting of teaching Greek, Latin, and literature along with the 3Rs—reading, writing, and arithmetic—as well as other subjects. The teaching techniques were characteristically traditional and teacher-centered, with the teacher primarily implementing didactic instruction. Students generally sat in fixed rows of desks bolted to the floor in overcrowded classrooms as they listened to lectures, practiced skills, and participated in recitations. This was especially true in urban classrooms where the school-age population rose precipitously during the 1910s and 1920s:

> Between 1909-10 and 1919-20, the ratio of high school enrollment to the 14- to 17-year old population rose from 14 percent to 31 percent. The enrollment ratio for the younger 5- to 13-year-old children was over 100 percent, indicating both the high enrollment rate for the age group and the number of older students attending below ninth grade. (Snyder, 1993, p. 26)

Teacher-centered classrooms in this era often aimed to serve the largest number of students in the most efficient manner, which was consistent with the goals of the social efficiency movement focused on running schools like well-organized businesses. This movement sought to shape education to prepare students with the knowledge and skills needed by a

growing industrial society (Rury, 2002). Another way of increasing efficiency was to test students and then track them by ability into leveled classrooms, purportedly to better meet student needs. However, the IQ and standardized tests used to sort students into these tracks were biased to categorize students by race, ethnicity, gender, and class. These prejudiced classification mechanisms, coupled with equally biased counseling advice, shuttled students into entrenched academic and vocational tracks with long-term consequences (Steffes, 2012).

In contrast to those supporting scientific or business-like approaches to curriculum, some progressive educators focused on the child as a whole person that exists within a social reality. Progressive education came in at least two forms at this time: pedagogical progressives, advocating child-centered methods (not to be confused with child-study), and administrative progressives, interested in shaping schooling along the corporate model of efficiency (Tyack, 1974). Columbia Teachers College professors John Dewey (formerly of the University of Chicago) and William Heard Kilpatrick, both firmly in the pedagogical progressive camp, encouraged teachers to engage students in inquiry-based learning built on student experiences. Dewey espoused the scientific method as a tool for teaching and helping students make observations about the phenomena of their actual experiences. Kilpatrick, building on Dewey's ideas, promoted the project method, which focused on developing curriculum projects that involved a four-step problem-solving process (Kliebard, 1995).

Both Kilpatrick and Dewey pressed for education that prepared students for life in real-time. In *How Teachers Taught*, historian Larry Cuban (1993) found evidence of teachers engaging students in progressive pedagogies during the 1930s in New York City, Denver, and Washington, DC. These more student-centered methods included the activity method, small group discussions, debates, and more. Teachers engaged in these methods in attempts to prepare students not just for their future lives, but for their current realities, as the pedagogical progressive theorists promoted.

## 4.2 Culture and the Curriculum

Although progressives from both orientations aimed to serve the child, how they defined the concept of serving a child varied a great deal. As the century churned on, the curriculum continued to ebb and flow

between more progressive and traditional orientations (Chapter 5 delves into these shifts in some depth; Franklin & Johnson, 2008). However, the drive to center culture in the curriculum was also evident in the early twentieth century. Social reformer Jane Addams' work at Hull House, one of the first and most prominent Settlement Houses in the United States, provides an important example of an educational model that valued the cultural backgrounds of immigrants who had newly arrived in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. Although Addams, like many of her fellow progressive reformers, aimed to assimilate the immigrants who came to Hull House and fashion them into law-abiding American citizens. However, Addams also believed that the cultural heritages of immigrants were assets and advised schools to support the culture of students' parents:

> Can we not say, perhaps, that the schools ought to do more to connect these children with the best things of the past, to make them realize something of the beauty and charm of the language, the history, and the traditions which their parents represent. (as cited in Nieuwejaar, 2015, p. 70)

Addams advocated for building on immigrants' assets and urged educators in Chicago and beyond to make bridges from home to school to improve the conditions for these new arrivals.

Similar to Addams, historian Carter G. Woodson (1933/1998) advocated for education that strengthened and supported the cultural inheritance of students, but his focus was on African Americans. In contrast to Addams, Woodson was not an assimilationist, as demonstrated by his argument to include the contributions of African Americans in U.S. history lessons (Ladson-Billings & Brown, 2008). His writing and advocacy in the 1910s and 1930s had a significant impact on other Black educators and scholars (see Sect. 4.4.1). Although his work examined the wider history of African Americans, he did produce several pieces on the history of education, his most notable being *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933).

These early efforts to leverage student cultural heritages within art and history curricula to help students better connect to school were not the only type of culturally influenced curricular programs at the time. There were movements as early as the 1920s to imbue curricula with content and pedagogies that would help students from different racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds better understand one another's

"cultural gifts" (Johnson & Pak, 2019). Known as the intercultural (or intergroup) education movement, this particular trend persisted well after World War II. Johnson and Pak (2019) argue that this curricular movement trailed into the 1970s.

Intercultural education was met with resistance during the WWII and Cold War eras of the 1940s and 1950s, when the mood of the nation, under threat from external forces, emphasized unity and feared difference. Regardless of the opposition, some regions of the country, notably Detroit and New York City, continued to implement intercultural education, knowing that attending to the diversity in their city or school during these more challenging times, was critically important (Johnson & Pak, 2019). For example, Detroit Public Schools had a fairly robust intercultural education program during the 1940s. The program regularly shared teachers' efforts in a pamphlet, *Promising Practices in Intergroup Education* (Halvorsen & Mirel, 2013).

One of the methods highlighted was "The Factual Approach," which focused on debunking false notions of racial hierarchies (Halvorsen & Mirel, p. 371) resulting from decades of eugenic science content that was still in the public sphere. Eugenics inaccurately (and with great consequence still today) promoted the idea of racial hierarchies and superiority supported by pseudoscience (Gould, 1981/1996; Selden, 1999). Teachers using "The Factual Approach" based their lessons on anthropological findings, refuting the belief that race accounts for character and ability differences (Halvorsen & Mirel, p. 371). *Promising Practices* explained that "The Factual Approach lessons were organized around the pamphlet *Races of Mankind* [by Ruth Benedict, a noted anthropologist] and the book *One God and the Ways We Worship Him*." In this approach, teachers aimed "to dispel the myth of a 'pure' race" (Halvorsen & Mirel, p. 371).

As some educators worked to increase cultural understanding through the curriculum, the issue of educational inequity played out in the courts. In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in *Brown v. the Board of Education* that separate schooling was unequal. This decision, coupled with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, resulted in curricular shifts. Different from the preceding intercultural education movement, multicultural education (ME) came on the scene as early as the 1960s (Banks, 1993). Largely influenced by the Civil Rights Movement and other liberation struggles of the era, ME initially concentrated on integrating content that reflected the experiences

of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. ME curricula included some attention to women, but this came about more as a result of the resurgence of the Women's Movement in the 1960s and 1970s and its call for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (which did not pass at the time, but renewed efforts to pass the amendment are afoot presently) and the eventual passage of Title IX in 1972 that established equality in education for women (see Sect. 4.4.3). Similarly, educators saw the merits of ME and how it might bolster efforts within special education, although disability did not officially have a home in ME. Amos and Landers (1984) invoked PL 94-142 of 1975 and the increased presence of students with special needs in "mainstream" classrooms as a rationale for wider integration of ME. Amos and Landers (1984) outlined the need to prepare teachers in ME to better serve what they described as "culturally different" and "disabled" children (p. 146; Sect. 4.4.2 highlights some of these issues).

By the 1980s and 1990s, ME efforts moved beyond solely curricular content integration to add aspects of the political and structural organization of schooling. James Banks (1993) argued that ME curriculum aimed to reduce prejudice reduction, promote equity pedagogy, and form school cultures that supported students from all backgrounds. However, just as its predecessor, intercultural education, ME's impact on the curriculum and wider education organization was met with resistance. As ME began to flourish in schools, the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (1983) cautioned the public about the grave state of education. This high profile national report published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, formed by President Reagan's Secretary of Education Ted Bell (1981–1985), raised concerns about curricula in U.S. schools. The Commission criticized schools for being out of step with what was needed to be competitive in the international marketplace. It echoed decades past with calls for getting back to basics.

One of the highest profile battles of the time period was the heated debate over the development of the ill-fated National History Standards in 1994 by the National Center for History in the Schools at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). A team led by historian Gary B. Nash and history educator Charlotte Crabtree, who consulted educators and other stakeholders, had been charged with the task by the National Endowment for the Humanities. However, its then chairman, Lynne Cheney, accused UCLA's center of political correctness and lobbied against passing the standards (Nash, Crabtree, &

Dunn, 1997/2000). Conservative-leaning coverage of the controversy depicted the standards as part of the "multicultural agenda" (Nash et al., 1997/2000, p. 5). Although the standards did not survive as a formal set of national standards, they did influence the formation of subsequent state standards and curriculum in the new millennium (Brown, 2004; Henry, 2010). This battle over national history standards laid bare the cultural and political contests surrounding the curricula of the twentieth century.

Building on the long history of those who appealed for more cultural and political orientations to the curriculum over the course of the century, it is essential to acknowledge that as ME took root, so did critical pedagogy. Gottesman (2010) argues that although it took some time, acclaimed Brazilian Marxist educational theorist Paulo Freire eventually had a significant impact on the U.S. curriculum field. Freire (1970/2000) published his foundational book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1970, but it was not until American scholars like Henry Giroux (1988) cited Freire's work that U.S. educators began to use his ideas in the classroom (Gottesman, 2010). The work of critical education scholars Giroux (1988), Peter McLaren (1989), and Freire (1970/2000) began to make their way into teacher education programs and, in turn, influenced the questions teachers asked of their students and the way teachers taught. The Marxist influence of this body of work therefore led a wider group of teachers to explicitly ask questions about power, resources, and politics in terms of education. This change was also realized in the curriculum since teachers began to bring these questions about the wider world into their classrooms. One such example was the establishment of Rethinking Schools, a teacher-led organization founded in 1986: "Rethinking Schools began as a local effort to address problems such as basal readers, standardized testing, and textbook-dominated curriculum" (Rethinking Schools, 2017, para. 3). Its name suggests that it aimed at asking new questions about the organization of, and decision-making processes within schools. (See Sect. 5.8.3 in Chapter 5, which is from Rethinking Schools, to understand how it took a critical approach to education at this time.)

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b) was also interested in a critical approach to the curriculum, but she urged educators and teacher educators alike to ground their work in a pedagogical theory that explicitly addressed issues of educational inequity within a cultural context. She was also deeply concerned about the accountability movement of the

1990s and conducted research in schools that had successful academic track records with African American students. In her landmark study on culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), Ladson-Billings (1995b) asserted,

> A next step for positing effective pedagogical practice is a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate. I term this pedagogy, culturally relevant pedagogy. (p. 469)

Ladson-Billings was at once asking for a pedagogy that was grounded in culture, but also critical (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Incorporating the critical pedagogy that had in part dominated the curriculum field up until that point (Ladson-Billings, 1995a), Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate IV (1995) looked to Critical Race Theory (CRT) to reorient the field. CRT in education critiqued education along with power relationships through the lens of race, and Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) suggested that it should also be used to question the effectiveness of ME.

> …the current multicultural paradigm functions in a manner similar to civil rights law. Instead of creating radically new paradigms that ensure justice, multicultural reforms are routinely "sucked back into the system" and just as traditional civil rights law is based on a foundation of human rights, the current multicultural paradigm is mired in liberal ideology that offers no radical change in the current order. Thus, critical race theory in education, like its antecedent in legal scholarship, is a radical critique of both the status quo and the purported reforms. (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 62)

Marshaling the use of CRT from the legal field into use in education offered another feature to consider in the curriculum: intersectionality. This concept, developed by Black feminist legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, emphasized the interconnectedness of social categorizations and how those categorizations such as race, class, and gender can compound an individual's level of discrimination or disadvantage (Cooper, 2015). The idea of intersectionality provided a powerful framework from which to better understand how system power issues in education made addressing the student achievement of marginalized populations so difficult.

In her research, Ladson-Billings (1995b) found teachers making more than simple connections with African American students. She saw the power of integrating critical and cultural pedagogy into the curriculum.

> … the teachers in this study were not reluctant to identify political underpinnings of the students' community and social world. One teacher worked with her students to identify poorly utilized space in the community, examine heretofore inaccessible archival records about the early history of the community, plan alternative uses for a vacant shopping mall, and write urban plans which they presented before the city council. (p. 477)

Educators found Ladson-Billings' argument convincing and turned to CRP to meet the challenges of raising student achievement during the increased focus on standards and accountability of the 1990s and 2000s (CRP is also known as culturally relevant or responsive education [CRE]).

Many twenty-first century educators have adopted culturally responsive pedagogy, but there is still a good deal of resistance (Neri, Lozano, & Gomez, 2019). Along with organizational barriers that prevent teachers from implementing CRE, Neri et al. (2019) argue that a lack of knowing how to implement CRE, good examples of CRE, and curricular resources contribute to the problem. Despite these challenges, some curriculum scholars have called for teachers to move beyond culturally responsive pedagogy to culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP; Paris & Alim, 2017). CSP explicitly takes cultural and linguistic diversity into account while centering on culture as an asset and seeking a curriculum that is humanizing through arts integration, participatory action research, hip hop pedagogy, and more. The steadfast demand to address culture in the curriculum has left its indelible mark on the twentieth century and promises to be the hallmark of twenty-first century curricula.

## 4.3 Introduction to the Sources

The sources for this chapter are from the 1930s through the 1980s. They represent calls for curriculum and education that are more equitable and responsive to a range of students with diverse sociocultural, linguistic, and gender identities. The authors of each source demonstrate the need for curriculum to be more responsive to students' culture, but

also recognize that students' multiple identities are sociopolitically constructed and therefore articulate the need for curriculum to recognize their intersectionality. These sources represent what other educators were calling for during the shifting educational landscapes of the 1930s to 1980s, including a shift away from curriculum looking for a universalized, one-size-fits-all solutions. Curriculum that took that approach (and those that still do) privileged the dominant culture, giving a particular group advantages over others and marginalizing many for their perceived "otherness." As you read each of these sources, use the following questions and your own to examine the issues they raise.

1. How did each of the authors argue for a different approach to the curriculum than the existing one at the time?
2. How did the time period, including the sociocultural political issues at that time, influence the particular points raised about the curriculum by the authors?
3. Which subject areas of the curriculum did the authors suggest needed revision to better meet the needs of students? Why?
4. Who did the authors believe were responsible for the issues with the curriculum? Who did the authors believe needed to address those issues and how were they to do so?

## 4.4 Associated Sources

### *4.4.1 Source IV.A: Why and How We Teach the Negro About Himself in the Washington Public Schools*

In "Why and How We Teach the Negro about Himself in the Washington Public Schools," John C. Bruce examined the critical importance of teaching the history of African Americans to students of African descent in 1937. This Great Depression era source argued that emphasizing this history not only to support the identities of students, but presented the factual historical record of the nation and the world.

Bruce was an elementary teacher, school principal, and district administrator in the Washington, DC public schools for more than 44 years (Board of Education). He served during an era of segregation within the DC schools. Mr. Bruce's text was originally an address given at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (presently named the Association for the Study of African

American Life and History), which took place on October 26, 1936 at Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia. His address was later published by *The Journal of Negro History*, now renamed *The Journal of African American History*. In his address, Bruce argued for a more responsive curriculum for all students, not just some, specifically in the area of history.

**Source IV.A.**
Bruce, J. C. (1937). Why and how we teach the Negro about himself in the Washington Public Schools. *The Journal of Negro History, 22*(1), 38–43.

In order to attain the established objectives in teaching history [sic] it is necessary to trace the record of mankind from the days of the earliest caveman to the present day. It naturally follows that the study of any race that has contributed materially to the civilization of man hardly can be omitted from the course of study. Yet such is the case. The study of the ancient Negro culture is nowhere to be found in the course of study of the Washington Public Schools as given in the printed outline. Are we to assume that Negro boys and girls who constitute approximately thirty per cent [sic] of the total school population will become, "willy nilly," useful citizens facing the future with confidence and enthusiasm? Such an attainment is impossible without proper guidance and nurture. Negro citizens, proud of the accomplishments and achievements of their race, conscious of the part their race has played in the evolution of civilization, can be produced only when provisions are made toward this end.

Every child enjoys reading deeds of great men and women who have played important roles in the theatre of life. A human trait is hero worship. The little Negro child ordinarily grows up, rightly admiring the heroes of other races, but ignorant of the fact that his own race has produced men and women of eminence and usefulness. It is a stimulus to any people to be able to refer to their fore-fathers as distinguished in deeds of valor. The Negro child is robbed of this stimulus. To the [W]hite authors are accredited the sins of omission and commission, in that they have written exclusively for [W]hite children and studiously left out the many creditable deeds of the Negro. He is credited with no heritage of valor; he is mentioned only as a slave while historical records prove that he has been among the bravest of soldiers, the most loyal of patriots, and the most constantly faithful of God-fearing men. We blame

the [W]hite authors of textbooks for neglecting our side of the story while we ourselves are surely not without fault.

American schools represent the unfolding ideals of a people. Their development has been the answer to increasing demands from the people, thus standing in sharp contrast to those of many countries where education has been imposed upon the people and its purposes controlled by national governments. Again [sic] it is notable that our schools must be regarded as purely local community enterprises. We must be mindful of their distinctive local and popular origin, unplanned by any individual or group but truly responsive to the evolving ideals and aspirations of thousands of individual local communities. What the people value most in life, American schools eventually reflect. Courses of study are not established and defined by administrative fiat, but they grow or adapt little by little under impact of decisions made literally by thousands of local school boards who are primarily responsible to local public opinion only. Local educational programs change in consequence of community discussions and agitation, of organized research, of propaganda brought to bear locally and nationally by pressure groups, such as this.

If we get nothing more from this conference than this thought our time has been well spent: Nowhere in the annals of history do we find where a minority group has had the control of the education of its youth. The part the next generations are to play in the complex dramas of tomorrow depends upon how well we, the teachers of colored youth, the molders of public opinion, fulfill our missions of today. My doctrine of social salvation is the systematic improvement of individuals. The present age is witnessing a race between education and disaster. The decision must be reached in the classroom.

If I may believe anything of the many things which continuously crowd the airways of communication it is that Tuesday of next week will be one of the most momentous days in American history. The fate of a nation hangs in the balance, with the expressed will of the Negro a determining factor. Regardless of the results, however, I believe that we shall continue to have some form of democratic government. Now let us see the connection with the teaching of Negro History.

A democracy cannot survive unless it produces a citizenry properly developed so that it can and will take an intelligent, active part in important issues in the state, nation, and world. Our education must, therefore, produce an intelligent, responsible and participating citizenry.

A citizen cannot function intelligently in a democratic society unless he is accurately informed concerning the problems and contributions of all members of that society. This correct information will make for tolerance and sympathetic understanding among the members. So [sic] train all school children that they may relive situations as they really were, see all sides of a question, weigh evidence and make impartial judgments. For all too frequently, public issues, especially those concerning the colored American, are decided not upon their merit alone but are biased by prejudice.

Today is the result of yesterday; tomorrow will be the outcome of today. The hundreds of boys and girls studying history at the present moment will do much to determine the kind of tomorrow that millions, yet unborn, will have. If they get from the study of history not merely the story of men and their deeds, but more important still, the facts that enrich their understanding of human affairs, they will have added equipment with which to supply the needs of mankind.

There has been much miseducation concerning the Negro. His vices have been exploited and his virtues suppressed. Until recently, thanks to the splendid efforts of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History which changed it all, no writer of repute ever dreamed of including the Negro as an integral part of American civilization, seriously considered his contributions as valuable, or was able to conceive the whole fabric of American Negro heritage so closely interwoven with the pattern of American life and history that to leave out one would be to distort the other. The major concern, then, in teaching Negro History is to help the student grasp the meaning and importance of his place in his race and the place his race holds in the development of this country. Emphasis should be placed not only on the past, but on the present as well and the relation of the one to the other.

> Other races have come to our shores, sometimes with great gifts or in large numbers; but it is upon the Negro race that the country's history has turned as on a pivot. In the colonial era [sic] it was the economic advantage of slavery over servitude that caused it to displace this institution as a system of labor. The expansion of the southwest depended upon the labor of the Negro and the question of fugitives was the real key to the Seminole War. The long struggle culminating in the Civil War was mainly concerned with the status of the Negro in the Republic.

Because of the obvious neglect of most historians to discuss Negro accomplishments or contributions, it is necessary to supplement so-called abortive American history with a course especially aimed to bring before the Negro child and the world some achievements of the race. The present approved course of study in history for the District of Columbia has in outline form main topics to be covered in the intermediate grades of the elementary school starting with ancient civilizations and leading up to contemporaneous American history. Important eras, epochs and characters are brought into relief, but nowhere do we find the slightest mention of or even reference to any member of the ethnic group with which we are identified. Now one of the functions of a supervising principal in our system is to interpret the course of study. I perform this function to the best of my ability. With regard to the teaching of history [sic] every requirement is met, yet by the interpolation of facts as given by the best authorities, the interweaving of historical data in the proper chronological sequence, without bitterness or prejudice we have made our children cognizant of the "missing pages of American History."

A careful study of our plans will immediately acquaint you with the scope and possibilities of such units in attaining the objectives set forth above. All of this work runs concurrently with the required subject matter throughout the entire term. Every week for us is Negro History Week. These units correlate with practically every other subject in the curriculum. Through poems, songs and story, dramatizations, picture study, excursions to museums, shrines, public places, and industrial arts work a wealth of broadening information rich in the good the Negro has done may be discovered.

History, fully as vividly as literature, though not in so personal a way, presents reconstructions in imagination of the experiences of nations, peoples, institutions and social groups. History is to be used primarily as a means of social experience, indirect observations of, or vicarious participation in, man's activities in different lands and ages. Its generalizations must grow up gradually out of concrete, historical experiences. They cannot be given over merely by formulating them in verbal terms and instilling these verbalities into the minds of the students. In outward form such generalizations appear to be genuine; but in the mind of the learner they lack the actual substance. The teacher selects the type of lesson best suited to her purposes. Dramatization often makes real phases of this work.

To summarize:
The Negro child sees about him the White man's civilization. He feels prejudice on every hand in America. He reads in books that the Negro is inferior. His textbooks tell him nothing good about the Negro. Logically, he begins to wonder if he has come from nothing and is going nowhere. It is important, then, that Negro History be taught (1) to instill pride of race, (2) to give courage to face social handicaps in this country today, (3) to stimulate the child toward greater achievement, (4) to acquaint the child with what part the Negro has taken in the building of American civilization, (5) to give a sympathetic attitude toward the Negro (if taught to other groups), (6) to have the child appreciate the courage with which the Negro in America has faced conditions from slavery to the present, (7) to inculcate in the mind of the Negro child, the fundamental idea of his American citizenship with all of its rights, privileges and responsibilities.

### *4.4.2 Source IV.B: My Experiences in School*

Gallaudet College (now Gallaudet University), established in 1864 in Washington, DC, published two books based on a videotaped series of deaf persons telling their stories in American Sign Language (ASL) in the early 1980s. The stories were transliterated into two volumes with the intent "to promote the deaf heritage" (Pittle & Rosen, 1984, p. v). The editors of the stories acknowledged that the transliterations of the stories were not "exact duplications of the signed originals," but edited versions of the stories (p. v). Oralism, or teaching deaf children to read lips and speak, was the approach to deaf education for the majority of the twentieth century, as was hiring hearing rather than deaf teachers (Nomeland & Nomeland, 2011). ASL did not become the language of choice for teaching deaf students until the 1960s. That is not to say that sign language was not in use: "During the reign of oral programs…deaf students signed behind the teacher's back in classrooms. When caught, the students were usually punished.…[Teachers believed that] the ability to talk was a passport for deaf people to succeed in the hearing world" (Nomeland & Nomeland, 2011, p. 55).

Carolyn McCaskill, an alum of and staff member at Gallaudet, shared her account of growing up as a deaf African American woman in Mobile, Alabama in the early 1960s. She provided a window into her unique educational experiences, giving a sense of how her multiple identities and the intersectionality of those identities affected her schooling and

the choices she and her family made in relation to those complex individual and social factors. She noted that a critical moment in her educational history was the racial integration of the Alabama School for the Deaf in 1968. The school integrated some 14 years after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and only after a court-ordered mandate (Hawkins, 2011).

**Source IV.B.**
McCaskill, C. (1984). My experiences in school. In I. B. Pittle & R. Rosen (Eds.), *Another handful of stories: Thirty-seven stories by deaf storytellers* (pp. 121–123). Washington, DC: The Division of Public Services, Gallaudet College.

I grew up in Mobile, Alabama. Attended a public high school. At that time, 1963, there were no interpreters in my school. I became very, very frustrated. I depended on my hearing friends for information about what was going on in class. School became so frustrating that one day I just gave up. I told my mother I didn't want to go to that school anymore. I wanted to transfer to the Alabama School for the Deaf. My mother finally gave in, and my sister (who's also deaf) and I transferred to the Alabama School for the Deaf.

My sister and I felt a little awkward at our new school. We didn't know any sign language and there were no sign language classes at the school. We had to pick up signing by associating with the deaf students. The Alabama School for the Deaf was a segregated school. It was only for [B]lack deaf children. The students' educational values were very, very low. My sister and I really never had to study because we had very good backgrounds from the public schools, even though we had missed a lot of information in school.

I did not have any role models. I never had heard of a successful [B]lack deaf person I did not know any [B]lack deaf teachers or principals or successful business people. Most of the [B]lack deaf people who graduated from the Alabama School for the Deaf went to work in factories or laundries or they became custodians or janitors. I realized that I did not want that to happen to me.

Fortunately, the Alabama School for the Deaf was forced to integrate in 1968. Integration of [B]lack and [W]hite students was a whole new experience. Educational values became very high. I learned so much; it was like being in a different world.

I learned about Gallaudet College. Before, I had never even heard of Gallaudet College. I remember asking some deaf [W]hite teachers if [B]lacks could enter Gallaudet. The teachers said of course. I asked one teacher to show me the Tower Clock (the Gallaudet yearbook). My jaw fell when I saw pictures of African students. My teacher assured me I could get into Gallaudet. I said, "Me? No, way! I'm, too dumb." I just thought that all [B]lack deaf students were dumb. The teacher said, "No, you can do it. You just have to study hard." I asked her how I could improve my English. She said, "By reading." I said, "Reading? I don't like that; it would be really boring." "That's the only way you're going to improve yourself," she replied.

So, I read [sic] and I read. When my teacher asked me what I wanted to become in the future, I told her a teacher or a counselor. I wanted to help other deaf children. My teacher encouraged me. I had several good [W]hite deaf role models. My teachers encouraged me to study hard. They said if I studied hard I would pass the Gallaudet exam. My goal became to study hard.

I passed the Gallaudet Entrance Exam and so did my sister. We both went to Gallaudet. Being at Gallaudet was an eye-opening experience. I met African students, Chinese students, and Russian and German students. I was so happy my first year at Gallaudet. I wrote home often to describe to my mother my different experiences at Gallaudet. I really enjoyed my years at Gallaudet. My best year was 1976—that's when I became Miss Gallaudet. I really felt that was the biggest achievement of my life at Gallaudet.

My sister and I both completed all five years at Gallaudet, and we graduated in 1977. By that time, I had decided to enter the graduate school; I wanted to become a counselor rather than a teacher. I attended the graduate school for two years, and I graduated in 1979. Then I applied for work at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD). I worked there for two years as a dorm counselor. And then in the fall of 1981 [sic] I became a school counselor at MSSD.

I feel that I have accomplished a lot. But I'm still not finished with my goals. Every time I've succeeded in attaining one goal, I set another one. My next goal is to get my Ph.D. someday. I believe that you can succeed if you set your mind to it then you can indeed attain your goals.

### *4.4.3 Source IV.C: A Handbook for Workshops on Sex Equality in Education*

This source is an excerpt from a handbook published by the Office of Education (now the Department of Education) in 1976 offering guidance on how to support women and girls in education. This handbook especially emphasized the obligation for schools to address the needs of women of color, women who were twice a minority due to the intersection of their racial and/or ethnic background and their gender. In each of the sources supporting this chapter, the authors comprised of teachers/administrators, students, or bureaucrats from government agencies argue for the curriculum to address specific needs and set high expectations for both specific students and all students implicitly or explicitly.

This handbook came about to support educators with the implementation of Title IX, a 1972 federal law passed to address sex discrimination in education: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" (as cited in Kerber & De Hart, 2000, p. 543). The Office of Civil Rights in the Office of Education assumed the enforcement of this federal legislation. (The Office of Education did not become a cabinet-level office—the Department of Education—until 1979.) Title IX was used by the federal government to address inequity issues in funding and unequal treatment of women in educational institutions from elementary to college levels. However, it initially had a larger impact on athletics, even though the legislation was clearly intended to affect education programs at the classroom level more specifically (Edwards, 2010).

The source that follows illustrates how the federal government encouraged schools to implement curricular initiatives that supported Title IX's original intent of addressing the broad-ranging educational inequities for women. It focused not only on curriculum in terms of the traditional classroom, but also for guidance, athletics, and the discourse of how we talk about these important issues.

**Source IV.C.**

Verheyden-Hilliard, M. E., American Personnel and Guidance Association, United States, & Office of Education, Women's Program. (1976). *A handbook for workshops on sex equality in education: Information activities*

*resources for educators, students, the community*. Washington, DC: American Personnel and Guidance Association.
[The following material was excerpted from pages 14–18 of the handbook.]

## THE CURRICULUM

*The Problem*
The curriculum is the core of the school program and curricular materials may be the school's most relentlessly sex discriminatory aspect. Whether in kindergarten picture books, high school science books or college texts on human development, sex bias in educational materials is a reality.

Researchers analyzing books and stories for sexist material found that often girls are presented as dumb and stupid, and adult women are shown as virtual incompetents. Boys are required to lead dangerously adventurous lives, or, as men, expected to bear the sole responsibility for the financial survival of the family. The reality of the numbers of women in the labor force is rarely indicated.

In science and math books females are notable by their absence. This covertly if not overtly continues the stereotypes that mathematics and science are male domains. Audiovisual materials often use male narrators speaking in male-generic terms to present material which ignores half the student population.

*Positive Steps*
The seriousness of teacher interest and input can help students recognize the detrimental effects of sex role stereotyping and the need to eliminate it.

- Point out sex stereotyping as it occurs in curricular materials. Compare the stereotyping to the reality of students' lives.
- Encourage students to point out and discuss sex stereotyping whenever and wherever they encounter it.
- Plan a series of projects for students to find and develop bias free information and materials for class use (e.g., pictures, career possibilities, biographical and historical information).

Involving students in projects of their own helps them not only to be conscious of sex stereotyping but to become aware of bias free alternatives.

Topics for discussion at various levels can be found in the section, "Girls and Boys are Socialized Differently" (p. 9). The Resource section offers many items that can be used as a base for supple mental materials.

## COUNSELING MATERIALS

*The Problem*

Counselors have a legal responsibility to deliver sex fair counseling and testing. Counselors should be sure that their activities and practices are in compliance with the law.

Studies indicate that many career guidance materials are sex biased. Women are either absent from most career materials or, when present, portrayed predominantly in traditional occupations.

Questions also have been raised concerning the sex fairness of many tests which counselors administer routinely ….

The Regulation for Title IX issued by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in July of 1975 states that one area that will be closely examined to see if a school is in compliance with the law is the area of counseling….

*Positive Steps*

To provide sex fair guidance, counselors may wish to:

- Examine their own counseling practices and methods of test interpretation which may convey to students that certain roles or careers are more appropriate to one sex than to another. All the material in this handbook should help with that examination.
- Screen tests for sex bias using guidelines developed in the study done by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Institute of Education (Appendix E);
- Bring in persons with non-traditional jobs to talk with students; and
- Develop sex fair counseling materials through use of supplemental materials suggested in the Resource Guide.

Career decisions should not be limited by stereotyped notions of what is "appropriate" for girls or boys to do. The Guidelines in Appendix E offer ways to judge whether or not a test is sex fair and also suggest ways to expand options that can be helpful not only in interpreting tests but in general counseling practice.

Other ways to assess tests for sex bias are offered by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Its Guidelines on Discrimination

Because of Sex (Appendix D) and the American Psychological Association's Standards for Educational Psychological Tests.

## ATHLETICS IN AN EDUCATIONAL SETTING

*The Problem*

As the effect of Title IX on athletic programs and physical education classes is felt in school systems across the land, educators will need to reconsider and help others reconsider the traditional role of athletics in the lives of all students.

Present sex role stereotypes require that boys compete a great deal and that girls compete very little and particularly not with boys. This places limitations and burdens on both groups which prevent each individual from doing what she or he is capable of doing or interested in doing.

*Underlying Concerns*

Many persons who genuinely would like to see increased athletic activity for girls often have at least two concerns regarding the "danger" to girls if they are athletically active. Counselors should be aware of possible responses to those concerns:

- No one, of course, wants to pit an athletically weak girl against a strong athletic boy. But neither would anyone want to pit an athletically weak boy against a strong athletic boy. Groupings by appropriate weight and height provide a safe and simple solution.
- The fear of cosmetic or reproductive injuries is often raised in regard to the question of how involved girls and young women should be in athletics. Surely educators are not more willing to see boys and young men scarred or injured. If that is so, then suitable protection should be worn for all sports. If a sport is very dangerous and playing it risks a large percentage of bodily injury, perhaps educators should consider whether such a sport belongs in an educational setting at all.

*Positive Steps*

The need for reappraisal of physical education and athletic programs in educational settings exists not only because it is desirable that both girls and boys be given equal opportunity to develop their physical health, but because there are other important meanings attached to sports programs involving team work [sic] and leadership roles. Through sports, girls and

boys can learn to work together in a team effort and to accept each other as team leader. These are important learnings for later adult life.

## SEMANTICS

*The Problem*

The same word can have different meanings to different people. This may be even more likely to happen with words that are relatively new to popular usage.

For the purposes of your workshop, take the time to define your terms. It will help provide a common language base for discussion and may help avoid disagreement based on misunderstanding.

*Some Definitions*

GIRL, WOMAN, FEMALE: For the purposes of material in this handbook, these terms refer to all girls and all women, including the women and girls who are half of every minority, ethnic or religious group.

SEXISM: The word was coined by analogy to racism, to denote discrimination based on gender. In its original sense, sexism referred to prejudice against the female sex. In a broader sense, the term now indicates any arbitrary stereotyping of males and females on the basis of their gender. (Guidelines for Equal Treatment of the Sexes, McGraw Hill Book Company Publication.)

SEXIST: Advocate or supporter of sexism. All those attitudes and actions which relegate women to secondary and inferior status in society. (Guidelines for Improving the Image of Women in Textbooks, Scott, Foresman and Company, 1972.)

RACIST: Advocate or supporter of racism, a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1974.)

FEMINIST: Advocate or supporter of feminism, which is the theory that women should have political, economic and social rights equal to those of men; also the movement to win such rights for women. (Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, College Edition, 1957.)

FEMINISM: …that work is as significant to women as it is to men, that marriage ought to be a partnership of equals, that women ought to be financially independent, that child bearing and child rearing is not a woman's only or most important or even necessary role, and that family responsibilities ought to be divided between women and men. (Lucy Komisar, Civil Rights Digest, Spring Issue, 1974, p. 2.)

MS: Used as a conventional title of courtesy instead of Mrs. or Miss except when usage requires the substitution of a title or rank or an honorific or professional title before a woman's name. Note: The Correspondence Section of the White House prefixes the courtesy title Ms. before a woman's name unless a rank, honorific or professional title is used—General Mary Jones, Ms. Ann Jones, Dr. Mara Jones.

CHANGE AGENT: …those persons who desire to participate in, and often instigate, institutional change processes through strategic risk taking and calculated planning… also those persons who are called upon to work and live in vanguard positions in order to model new behavior that affect persons and institutions. (Geraldine Rickman, Civil Rights Digest, Spring Issue, 1974, p. 58.)

THE LAW

Educators with some basic understanding of the laws forbidding sex and race discrimination can help students understand how to benefit through the enforcement of these laws as well as learn what educators must do as professionals to bring their own practices into compliance with the law.

Of the six Federal enactments relating to equity in regard to sex, five prohibit sex and race discrimination in educational institutions in the major areas of admissions of students, treatment of students, and employment and the sixth provides monies for grants and contracts to develop programs and materials to achieve educational equity for girls and women. The enactments are:

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**:
Prohibits discrimination against students or others on the basis of sex.

**Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972**:
Prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sex (also race, color, religion, and national origin).

**Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972**:
Prohibits discrimination in salaries and fringe benefits on the basis of sex.

**Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Order 11375, Part II**:
Prohibits discrimination employment on the basis of sex (also race, color, religion, and national origin).

**Title VII and Title VIII of Public Health and Service Act as amended by the Comprehensive Health and Manpower Act and the Nurse Training Amendment Act of 1971**:
Prohibits discrimination against students on the basis of sex and against some employees.

**Women's Educational Equity Act of the Education Amendments of 1974, PL 93-380**:
Designed to assure equity for girls and women at all levels of the country's educational system.…

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CHAPTER 5

# Who Chooses What Is Taught?

The phrase "school choice" has become a lightning rod in education in the twenty-first century. The United States (and the British colonies before it) has had a history of parents and caregivers seeking out and choosing a desirable curriculum for their children (Ben-Porath & Johanek, 2019). Historically, and still to a large extent today, one's economic, sociocultural, and political circumstances limit the range of available choices among schools and curricula. Regardless of those limitations, people from a wide swath of backgrounds believe, for various reasons, that having a choice in how their children are educated is a fundamental freedom in the United States (Carl, 2011). Although some draw the line at public funding for private schools or public charter schools, others are fully supportive of such efforts. This chapter explores historical cases that address questions surrounding curriculum choice and efforts to maintain a balance between equity and excellence in education within various levels of choice.

A variety of issues are related to educational and school choice—curriculum, region, beliefs, and economic values. The scope of choice for this chapter focuses on choice within the field of curriculum, and we examine the history and trends of curriculum choice over the late nineteenth to twenty-first centuries. In analyzing a sociopolitical and economic trend, we argue that making an informed choice is crucial for making an equal, fair choice. Furthermore, we posit that a full choice with a free will is an illusion in the curriculum choice discourse (Miller, 2005).



A. M. Ryan et al., *The Curriculum Foundations Reader*,
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As a curriculum historian, Herbert Kliebard (2002) provided historical debates related to curriculum choice and reform in his book *Changing Course: American Curriculum Reform in the 20th Century*. Kliebard (2002) elaborated on the "fads, fashions, and rituals" in curriculum change and noted that curriculum is a matter beyond academics, emphasizing the real everyday life of students and parents. Even in the face of efforts to change curriculum, organizational structure sometimes supersedes the importance of the academic curriculum. It should be recognized that efforts to change curriculum, and any pressures for social progress, are the embodiment of very specific political environments and maneuvering. When discussing the impetus for curriculum changes throughout history, Kliebard (2002) articulates four sociopolitical issues, functioning as "ebbs and flows of curriculum fashion" (p. 89). His related questions include: What is the purpose of deciding between the 3Rs-focused curriculum of reading, writing, and arithmetic and the "shopping mall" (electives-based) version of curriculum? How do we deal with the gap between the positive rhetoric of curriculum choice and a school's structural incompatibility to embrace such needs? How do we analyze political influences in curriculum choice? What about societal needs in curricular decision-making, such as the career-readiness agenda, in curriculum choice? Kliebard's (2002) diagnosis of these four questions offers a crucial framework in reviewing curriculum from a sociocultural and political lens. Furthermore, Kliebard (2002) invokes the swinging pendulum metaphor to predict what will come next in curriculum reform.

When viewing curriculum though Kliebard's (2002) sociocultural and political lens, it becomes clear that curriculum choice does not simply involve an individual student, parent, or teacher voluntarily choosing what and where to learn. Instead, it is a political act to fight against a set of sociopolitical norms that is already given to someone with a limited option. Thus, the overarching question of this chapter, "Which curriculum?", focuses on the different curriculum choices provided and challenged historically by those who interacted with it at a more microlevel—students, teachers, principals, and community—rather than curriculum on a macro-level or curriculum policy. We start from the perspective of those who were often in receipt of curriculum, but who also questioned that curriculum and its value. In exploring curriculum choice in this way, equity and power issues become the center of our inquiry. In the midst of this sociopolitical, economic trend, we argue for making an informed choice for advancing a more equitable, fair choice movement.

## 5.1 Whose Choice? From Some to Many

States compelled children and youth to attend school starting in 1852 with the State of Massachusetts. Mandated schooling operated as a tool for parents to insist on more school and curriculum options. Thus, in the late nineteenth century, educators used and tested a range of curriculum options for American schools. By 1918, all states had passed a compulsory school attendance law. Even with mandates to attend school, not all students had access to schooling; discriminations still operated based on those from particular ethnic and racial groups. Children and youth with disabilities were often turned away from formal education.

Prior to the compulsory schooling era, those children who received an education did so through a variety of means—tutoring, apprenticeships, private academies, public schools, and private religious schools. This range of educational situations presented different purposes and hence offered different curricula. Families and communities had needs and schools worked to meet those needs, in turn constructing one another and mutually reinforcing the identities of each other. However, in many cases, formal school determined the purposes and needs for particular populations. In these circumstances, students from lower socioeconomic classes and students of color received education and specifically curriculum that reinforced existing ethnic, racial, and social class hierarchies.

The manual training movement, which consisted of a curriculum based on preindustrial hand labor, largely kept people of color, namely African Americans and Indigenous peoples, from advancing economically (Kliebard, 2002, pp. 29–30). This was met with resistance from African American intellectuals like W. E. B. DuBois and others but persisted, nevertheless. Eventually, manual training gave way to industrial education, which did not promise much more than its predecessor. In public schools, industrial education took the form of vocational education during the Progressive Era of the early twentieth century.

Educational entities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries offered curriculum ranging from basic literacy for the purpose of reading the Christian Bible, to sets of skills to become a craftsman, to traditional academic subjects. Reese (2007) aptly describes the line between public and private education during the colonial and early national period as ambiguous, but argues that it became more defined over the course of the nineteenth century as states began to establish school systems. In the early twentieth century, with the advent of

compulsory schooling, traditional teaching methods and the classical curriculum prevailed, but prominent educators like John Dewey of the University of Chicago and later Columbia University promoted a more progressive approach. Dewey and others encouraged teachers to put the child and his experience of the world at the center of teaching and learning (see Chapter 4 for more on this). Progressive orientations to the curriculum came into fashion from time to time over the course of the twentieth century, but schools in the United States tended to revert back to a more traditional approach.

## 5.2 What to Learn? Curriculum Recommendations and Revisions

By 1918, all states generally required students to go to what we now consider elementary school and some high school, but did not specify private or public schooling. However, the enforcement of attendance and the type of school parents and children had access to varied greatly depending on their demographic, sociopolitical, and geographic context, which perpetuated separate and unequal schooling. As formal schooling took hold across the country, federal legislation ushered in funding for vocational education through the Smith Hughes Act 1917 (discussed in detail in Chapter 2). Following this act, long-standing distinct agricultural and industrial schools made their way into public school curricula, coinciding with the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education 1918 report, the *Cardinal Principles*. This committee, appointed by the National Education Association (NEA), delivered a report with recommendations to shift the high school curriculum from primarily focusing on college preparation, the centerpiece of the NEA's 1893 recommendations from its Committee of Ten, to one concerned about preparation for life in all its forms—academic, social, civic, and vocational pursuits. The message to high school students seemed to suggest that although they had to attend school, they would now have some curricular choices.

Reform-minded educational leaders of the time began to be concerned about the educational experience of children and high dropout rates; they started to believe that reforming the curriculum might keep children in schools and out of the labor force (Kliebard, 2002). The NEA led with its focus on the high school curriculum. The NEA sponsored three major efforts between 1893 and 1918 focused on the

secondary curriculum and its articulation with the college curriculum. These efforts included: The Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies in 1893, chaired by Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard University; the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements in 1895; and the *Cardinal Principles* in 1918. With each convening, the NEA worked to move the high school curriculum further from the classical model and closer to a more modern and practically minded curriculum. While the Committee of Ten and the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements concentrated on moving high school students from secondary studies to college studies, the *Cardinal Principles* decidedly shifted the high school curriculum to be both academic and vocational. With compulsory education in place across the nation, at least until the age of sixteen, schools became aconvenient location for job training and serving a growing corporate culture in the United States.

While these efforts aimed to create opportunities for students, they coincided with the educational measurement movement in schools, which introduced IQ and standardized testing purportedly designed to address students' individual differences. In reality, these tests generally resulted in tracking students into curricular programs by race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic class due to the biased nature of the testing instruments and the interpretation of their results by guidance counselors (Steffes, 2012).

## 5.3 A Turning Point for Choice

Catholic schools have held a significant place in the American educational landscape since the mid-nineteenth century. Established in part as a reaction to anti-Catholicism, Catholics also set up schools because they believed that formal schooling was not the responsibility of the state; rather it was that of parents and religious institutions (McCluskey, 1969). The curriculum of Catholic schools was designed to offer largely the same subjects as that of the public schools but infused with theology catering to their constituent's academic and religious needs. Many also taught in the native language of those who attended. This often resulted in increased criticism that Catholics and their schools were not American enough.

Shortly after World War I, in an era of increased Americanization, some states mandated English as the language of instruction. Legislation to this effect passed in Nebraska in 1919 and resulted in the landmark

Supreme Court case of *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923). The ruling was a victory in part for private and parochial schools by making the teaching of foreign languages legal, a chief concern of many of these schools, but it also was a significant victory for compulsory schooling legislation and state regulation of schooling. In acknowledging the right of the state to mandate attendance, require instruction in English, and regulate schools, the Supreme Court gave its clear support of state intervention in schools within reason.

The battle over the right of private education to exist continued into 1925 with the decision on *Pierce v. the Society of Sisters* (1925), reversing an Oregon law requiring all children to attend public schools. This law, supported and promoted by the Ku Klux Klan, tested the Court's ruling in *Meyer*. This type of legislation—already tried in other states, including the 1889 Edwards Law in Illinois—was not successful. Although the *Pierce* decision resulted in the protection of private education, it also reinforced the *Meyer* decision by protecting the right of the state to regulate private schools (Randal, 1994). The support for finding the Oregon law unconstitutional demonstrated a shift in public opinion regarding the right of private schools to exist, but the opinion of the quality of those schools and their societal value continues to be a source of debate.

## 5.4 At Mid-Century: Choice in the Wake of *Brown v. Board*, 1954

Before the 1954 desegregation ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown v. the Board of Education*, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals set precedence in its 1947 *Mendez v. Westminster* decision. This case found California schools to be separate and unequal. The *Brown* and *Mendez* decisions began the slow process of public school desegregation. With this, the plans to shift school integration policies, including busing programs, were met with a great deal of resistance. Some defied desegregation orders openly while others used school choice and the pretense of curriculum choice as a way to resist, defy, avoid, or even comply with the court's decisions to desegregate. For example, by the late 1960s some White southerners avoided desegregated public schools by establishing private segregation academies. They claimed that these schools offered a better curriculum than the public schools, but the underlying motives of their founders belied that arguments' thin veneer (Carl, 2011; Reese, 2007). In the north, White urban Catholics who may have

chosen public schools in earlier decades shifted to Catholic parochial schools to avoid busing programs and remain in a neighborhood school (McGreevey, 1996).

Desegregation efforts of the 1970s and 1980s led to the creation of magnet schools in many large urban areas. In some cases, these schools were created to address court-mandated consent decrees to desegregate school districts. In other cities, magnet schools were designed to voluntarily desegregate the student population from across the region. In both cases, magnet schools usually specialized in a particular curriculum—fine or performing arts, college preparatory, technical, or other educational focus. As Ben-Porath and Johanek (2019) explain, the characteristics of magnet schools changed over time as funding shifted to charter schools in the 1990s and legal challenges to voluntary desegregation efforts were upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 2000s. However, the consequence of the magnet school phenomena was a plethora of schools with curricular foci from which students and parents could choose, but magnet schools often then drained neighborhood schools of their students, causing those schools to become even more segregated.

## 5.5 The Curriculum Pendulum

John Dewey called on educators to provide a curriculum of experiences for children in the early twentieth century, and later refined and recast his ideas in 1938 in his book, *Experience and Education*. This book was published in the same year as the Eight Year Study, which examined the benefit of student-initiated curriculum over an essentialized high school core curriculum imposed upon from universities (Kridel & Bullough, 2007). During this golden era of progressive education, educators and stakeholders had different perspectives on which knowledge was important and how to make curricular choices.

The Eight Year Study, among others, promised the benefit of student-initiated curriculum over a traditional core curriculum, and tested this hypothesis by comparing cohorts of students who went through high school in progressive or traditional models of secondary schooling and then on to college (Kridel & Bullough, 2007). Since the study determined that students who experienced the more progressive curriculum did just as well in college as their traditional curriculum counterparts, the next wave in secondary educational curriculum making would revert back to centering on vocational education.

Similarly, the debate between discipline-centered and student-centered curriculum addressed the issue of what the purpose of education should be. Ballou (1925), for example, articulated the importance of whole child education and democratic citizenship in deciding important curriculum, stating that "the school must not only provide the child with the knowledge of the traditions and ideals of our republic but must train them into think straight, and inculcate in them proper ideals of honor, honesty, respect for law and duly constituted authority, and a willingness to perform some part of the world's work which needs to be done" (p. 426). A similar discourse surrounding the center of curriculum is currently happening in our own time with the emphasis on Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum, in the midst of the standardized testing movement. It is notable that such emphasis on whole person growth is a recurring topic in curriculum.

In the post-World War II era, vocational education experienced a reboot in the life adjustment education movement. Similar to the *Cardinal Principles*, this curriculum emphasized inculcating life and work habits, rather than solely preparing secondary school students for college (Kliebard, 1995). Education circles lauded this curriculum orientation, but by the 1960s, the school curriculum shifted back to an essentialist orientation, especially in secondary schools, narrowing it to the core academic subjects. Proponents of this narrowing, who came from major research universities and elsewhere, believed that the soft curriculum of life adjustment had opened the United States to a stinging defeat in the Cold War against the USSR with the Soviet's launch of the Sputniks (Reese, 2007). Infusions of federal dollars to reshape school curricula through legislation like the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 supported these efforts. The NDEA offered schools funding through the National Science Foundation to emphasize science, math, and foreign language, with limited attention to other subject areas.

As the 1960s came to a close and the 1970s ushered in, essentialism suffered a backlash at the secondary level with a demand for more openness and experimentation with students and teachers looking for curriculum that allowed for more electives, interdisciplinarity approaches, and experimentation (Van Til, 1970). At the elementary level, teachers had been influenced by the open education movement (discussed in more detail in Chapter 7), which allowed for team teaching and programs like Individualized Guided Education.

These curricular innovations existed alongside and within the development of different types of schools. In the 1970s and 1980s, some schools adopted the open classroom or schools without walls model and then adapted instructional and curriculum models to accommodate those changes (Baron, 2012). In these schools, teaching methods allowed students to exercise more independence and teachers to exercise more innovation (Baron, 2012; George, 1975). Simultaneously, some teachers brought constructive-oriented, research-based practices into their classrooms that affected how they approached a range of subject matter, especially reading instruction, by moving away from phonics and toward whole language. Those teachers decisively put children at the center of the curriculum with whole language and other constructivist approaches, thus moving the needle toward the progressive end of the spectrum.

## 5.6 Modern Choices

Starting in the 1980s, a neoliberal political environment highly influenced major players in the curriculum choice and reform movements. This environment thus supported Kliebard's (2002) fourth question, namely the ways in which social needs influence curricular choice. The 1983 conservative indictment of public schooling, *A Nation at Risk*, began a slow slide back to essentialism and focus on the 3Rs in many schools. It also marked the moment when increased efforts for market-driven reforms around school choice ramped up. States started passing school voucher laws in the 1990s, with Wisconsin being the first in 1990 (Bronner, 1998, para. 6). As states offered parents choices through tuition vouchers, tax credits, or tuition tax credit scholarships, school choice and curriculum choice continued to be entangled with one another.

Throughout the 1990s, large urban public districts experimented with different school configurations, such as the development of alternative and small schools in New York City (Lewis, 2013). By the late 1990s and early 2000s, charter schools had also entered the scene, supported by federal and state legislation that further complicated the school choice landscape. Neighborhood public schools implemented school-wide curricula centering on the arts, world languages, or other unifying themes or programs, including Montessori, International Baccalaureate, and Career and Technical Education, to develop choices and attract students

and their parents in an era of growing curricular competition. Districts continued to pursue these types of curriculum reform and choice initiatives with the hopes that a more cohesive curricular focus would lead to increased student engagement, motivation, and outcomes. Notably, neoliberal-oriented decision-making in curriculum has become apparent in the era of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in the twenty-first century. A desire to pursue professions in technology and the sciences encourages students to focus on and advocate for STEM-related curriculum. Exclusive private schools and innovative public and parochial schools work to emphasize these elements of the curriculum and introduce their market value for parents and students, advertising that their input (such as tuition and time) will generate favorable future outcomes for students.

## 5.7 Introduction to the Sources

The three sources presented in this chapter provide examples where communities, parents, students, and teachers expressed their desires around what kind of curriculum mattered to them. Over more than two centuries in the United States, educators and stakeholders have asked questions about curricular choice. The following sources demonstrate the ways in which curriculum choice has shifted across multiple dimensions related to equity issues: Choice of what? Choice for what? Choice by whom? Choice for whom? There is a range of sources in terms of topics and formats to explore these questions.

The sources presented here are all centered on the politics of choice. In the discussion of curriculum choice, critical theorists claim that regardless of curriculum reform for equitable choice, the haves still sustain their status and therefore perpetuate their privilege. There is no one-size-fits-all approach in deciding what is fair for all students when it comes to school choice. The debates operate with important questions including the difference in the purpose of education between public education and private or religious sectors. The sources range from visual depictions of American Catholics urging their children to attend Catholic secondary schools to Los Angeles parents and students demanding that the Board of Education bring back the elementary music program to the

reading wars of the 1980s. As a result, the sources encompass what and who should be at the center of curriculum choice, from subject matter experts, students, or social needs. The three sets of sources provide a rigorous platform to explore these questions related to curriculum choice, equity, and agency. As you read the sources, consider the following questions and raise your own questions:

1. Historically, what are the major discourses about curriculum choice that have inspired people to want a specific curriculum?
2. Who benefits the most from these choice debates? What motivates people to choose a specific curriculum? How do they go about getting what they want?
3. What happens when noncore academic disciplines (e.g., music, dance, PE) and social skills are not provided in schools? Who is responsible for providing this curriculum and who has the capacity to provide such lessons?
4. How do these examples relate to issues of curriculum choice today?

## 5.8 Associated Sources

### *5.8.1 Source V.A:* The New World

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States urged parents to send their children to Catholic schools from elementary through to higher education (Ryan, 2006). At the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, the American hierarchy of the Catholic Church called on each parish to establish a parish school within two years of the declaration (Weisz, 1976). By the early twentieth century, the Church impressed upon parents and their children the benefits of choosing Catholic secondary and higher education for their children.

To get the message out to Catholics, priests extolled the virtues of a Catholic curriculum through their sermons at daily and weekly masses. Catholic educators—sisters, brothers, and priests—advised students in their classrooms to continue on "The Straight Road" (O'Neil, 1926, p. 152). Families also encountered these messages in their homes through the Catholic press. In articles and images like those presented here from Chicago's Catholic newspaper, *The New World,* the Catholic

press aimed at communicating how Catholic schools and their curriculum would protect Catholic youth from the perceived social ills of modern America, yet prepare them for a range of economic and social opportunities in that same society. In addition, American Catholic schools were presented as a choice for predominantly European ethnic-Catholics to assimilate into middle-class Catholic-Americans armed with a strong moral compass to navigate the difficult waters of modern American society.

**Source V.A1. The problem of the day**
The New World. (1924, August 15). *The problem of the day* (Fig. 5.1).


**Fig. 5.1** The problem of the day

**Source V.A2. Higher education**
The New World. (1923, August 31). *Higher Education* (Fig. 5.2).

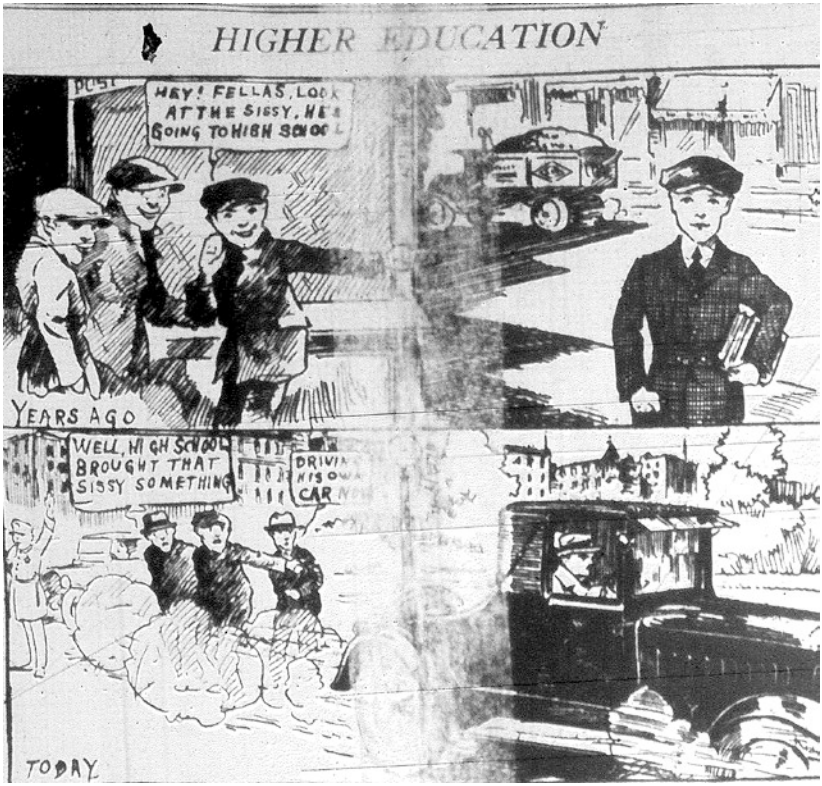


**Fig. 5.2** Higher education

### *5.8.2 Source V.B: Los Angeles Unified School District Documents*

From 1960 to 1980, the Los Angeles Unified School District underwent significant demographic, organizational, and budgetary changes. Like other large urban districts in the United States at this time, large numbers of White residents chose to leave the city for suburban areas (Schneider, 2008). This caused a financial drain on the city of Los Angeles and its schools, which depended on local taxes for a significant portion of its school funding. The 1960s also represented a time

of immense political, social, and economic change. The Watts "Riot" or "Rebellion" of 1965 and the Chicano School Walkouts of 1968 demonstrated the long, slow boil of tensions of community neglect and abuse by the larger urban government infrastructure. On the heels of these change agents, the city's schools also faced a series of teacher walkouts and strikes from 1968 to 1970 over pay and class size (Donovan, 1999).

In 1969, the district faced over a $25 million dollar budget shortfall which resulted in cuts to, among other things, the district-wide elementary school music program. The district's choice to make changes to the music curriculum caused parents, students, community representatives, and teachers to voice their dissatisfaction with the Board of Education. A sample of this correspondence from the Los Angeles Unified School District presented here offers a sense of how important the fine and performing arts were to school community members and the organized efforts they employed to apply pressure on the Board of Education to reinstate the music program.

The following source is a series of correspondence and documents from the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records, Collection 1923 housed in the Library Special Collections in the Charles E. Young Research Library at the University of California at Los Angeles. The names of public officials and schools are original, but the names of teachers, parents, and students have been masked by the use of pseudonyms.

(1969, August 1) [Letter to Arthur Gardner]

> Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records (Collection 1923). Box 1421. UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Mr. Arthur Gardner, President
Los Angeles City Board of Education
450 North Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, California

Dear Mr. Gardner:

As a parent in the East District at Belvedere Elementary School, I do <u>not</u> want music cut out of the school curriculum.

I feel that our children deserve the cultural advantage of learning music as part of their rightful heritage.

Furthermore, I am convinced that music strengthens skills in other academic subjects and increases understanding of other nations and their cultures. Music provides a pleasurable approach to these subjects and allows for a change in the atmosphere from drill and pressure.

Historian [sic] know that when the Fine Arts are cut out of education or out of society, that society begins to deteriorate.

I feel very strongly that music must be kept in the school program for all children.

I want each board member to have a copy of my letter.

Thank you.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Mrs. Eva Rodriguez [pseudonym]

* * *

Gardner, A. (1969, August 22) [Letter to constituents]

> Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records (Collection 1923). Box 1421. UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

August, 22, 1969
Following Letter Sent To: Mrs. Gwendolyn Anderson [pseudonym]
Mrs. Zora Henderson [pseudonym]
Mrs. Alice Williams [pseudonym]

Thank you for your recent letter expressing concern about the cuts in the school budget which will have a deleterious effect on the school music program.

All Board Members and the professional staff, of course, share your concern. Unfortunately, as you may have noted in recent newspaper articles, the resources of the District from local tax funds and State apportionments have been, up to this point, some 26 million dollars less than the minimum required to maintain even the skeleton of the music program, not to mention the other activities which have been reduced or eliminated.

We sincerely hope that with the support of people such as you, the Legislature and the local voters may be persuaded to provide funding for local school activities which will be truly adequate to the needs.

Sincerely,

Arthur F. Gardner
President

Board of Education

* * *

(ca.1969, August) [Letter to Los Angeles Board of Education] Los An geles Unified School District Board of Education Records (Collection 1923). Box 1421. UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Committee To Restore The Elementary Music Program

One of the most tragic losses resulting from this year's school budget cuts is the elementary school music program. This giant backward step is being taken at the very time that people around the country are concerning themselves with the issue of preparing members of our society for the constructive use of increased leisure time.

At best, the music program that formerly existed was extremely limited. Some schools were assigned a music teacher only one day a week, during which time the teacher was expected to conduct instrumental classes, the school orchestra, a school chorus, and to make individual classroom visits.

This year, the valiant efforts of music teachers to meet this challenge have been brought to a virtual standstill.

In some Valley schools, regular staff teachers who have musical ability have volunteered to conduct school choruses before or after school.

In other schools, a few music teachers have been retained because of arrangements made by their principals and fellow teachers to carry an extra pupil load so as to free one teacher for the music program.

In still others, music teachers have been conducting school orchestras before school in the morning, or on Saturday mornings, for those children whose parents have been able to drive them to and from the designated schools.

Why should this be the case? Why is music less essential to the school curriculum than other areas of study? What will be the effect of these cutbacks on the Junior and Senior high school music programs in the coming years?

Parents who are in a position to afford it are probably providing for instrumental instruction for their children on a private basis. What of all those families who are unable to do so? Many children have had the opportunity for musical study only because the public schools have provided school instruments and music programs for them.

Why should children and their schools, as a whole, be deprived of the enrichment, motivation and satisfaction provided by participation in the school orchestra and the contribution it makes to school programs and festivities?

THIS COMMITTEE URGES THE LOS ANGELES BOARD OF EDUCATION TO RESTORE THE ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAMS—NOW!

Name: Mrs. Amanda Perkins [pseudonym]

* * *

(1969, October 21) [Letter to Arthur Gardner]
Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records (Co llection 1923). Box 1422. UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

October 21, 1969

Mr. Arthur Gardner, President
Los Angeles Board of Education
450 North Grand
Los Angeles, California

Dear Sir:

Last spring our school had a fine orchestral concert under the direction of Mr. L. Spencer [pseudonym], who was at our school one afternoon a week. This was a very meaningful experience for everyone. This year there is nothing of this nature to enrich and broaden the world of the youngsters.

Therefore, I urge you to recommend strongly to the other members of the Board that the travelling music teacher program for the Limerick Elementary School in Canoga Park be reinstated. We are not demanding full-time help, just part-time!

Our community needs this program and I am sure you will make every effort to reinstate it in the near future.

Sincerely yours,

Alicia Nelson [pseudonym]

* * *

Gardner, A. (1969, October 24) [Letter to constituent]
Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records (Collection 1923). Box 1422. UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

October 24, 1969

Dear Mrs. [Alicia] Nelson, [pseudonym]

Thank you for your recent letter expressing concern about the cuts in the school budget which will have a deleterious effect on the school music program.

All Board Members and the professional staff, of course, share your concern. Unfortunately, as you may have noted in recent newspaper articles, the resources of the District from local tax funds and State apportionments have been, up to this point, some 26 million dollars less than the minimum required to maintain even the skeleton of the music program, not to mention the other activities which have been reduced or eliminated.

The Board recently has approved a modest allocation of funds to provide central staff services which it is hoped will at least maintain the structure of a music program pending the restoration of sufficient funds to do the job properly. This, of course, is not a satisfactory solution, but seems the best that can be done under the circumstances.

We sincerely hope that with the support of people such as you, the Legislature and the local voters may be persuaded to provide funding for local school activities which will be truly adequate to the needs.

Sincerely,

Arthur Gardner
President

Board of Education

* * *

(1971, April 21) [Letter to Dr. Nava]

Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records (Collection 1923). Box 1422. UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

4/21/71

Dear Dr. Nava,

We have a serious problem in our school. I know that you are trying to help our school. Still there are things we need desperately. One of the things we miss very much is a full time music teacher. I have written the attached letter to Governor Reagan, asking for more money for Los Angeles City Schools, so that you could send us a music teacher.

Sincerely yours,
Lena Lancaster [pseudonym]

* * *

(1971, April 14) [Letter to Governor Reagan]

Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education Records (Collection 1923). Box 1422. UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

April 14, 1971

Dear Governor Reagan,

I am a sixth grader at Rhoda St. Elementary School, Encino, California. My name is Lena Lancaster [pseudonym]. I am 11 years old.

The reason I am writing you this letter is because we have a problem in our school.

A few years ago [sic] we had a wonderful music teacher. His name was Mr. Hodges [pseudonym]. He taught music for nine years, at Rhoda. He also taught chorus. He set up some wonderful programs for the school. He helped regular teachers who were weak in music. He taught children how to play accompanying instruments, such as the auto harp and song bells. He come around twice a week to teach individual classrooms. We were very happy with the music programs we had in our school.

A couple of years ago, the Board of Education cut down the money. The school couldn't afford to pay Mr. Hodges for a full time job, so he lost his job.

A part time music teacher came to our school for about a year. Finally, there was no more money. We had no music teacher for any sort.

Mr. Bower [pseudonym], a third grade teacher, volunteered to fill in for our music needs. Even though he had to teach in his regular third grade classroom, he came every Monday after school and every Thursday before school to teach our singing chorus. It is made up of interested fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. This help was better than none at all.

A few weeks ago, Mr. Bower was taken away by the Board of Education for a special job, and he will not be back for ten weeks.

Now we have no chorus or music teacher. The children who are interested in singing are very, very sad because of our problem. We have no one to take over his job of teaching auto harp or bells.

The children of grades fourth, fifth, and sixth are very disappointed. We feel that we should have the privilege of a music teacher. We feel that it is necessary to round out our educational program. We thought about asking somebody from junior high or high school to teach us.

We found out that these people have their own work to do, just like Mr. Bower had to teach 30 students here at our elementary school.

We are asking you if it's possible to send some more money to Los Angeles City Schools so that the Board of Education could send us a special music teacher.

Sincerely yours,
Lena Lancaster [pseudonym]

### *5.8.3 Source V.C:* Rethinking Schools

In the 1980s, many elementary teachers began rethinking their approach to literacy instruction based on research that supported a more constructivist orientation privileging literature over phonics-based curriculum. In many schools and districts across the country, teachers led the charge to shift from traditional basal readers and instead adopt a whole language approach. Teachers who advocated for whole language had their students read actual books, rather than basal readers with excerpts of literature.

The curricular battle between whole language and phonics-based literacy curriculum became known as the "reading wars" (Pearson, 2004)

and extended well into the 2000s. The documents that follow are from some of the earliest editions of *Rethinking Schools*, a periodical written by teachers about critical issues in public education. In these early years of *Rethinking Schools,* the publication carried several stories about the whole language movement from both the perspective of teachers and how districts were rolling out this reform. The following excerpts offer a glimpse into each of these points of view.

**Source V.C1. Students thrive on the whole book approach**
Sommers, F. (1987). Students thrive on the whole book approach. *Rethinking Schools, 1*(3), 3.

Basal readers have attractive names like *Hang onto Your Hats* and *Star Flight*. There is an illustration on almost every page and none of the stories is more than ten pages long—which is an important factor in these days of short attention spans. Many ethnic groups are represented at least in terms of characters' names and illustrations, and sometimes they even all fit neatly into the same story. There is a wide array of poems, fiction, factual articles and fantasy. We know that good literature endures for centuries because good authors write with the purpose of communicating in some depth about human condition. But how many basal reader stories left an impact on you in your youth? How many can you even recall? These stories don't endure. Instead of using the basal, why not teach children to read using real books? It can be done, and some teachers are doing it now.

**Whole Books as an Alternative**
In a recent workshop sponsored by the Wisconsin State Reading Association, four staff members from Crestwood Elementary School in Madison explained the "whole book" approach to reading instruction that they have been using school-wide for twelve years. Knowing that reading, writing and language arts are closely integrated, they have developed a program that does not include basal readers or workbooks. Children at the 4th and 5th grade levels read approximately twelve books a year. Instruction is given in small groups and each child has a second book at her desk to read when she has completed the paced reading assignment for the book she is reading with the teacher.

Language development is closely integrated with the reading instruction at Crestwood and students are involved in a variety of activities to enrich their understanding of an author's work. Often they

correspond with an author. When reading books like *Endless Steppe* and *My Side of the Mountain*, children are encouraged to keep a diary as if they were one of the characters in the story. It might be argued that one can "enrich" the basal through use of similar creative techniques, but the very nature of the basal makes this difficult. Since so many skills and lessons have to be covered, and because the reading selections are so short, such activities are usually peripheral, if not altogether omitted.

The instruction of research skills is taught on an interdisciplinary basis. Historical novels, science fiction, etc., provide opportunities to relate the research to the students' reading material.

Students are given weekly vocabulary assignments and research projects in which they must use a variety of resources, evaluate the information they find, and compare the sources they used to locate the information. How thorough was the material they read? How up-to-date was the information? Was one source better than another for the particular kind of research they were doing?

**Putting it into Practice**

One might argue that basal reader stories also take place in a variety of locations, but in a "whole book" the reader does not just move from one location to another without any connections. They are following and witnessing the development of the character against the various backgrounds. This coherence is an important contrast to the fragmentation of the basal where one story has absolutely no connection with the story preceding or following. Reading a basal is a transient experience, like someone who moves often and never has the time or opportunity to develop more than superficial friendship. Reading a novel allows the student to develop strong bonds to or antipathies toward the characters in the story. This is a crucial difference. Another advantage I've found is the flexibility. Presently in the basal system, if a child fails the end-of-the-book test, they have nowhere to go. They repeat the book they have just completed or enter an old basal at the same level. If they pass the test with the minimal score, and sometimes even if they fail, they struggle through the next book, and pass the next test with a low score also, and struggle the next book, ad infinitum. This pattern is frequent in the reading groups that teachers inherit. The same students are consistently "at the bottom." If you are bound to using the basals, what choice as a teacher do you have to break this cycle?

Reading should be one of the major vehicles for critical thinking. It is hard, though, to teach children to think when the problems they encounter in their reading materials are solved in a few pages. The reading experience should be so much richer than understanding the simple plot of a seven-page story, more than putting vocabulary words in alphabetical order or completing a comprehension worksheet. Children should experience the "joy of reading" and come to realize the insights and power than can be attained on a personal basis. All reading teachers want this for their students, but it's not happening in many places. I don't believe it can happen in the confines of a basal.

**An Opportunity for Change**

Not all teachers who first come to Crestwood are ready to surrender their basals and adopt the whole book method. They say it takes time. It is unlikely that all teachers here would want that transition but many teachers are ready, now, to bring the "whole books" approach into the classrooms. In the upcoming evaluation of the reading program in MPS, consideration must be given to those of us who are concerned about the shortcomings of the basal program. I believe that the "whole books" approach should be developed and promoted here in Milwaukee. There is a lot we can learn from the experiences of the staff at Crestwood. Give those of us who are excited about this idea the chance to help in the development. Allow us to share in the beginning of a richer, more meaningful reading experience for our students.

*Flory Sommers is 4th grade teacher in the bilingual program at Longfellow Elementary School in Milwaukee.*

**Source V.C2**

Peterson, B. (1988). Basal adoption controversy continues into second year: Whole language pilot projects launched. *Rethinking Schools, 3*(1), 9.

> I've been involved in whole language projects in Cambridge and New York City but I'm more excited about the Milwaukee project. The Cambridge and NYC projects were top-down. We had to go convince teaches that whole language was a good idea and that they needed to collaborate. Here I have teachers saying, 'It's bottom up. We had to do it. All you have to do is listen to us and support us.' And we [the administration] promise to be there.

Dr. Deborah McGriff is Executive Assistant to Superintendent Peterkin at a preservice session on whole language for elementary

teachers at North Division High School. The participating teachers were from the 10 whole language pilot project schools and Fratney Street School, a two-way bilingual, whole language school. Their presence at the in-service and their involvement this year in whole language pilots are the result of persistent work on the part of classroom teachers over the past few years.

Whole language is a name given to an increasingly popular trend in language and reading increasing popular trend in language and reading instruction. Proponents believe that children acquire reading and writing in a way similar to how toddlers acquire oral language—through use in a meaningful context. The whole language classroom is a print-rich environment and situates language learning in the life experience of the students.

The issue of whole language versus a more traditional basal textbook approach came to a head this past spring when the Reading Textbook Evaluation Committee produced both majority and minority reports. The committee's report recommended the adoption of the McDougal, Littell Reading Literature program in the middle schools and the Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Reading Program in the elementary schools. The minority report, written by three committee members, recommended that teachers be given the option of using either a whole language or basal approach in their classrooms. The minority report also proposed systematic and teacher-led in-servicing for those interested in whole language teaching.

**Teachers Organize**

Other classroom teachers also organized to voice their support for more creative approaches to the teaching of reading. In testimony before the School Board's Community Relations and Instruction Committee last February, the Ad Hoc Committee for Whole Language Instruction called for the use of emergent reading techniques in kindergarten. A few weeks later the reading committee of the MTEA called for postponement of adoption saying teachers hadn't had sufficient opportunity to examine the proposed texts. In May, teachers from a variety of groups including Teachers Applying Whole Language (TAWL), Rethinking Schools, the Ad Hoc Committee for Whole Language, and the Milwaukee Kindergarten Association organized a group called the Alliance for Whole Language. At its May meeting the School Board postponed action in order to wait for the opinion of the incoming

newly-hired Superintendent Peterkin and asked that he be sent both the majority and minority reports. Dr. Peterkin flew in from Cambridge and met with top MPS administrators and representatives of the Reading Textbook Evaluation Committee, including two of the authors of the minority report. Victory Elementary school teacher Mary Ann Padol, who had cowritten the minority report, insisted that the whole language option be considered before school recessed for the summer. "If the option is going to be a possibility next fall, we need to know who is interested now," she argued. Dr. Peterkin agreed and ordered the Curriculum and Instruction Department to conduct a survey.

**Survey Showed Support for Whole Language**

Despite the fact that the survey was conducted on the last day of school, 43 elementary schools responded, 32 of them expressing interest in being a whole language pilot school. During the summer the administration chose 10 of those schools who responded favorably to the survey to be pilots for the 1988–89 school year. Although 82 classroom teachers are directly involved in the 10 pilots and Fratney Street School, all teachers can benefit from the activities of the whole language proponents this year through the trade book option. The advocates of whole language convinced the Reading Textbook Evaluation Committee to recommend the "elementary teachers should be given the opportunity to indicate to their principal if they wish to use workbooks or spend the equivalent funds to purchase books for their classroom libraries (e.g. trade books, big books)." Several School Board members spoke in favor of this option and pressed the administration to implement it.

**The California Reading Initiative**

The future of reading instruction remains unclear. A Whole Language Advisory Council is being established with representatives of the pilot schools and Fratney. Its task according to Deborah McGriff, will be to "define what whole language means for Milwaukee Public Schools" and help plan and implement the whole language program in MPS. Textbook evaluation committees for elementary reading and language arts are also being set up. Whether or not the [sic] these committees will have an in-depth discussion of approaches to the teaching of reading and alternatives to the basal remains to be seen. The California legislature passed "The California Reading Initiative" which directed schools to emphasize more holistic approaches and literature in the teaching of reading. The

California recommendations suggested that publishers affix a "consumer warning label" to books indicating if the literary works contained within them have been abridged or adapted.

*Bob Peterson teaches at Fratney Street School.*

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CHAPTER 6

# Which Language(s)?

Most countries currently view multilingualism as an economic and cultural asset. The United States, however, applies double standards when assigning value to particular languages and tends to only value languages other than English when an English speaker learns a second language, such as Spanish, Chinese, or Arabic. Under the patriotic, assimilationist rhetoric of one America for all Americans, English as a second language (ESL) is regarded as a deficit (Baron, 1990). This assimilationist logic argues that a one-language people creates a strong and united nation. It follows that schooling in America is largely a subtractive process designed to remove linguistic diversity and cultural differences (Valenzuela, 1999).

This chapter explores historical and political overviews of linguistic policy, culture, and curriculum issues in K-12 settings in the United States. Notably, this chapter reviews court decisions of linguistic policy. The legal actions leading up to those cases are the core constructions of parents' and community members' desires as to which language or languages should be used to teach students and how to use curriculum to deliver a fair and equal education. Tyack, James, and Benavot (1987) argue that "the law is not a neutral instrument…Law responds to demands placed on the legal system by the groups that compose society and thus provides a map of patterns of power" (pp. 3–4). Using this argument, this chapter examines important, historical legal cases about language to interrogate the topography of power operations in linguistic policies.



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As we use this map of power circulation, we postulate that language debates are not exclusively a linguistic issue. Governmentality, which is the nexus of power-knowledge, operated to maintain privilege through discourses while creating a set of norms to include or exclude a particular language and culture in schools (Foucault, 1980). A set of social norms, constituted by a specific sociopolitical, cultural, and historical context, has formed and controlled the ways in which language minority people behave, speak, and interact with other English interlocutors in the United States. The creation of discourses, including success, social promotion, or equal access through learning to speak English are the mechanisms to maintain the hegemony of Anglo-Saxon superiority discourse in schools through the curriculum (Baron, 1990; Higham, 1955). Resisting this assimilationist ideology, linguistically and culturally marginalized communities may use their home language within the curriculum in an effort to sustain their cultural heritage. In this chapter, we investigate ongoing efforts from multiple racial and ethnic communities to sustain both language and cultural identity over the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries. These constant legal fights are the embodiment of their desire and endeavor for an equal access to sociopolitical and economic resources through education. The issues of language, culture, and identity are therefore interwoven to examine the historical debates and policies on education with or without using English.

## 6.1 Histories of *Taming a Wild Tongue*: English-Only Movement

> No person, individually or as a teacher, shall, in any private, denominational, parochial or public school, teach any subject to any person in any language other than the English language. (Nebraska Session Laws, 1919, c. 249)

In a book chapter entitled "How to tame a wild tongue," Anzaldúa (2007) illustrates her experience living in an environment where her Chicana language was not appreciated and her language/tongue was forcibly *tamed* to speak English. In U.S. history, people like Anzaldúa struggled and are struggling with widespread American Nativism—namely, the anti-foreign spirit prevalent in U.S. history and appearing with distinctive patterns (Higham, 1955). The aforementioned excerpt is the decision from the State of Nebraska in 1919 mandating to teach in

English. This act was directly related to the policy banning the teaching of foreign languages at schools in the United States.

The twenty-first-century version of "taming a wild tongue" is connected with anti-Mexican, anti-Muslim, and anti-Chinese discrimination, and maintains the English-speaking group's hegemony in order to reproduce their political and economic power. This hegemonic linguistic practice is grounded upon the conviction that "American traits [are] derived from the English, and that the future of American democracy depends upon the survival of the English language and domination of the Anglo-Saxon race" (Tamura, 1993, p. 37). The spirit of Americanization has persisted within the United States throughout its history, although the targeting of cultural groups has shifted over time. Under colonial rule and in the early phase of the United States, the federal government took aim at multiple tribes among the Indigenous Peoples. The Civilization Fund Act of 1919 was implemented to create Christian mission schools for Indigenous Peoples, but only Anglican cultural values (including English) were taught (Wiley, 2007).

Among other historical events, World War I (WWI) strengthened the perception that Americanization via English was crucial both in public and private organizations (Baron, 1990). The prohibition of teaching the German language serves as a great example of the impact on WWI on Americanization efforts. The 1919 Nebraska Law was an outcome of this anti-German movement. Although the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the state's decision, the law offers an indication of the country's mood in the post-WWI era. It is remarkable to observe that as early as 1694, German-speaking communities opened German language schools in Philadelphia for bilingualism or German monolingualism (Stern, 2008). German bilingualism thrived in the 1840–1850s, as evidenced by Pennsylvania's 1837 legislation to allow for public schooling in German (Wiley, 2007). In a different location in the United States and its territories, there was a contemporaneous and widely circulated atmosphere of Americanization through an English-only effort. Tamura (1993) describes an anti-Japanese and anti-Asian movement in Hawaii through an English-only policy that lasted from 1915 to 1940. According to Tamura, Japanese sugarcane worker strikes in 1909 and 1920 exacerbated a fear Japanese influence on the territory, which in turn led to reactionary language policies.

During the Cold War period, particularly due to the Sputnik crisis, there was a renewed emphasis on teaching foreign languages in addition to strong math and science skills, and these goals were incorporated into

ideas about the transformation of public education. The priority placed on foreign language teaching during the 1960s and 1970s was supported by the formulation of National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958, which underscored math, science, and foreign language education (Urban & Wagoner, 2004). The public recognized the importance of modern foreign languages in education including German, French, and Spanish. This was an interesting phenomenon compared with the first half of the twentieth century when WWI and WWII catalyzed the English-only movement and the elimination of German language in public and private sectors as a means to create patriotism. The inclusion of foreign languages in Cold War-era curriculum is important, yet double standards still existed in the way English was treated compared to other languages; second languages were only considered an asset if English-speaking Americans added other language proficiency. Linguistic diversity was "a blemish to be obliterated in the crucible of assimilation" (Osborn, 2002, p. xiii). Assimilationist ideologies were permeated in handling foreign language policies.

The English-only movement emerged again later in the 1980s and is still present in K-12 schools. A series of legal initiatives to support English-only teaching was proposed and passed in some states, particularly in California (e.g., propositions 63 in 1986, 187 in 1991, and 227 in 1998) and Arizona (i.e., propositions 203 in 2000 and 227 in 1998). According to California Proposition 227, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students are required to learn in classes taught nearly all in English and the goal of all educational programs is "to make LEP students fluent in English" (para. 3). Ron Unz, a California millionaire software developer, created these initiatives and provided funding for the campaign. He argued that bilingual education programs violate immigrant children's rights to learn English. The initiatives do not address the *real* rights of immigrant children for their academic success and sustainment of their cultural heritage (Wright, 2010). As an example, Proposition 227 that passed in 1998 was repealed by Proposition 58, *The California Non-English Languages Allowed in Public Education Act in 2016* (Senate Bill 1174).

With a similar rationale of assimilation, Arizona House Bill (H. B.) 2281 was signed into law by Governor Jan Brewer in May 2010. The law, since codified as A.R.S § 15–112, prohibits courses or classes in Arizona schools that "1. Promote the overthrow of the United States government…; 2. Promote resentment toward a race or class of people;

3. Are designed for pupils of a particular ethnic group; [or] 4. Advocate ethnic solidarity instead of treatment of pupils as individuals" (H. B. 2281, 2010). An assimilationist ideology is deeply rooted in constituting and passing of this H. B. Consequently, enforcement of this act has led to the elimination of the highly successful Mexican American Studies program in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) as well as the removal of books illuminating Mexican American history and perspectives from TUSD classrooms. Removing Mexican American Studies from the curriculum was to sustain political power of the mainstream groups, not to educate Mexican American communities about their important and rich histories. This House Bill reiterated an English-only policy.

Assimilationist ideology supports an English-only policy and creates a discourse arguing that children will find jobs easily when they speak English fluently because English is the dominant language in the United States. In addition to state-level assimilationist efforts, accountability, test-oriented policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) became the tool to eliminate successful bilingual programs in NYC and replace them with English-only programs. This limited approach to linguistic diversity has in turn resulted in the elimination or reduction of bilingual classes and has shifted resources and funds that previously supported ESL programs (Menken & Solorza, 2012). However, bilingual students, particularly young children, need a learning environment where they "practise, explore, think and talk aloud" (Brock & Power, 2006, p. 29) with the use of their home languages. These legislatures, such as NCLB, stem from the English-only movement that restricts immigration rights in education and devalues bilingual education. Thus, an anti-immigration political climate does not support multilingualism in curriculum.

## 6.2 Ongoing Political Struggle to Speak in One's Own Tongue

> The protection of the Constitution extends to all, to those who speak other languages as well as to those born with English on the tongue. Perhaps it would be highly advantageous if all had ready understanding of our ordinary speech, but this cannot be coerced by methods which conflict with the Constitution—a desirable end cannot be promoted by prohibited means. (*Meyer v. Nebraska*, 1923)

In the United States, political and socioeconomic forces constructed the ways in which people responded to language diversity and promoted discriminatory or inclusive linguistic policies (Ovando, 2003). The Anglo-Saxon centered nostalgia of American patriotism—namely, "Good English Makes Good Americans" (Baron, 1990, p. 154)—has been demystified and dismantled with political and legal efforts from non-English-speaking groups in the United States. Regardless of policies restricting the recognition of ethnic, racial, and linguistic heritage explained in the previous section, linguistically and culturally unrepresented groups have fought against assimilationist ideologies over time. This fight was not only to keep their rights to speak their own language but also to sustain cultural heritages embedded in language and identity (see Sects. 6.5.2 and 6.5.3).

Among multiple legal cases, *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923) set an important precedent for subsequent Supreme Court decisions about laws and language policies supported by the fourteenth amendment of the equal protection of the law. A famous phrase from a subsequence Supreme Court decision of *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923), "a desirable end cannot be promoted by prohibited means," rejected the arguments that linguistic enforcement of homogeneity, particularly English-only at schools, is against constitutional principles. In 1920, Robert Meyer, a teacher at Zion Parochial School in rural Hamilton County, Nebraska, resisted Nebraska's law to prohibit teaching foreign languages in all schools. In order to preserve German language and its heritage, he felt a responsibility to instruct lessons in German at least 30 minutes a day. He was penalized $25 for teaching Bible stories to 10-year-old children in German. Rather than paying the fine for his violation, Meyer started a legal battle to fight against an unjust law (Driver, 2018). The Supreme Court decided the Nebraska law violated the constitutional principles and *Meyer vs. Nebraska* (1923) engendered other court cases to sustain language heritages. *Farrington v. Tokushige* (1927) invalidated a Hawaiian law to regulate the territory's foreign language schools. In 1920, more than 160 foreign language schools existed within Hawaii. While students of Asian heritages attended traditional schools with English instruction, these students supplemented their education at afterschool community foreign language schools. The negative attitude toward people of Asian heritages during this time motivated the creation of a law to regulate these schools, but the Supreme Court upheld parents' right to sustain their cultural heritage (Driver, 2018).

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s heightened the general awareness of linguistic minority groups. Ovando (2003) categorizes the era of 1960s–1980s as the opportunist period in bilingual education, which was supported by political movements including the Civil Rights Movement and related immigration acts. The success of a dual-language program at the Coral Way Elementary School in Dade County, Florida in 1963 provides one such example of a pioneer in the field of bilingual education (Stern, 2008). Furthermore, the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 shifted the direction of teaching instruction with the use of languages other than English. Before 1968, no federal educational language policies existed. The Bilingual Education Act (BEA) of 1968 was created mainly owing to the Civil Rights Movement being responsive to the needs of rapidly growing immigration populations. Senator Ralph Yarbrough of Texas initiated a bill to offer federal funding to offer bilingual education programs for Spanish-surnamed students. Other legislators proposed 37 similar proposals that were merged into a final bill supporting bilingual education. In 1968, this bill became the BEA and included, as Title VII, an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). BEA is significant in that it documented the need to support linguistic minority students with federal support (Wright, 2010). However, BEA did not lead to a full emergence of bilingual education in that it did not mandate bilingual programs for teaching and learning. Program implementation depended on the political leverage, which "could be mustered" by interest groups with different political views on equity and excellence in education for immigrant children (Urban & Wagoner, 2004, p. 317)

Continuous efforts to sustain language and culture other than English in public schools were also supported by the U.S. Supreme Court decisions. The landmark case *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), advocating for Chinese students in San Francisco, indicated that schools must provide accommodations for students who do not speak English as a primary language. The court's decision follows.

> The failure of the San Francisco school system to provide English language instruction to approximately 1800 students of Chinese ancestry who do not speak English, or to provide them with other adequate instructional procedures, denies them a meaningful opportunity to participate in the public educational program and thus violates § 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bans discrimination based "on the ground of race, color,

> or national origin," in "any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance," and the implementing regulations of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. (*Lau v. Nichols*, 1974, para 1)

The *Lau* decision recognized the critical importance of the need to provide equal learning opportunities for all children, particularly for students who do not speak English. This decision led to the creation of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act in 1974. *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) also influenced the amendment to BEA to clarify the intent and design of the programs for LESA (limited English speaking ability) students (Wiley, 2007).

Researchers often highlight landmark U.S. Supreme Court decisions where school districts accommodated language minority students in the curriculum. Wiley (2007) and Wright (2010) highlight *Serna v. Portales* (1974) as a significant U.S. Supreme Court decision that affirmed school districts that provided relevant curriculum and resources for language diversity in schools. The *Serna v. Portales* (1974) decision is notable as the first case raising issues of bilingualism in a White-majority school in New Mexico. The discrimination was against Spanish-surnamed students who did not receive proper supports for their unique linguistic and cultural needs. The court case was brought by Puerto Rican parents who argued that bilingual education programs were mainly ESL programs with the goal of assimilating students into mainstream culture. The federal court supported the parents' claims that bilingual programs did not provide adequate education due to a lack of trained teachers and the absence of relevant curriculum. This particular case was crucial in establishing a legal argument that bilingual education required a proper curriculum taught by qualified bilingual teachers. The targeted populations of other prominent cases have shifted over time to all children regardless of their immigration status, such as undocumented students. In *Plyler v. Doe* (1982), a case originating in the state of Texas, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the state's legislation that attempted to prevent "illegal aliens" to educate their children in the public schools of Texas. The Court reasoned that the state had no right to deny children an education under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

## 6.3 Then and Now: The Nexus of Language/Culture/Identity and Power

Teaching and learning language is not limited to advancing linguistic skills. Language encompasses multiple elements including culture, identity, and power. For example, the sociocultural theory of identity argues that language is inseparable from cultural identity (Lozano, 2018). This theory pays more attention to the power circulations under which language learners are situated, rather than simply describing what language learners say (Norton, 2000). The nexus of language-culture is significant in studying the ways in which human mental functioning is organized by cultural artifacts, interpersonal and social activities, and cultural concepts (Ratner, 2002). Furthermore, the complex nature of linguistic and cultural identity is co-constructed in a wide variety of sociocultural relationships and framed within particular power relations (Norton, 2006).

Identity construction is understood within larger social networks and power operations, going beyond a technical approach to learning or not learning English (see Sect. 6.5.3). Power relationships circulate between interlocutors—namely, the persons who carry on dialogues—and, thus, are critical in structuring speech (Bourdieu, 1987). Historically, language was a cultural identifier and an indicator of access to sociopolitical and economic power. In the late nineteenth century, Jane Addams (1897) explicitly articulated that immigrant children, particularly Italian immigrants with low socioeconomic status (SES), confronted significant difficulties with social promotion no matter how hard they tried within their peer groups. She lamented, "foreign born children have all the drudgery of learning to listen to, and read and write an alien tongue; and many never get beyond this first drudgery" (p. 110). Limited resources for the community in given social structures were the real barriers for immigrant children, in addition to culturally relevant curricular supports for them to study.

Over the past century and more in the United States, educators and stakeholders have questioned what language(s) should play an anchored role for advancing equal learning opportunities at schools. The advocates of linguistic diversity in the U.S. curriculum have put forth efforts to create programs while sponsoring linguistic policy for the benefit of all children, regardless of their language and heritage. The people who argue for assimilationist ideology of English-only schools insist that being fluent in English is an imperative tool for social promotion and

success. According to this ideology, language diversity in the United States is regarded as a barrier to advance social promotion for children with diverse linguistic, cultural backgrounds. It is notable that English is not and has never been the exclusive language of the United States; rather, language diversity existed among Indigenous Peoples long before Europeans arrived from a region with its own set of diverse languages (Baron, 1990). Political actions and movements to use multiple languages at schools challenge an assimilationist logic prevalent in the United States that uses a hegemonic practice to sustain privilege among English speakers by excluding equal learning opportunities for all children (see Sect. 6.5.1). The people advocating for linguistic diversity do not undermine the importance of learning English; they only argue to simultaneously maintain their own linguistic heritages. The bottom line is how to design and implement culturally sustaining pedagogies in curriculum in order to nourish and nurture their linguistic, cultural heritages (Paris & Alim, 2017). The three sources in this chapter are examples of such efforts by non-English-speaking communities to sustain their cultural identity and heritage through language.

## 6.4 Introduction to the Sources

Language, power, and identity are deeply interwoven. Here, we present three sources representing constant endeavors to revive and sustain the languages and cultural heritages of people identifying as Indigenous (particularly the Navajo Nation), Latinx, and Khmer. In selecting sources for bilingualism, culture, and curriculum, this chapter includes the Navajo and Khmer languages, with which readers may not be as familiar. In Chapter 3 of this book, the authors introduced Chicago's Harrison High School students' requests for bilingual teachers and culturally responsive curriculum for Latinx communities in 1968. Implemented in the mid-1970s, Proyecto Saber in Seattle carried the spirit of the 1968 Harrison High School Walkout into the curriculum. These resources represent memories and the recovery of "lost," "forgotten" languages historically. Notably, founded upon a sociocultural theory of language and identity (Lozano, 2018; Norton, 2000), these sources demonstrate the ways in which language is interwoven with culture and communal efforts to sustain their cultures.

Although these three sources have different media to represent multiple languages, heritages, and cultures, they demonstrate the ways in

which educators and community members make ongoing, conscious efforts to retain their identity and language. They are evidence of linguistic, cultural revival movements within the pressure of assimilationist policy and practice. These resources illustrate the politics within language and multilingualism. The following questions, and you own, are relevant when approaching these resources.

1. What were the sociological and historical contexts of multilingualism when these archival materials were produced?
2. Who was involved in the linguistic revival/sustaining movement? What political interests did the individuals/groups pursue?
3. What challenges and hopes of multilingualism are represented in the three sources?
4. What linguistic and cultural implications do these sources reveal in the midst of anti-immigration and anti-bilingualism movements?

## 6.5 Associated Sources

### *6.5.1 Source VI.A: Little Man's Family: Diné Yázhí Ba'átchíní*

This source is a bilingual text for literacy: English and Navajo languages. This reader was published in 1950 and sponsored by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. As indicated in the Foreword of this reader, linguists, missionaries, and Native Navajo people worked together to produce this book. This source includes the preface of the book and includes the purpose of publishing the book and an acknowledgment of the individuals who were involved in the project. The selected pages are an example of how the story of a Navajo family is introduced with the use of image, English, and Navajo (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2).

In exploring linguistic issues, readers should raise questions about who and which organization initiated this language-culture revival attempt and who benefits from this effort. A central thesis for this inquiry includes what and who should be the agent of promoting language and cultural diversity. *Little Man's Family* is a good example for investigating these questions with critical perspectives. As indicated in the preface, this controversial book was published in 1950 from linguists and missionaries of Protestant and Catholic churches. The main goal of this book was to provide simple Readers "about the Navajo, written for Navajos, by someone interested in Navajo life. It represents the first publication in Navajo

Hazba watches the baby.
she watches my baby brother.
he is Hazba's brother, too.
she keeps the baby from crying.

**Fig. 6.1** Hazba watches the baby

haazbaa' 'awéé' yaa 'áhályą.
'éí sitsilí yaa 'áhályą.
haazbaa' 'ałdó' bitsilí 'át'é.
'awéé' yaa 'áhályąągo 'áko
doo yicha da.

**Fig. 6.2** Hazba watches the baby in Navajo Language

of anything save the Bible, religious tracts, and scientific monographs" (p. 2). It questions to what extent the Navajo Nation was involved in writing this representation of their lived experience from "inside" with the sake of advancing their own culture and heritage.

**Source VI.A.**

Enochs, J. B., & United States Department of the Interior. (1950). *Little man's family: Diné yázhí ba'átchíní*. Lawrence, KS: Haskell Institute. Retrieved from https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/006829709.

Foreword

In northern Arizona and New Mexico, on a land area almost as large as the New England States, live about sixty-five thousand Navajo Indians. Their numbers are increasing more rapidly than any other population group in the United States. They are as completely shut off from the general stream of American culture as any group of our population, not only because of the isolation in which they live, but because eight out of every ten speak only the Navajo language. Like the language of all other North American Indians, historically it had no written form. Despite the fact that the number of schools of the Navajo Service has been doubled since 1935, only about half the children of school age are now in school. More than half of those who are in school are still in the first four grades. Thus [sic] the introduction of English will be a slow process.

To facilitate the spread of information which will help the Navajo in the control of overgrazing and soil depletion, and show him how to improve livestock on which his livelihood depends, the federal government has been working with experts in Indian language to develop a popular alphabet which will encourage the writing of Navajo. The belief that such a written language may spread more rapidly than English is based upon experience with other Indian tribes. Even if the new skill reaches only a limited number of Navajos, it will make possible the accurate transfer of new ideas in the native tongue. Interpretations can then be made at leisure and recorded.

Linguists from Columbia University and Yale, missionaries of Protestant and the Catholic churches have contributed to the effort. However, developing an alphabet for a language as difficult as Navajo, which possesses sounds not present in English and is tonal like some Oriental languages, is not the easiest thing in the world.

In recording language sounds there is a tendency for linguists to do the job perfectly, seeking a separate symbol for each sound, and indicating every inflection. On the other hand the average man, who is to make use of a written language naturally wishes something as simple as possible. The teacher of reading approaches it from still a third angle, having learned that those who have oral familiarity with a language, know how it sounds, and therefore require only that words have forms which may be easily recognized. And [sic] so the argument has gone—the scientist, the educator, the layman, each pulling for what appeared to him the best solution for a thorny problem.

Dr. John Harrington of the Smithsonian Institution and Mr. Oliver LaForge, writer: and linguist, finally developed the first alphabet suited to popular use. With one exception it uses only the letters of the English alphabet, maintaining so far as possible similar sound values. Diacriticals have been reduced to indications of tone and nasalization. It may be reproduced on any typewriter or linotype. Robert W. Young, an associate of Dr. Harrington, lived some years on the Navajo reservation to familiarize himself with the language so that these publications might represent a clearcut [sic] expression in the vernacular, of the story content.

This volume is one of a series of simple readers about the Navajo, written for Navajos, by someone interested in Navajo life. It represents the first publication in Navajo of anything save the Bible, religious tracts, and scientific monographs.

Willetto Antonio, Navajo printer at the Phoenix Indian School, and Dr. Edward A. Kennard, specialist in Indian languages in the Indian Service, prepared the Navajo text for the three books of Little Man's Family, using the Harrington-LaForge alphabet. Every word has been checked by Robert W. Young. The little volumes are an expansion of material originally prepared by J. B. Enochs, a teacher at Koyenta Sanitorium School, arranged by Hildegard Thompson, now Director of Education for the Navajo Service.

The type used for these books has been selected because of its similarity in design to the alphabet used for manuscript writing. In the primers, only proper names and the pronoun I have to be capitalized, so as to further minimize the new learnings often encountered by the primary child when faced with several different alphabets at once.

Willard W. Beatty

### *6.5.2 Source VI.B: Proyecto Saber, 1974–1975*

This source presents a project promoting academic achievement and growth of the whole person among Chicano/a communities in Seattle. Proyecto Saber was a project implemented in the Seattle Public Schools in 1975. This proposal for Proyecto Saber explicated the specific plans and the needs of the educators, counselors, and community members who were devoted to this project. District and community members identifying as Chicano and Latino applied for and received a grant to address the high dropout rate and low academic achievement of Chicano and Latino students. The project originally served students from the Southwest area of Seattle, but eventually was expanded to 14 schools across the district. This source includes a logo that illustrated the project's emphasis on academic assistance, cultural enrichment, evaluation-based decisions, parent/community/corporate involvement, student-focused activities, and interpersonal relations. Selected components of the proposal are described. In the original proposal, all four needs that Proyecto Saber aimed to accomplish included detailed action plans. The aims included (a) the need to provide a bicultural/bilingual program for Chicano students in Seattle School District, (b) the need to reduce Chicano students' negative attitudes toward school and learning, (c) the need to reduce Chicano students' dropout rate, and (d) The need to increase the academic achievement of Chicano students. Among these four objectives, the first need is addressed in this source. This project was unique in that it aimed to promote students' self-image as bilingual/bicultural, let alone its focus on academic achievement. The procedures and evaluation plans are notable to examine how Proyecto Saber actively worked with counseling services and tutors. In developing bilingual/bicultural programs, Proyecto Saber introduced an innovative approach with educators, counselors, and community members collaborating in the 1970s. In addition to this proposal document, an evaluation of a specific program entitled "Chicano Cultural Heritage Summer Program" of Proyecto Saber is included. Among the 13-survey question responses, this section houses seven survey responses that are directly related to culture and language. Proyecto Saber became a bilingual/bicultural support plan at schools in Seattle School District by 1990 (Fig. 6.3).

**Source VI.B.**

Seattle Public Schools District Archives. (n.d.). *Proyecto Saber, 1974–1975.* Collection: Assistant, Associate, Deputy Superintendents, and

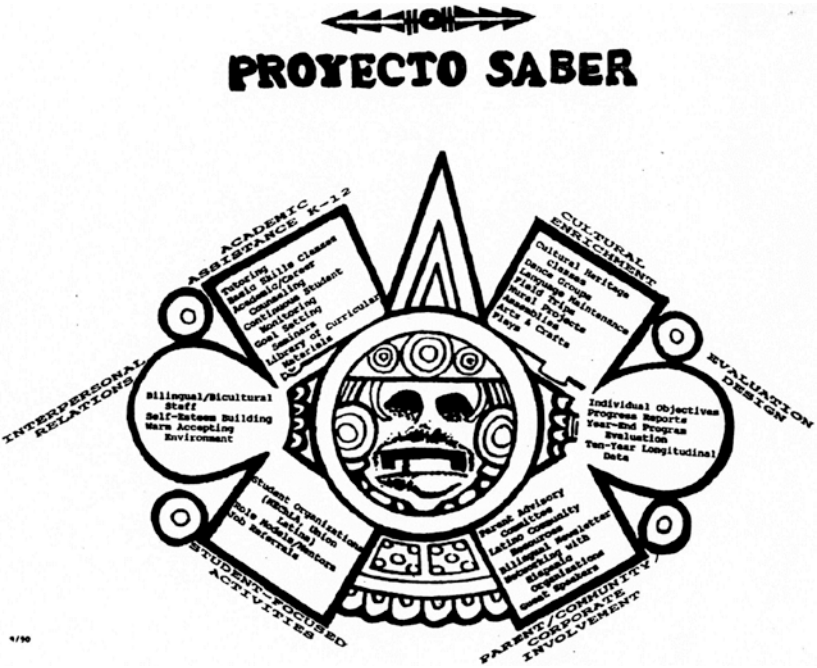



**Fig. 6.3** Proyecto Saber

Directors Administrative Working Files: Region II/South Administration (Box 89, Folder 9). Seattle Public Schools Archives, Seattle, WA.

I. PLANNING

A. The following individuals have been involved in developing and/or reviewing this proposal.

Community
Chicano Education Association
Seattle School District #1
Parents

B. This group endeavored to represent the target community as well as possible. In some cases where representation of a group was not possible because of time constraints, letters of support have been obtained.

Several of the women members of this group are also members of a steering committee for a Northwest Chicana organization, and the concerns expressed in this proposal stem in part from this prior commitment. Other community members were consulted to validate their ideas and to add input. The individuals listed above have had the opportunity to react to this proposal, individually or collectively and feel that a counseling and tutorial service for Chicano students is of utmost importance for their survival.

II. STATEMENT OF NEEDS

Region II of Seattle School District #1 has the largest number of Spanish-surnamed students in the District. The 1973 school census showed 513 students with Spanish surnames in this Region. The limitation of using Spanish surnames to identify Chicano students is well known, and the actual number of these students may be either slightly larger or slightly smaller than 513. Regardless of the actual number, it is felt by both District and community sources that the concentration is significant enough to warrant a program to address the unique needs of the Chicano student.

REASON FOR PRIORITY: The importance of a bilingual, bicultural program stems from the fact that the school system is failing to provide a viable education for the culturally different child. Historically, the Chicano student has found his language excluded from the classroom and his people excluded from the curriculum. Due to various and very significant cultural factors, the Chicano student is failing to accept or be accepted in the current school setting, be it elementary or secondary. The differences between the home and the school cause confusion, fear, frustration, anger, and a general feeling of failure in a large majority of Chicano students. The failure of the average classroom setting to fulfill the students' very real cultural needs stresses the need to provide special services to fulfill that deficiency in the classroom experience and hopefully to influence change in the classroom experience.

The school, due to a lack of cultural awareness, oftentimes, rather than stress positive aspects within the child, emphasizes the negative, and continues to overload the child's negative feelings. It. is important to note that within the Chicano community, school is viewed as a place which offers security and a place to learn. The child at the onset of a school career does not harbor feelings of inadequacy and looks forward

to the school experience as one which will be positive. At this point, the child is well-secured in his/her mother culture and is not prepared to undergo the enormous cultural shift that is expected by the school. It is at this point that the child's security weakens as a result of self-doubt and questions about the validity of his first five years of life and the culture in which he/she has been reared.

* * *

The Chicano culture is one based on genuineness and emotion. The schools, because of cultural differences, discourage strong overt displays of emotion. The Chicano student because of his/her customary freedom to emote feels [sic] a real loss at his inability to react in a genuine manner. In later development, it may cause withdrawal, acting-out, or dropping-out.

The schools offer very little positive reinforcement as to the child's cultural upbringing or daily existence. The majority of the child's teachers in grades K-3 are not acquainted with the accepted behavior patterns of the Chicano culture and are not able to offer the little signals that are so important to the child's security and psychological well-being. For example, home acceptance signals are lacking. The Chicano culture is well-steeped in both verbal and nonverbal communication; the Anglo culture does not use the same signals. A Chicano child is accustomed to verbal appreciation and a series of positive pats, hugs, glances, and general caring. It is important that the young Chicano student receives this same reinforcement in order for him to succeed. Often a Chicano child behaving in an exemplary manner by Chicano standards is perceived by a non-Chicano teacher as misbehaving. This is a very distressing situation for the young Chicano who may be trying very hard to please that teacher.

## III. OVERVIEW

The purpose of Proyecto Saber (Project: To Know) is to facilitate the learning ability and improve the self-image of the bilingual, bicultural Spanish-speaking student through tutorial and counseling services. The primary function of the proposed program is to administer to the educational deficiencies, both academic and cultural, of Chicano students.

The program staff will consist of five counselors, one of whom will be designated head counselor and will assume some managerial duties, and tutors hired on an hourly basis to serve students designated by the counselors. A citizens [*sic*] advisory committee will be formed to assist and advise the staff.

The immediate function of the counselors is to better identify the population to be involved in the program. The initial identification can come from teachers' records, Spanish surnames, physical appearance and cultural characteristics. The counselors will then meet with individual students to assess their needs, both cultural and academic. It will then be the duty of the counselor to contact the child's parents and inform them about the program and of the child's suggested participation. If the parent is amenable, the counselor will encourage parental participation in the form of either academic or moral support. The counselor will then seek out an appropriate tutor for the student and be responsible for follow-through.

Counselors in the proposed program will utilize a referral system when recommending a student for tutorial assistance. This will insure feedback from the tutors about particular students. The counselor in referring the student for tutorial services will note areas in which the student needs tutoring, send a referral slip listing these areas and be responsible for follow-through activity. Follow-through activity can come as direct tutor/counselor involvement or through the parental contact.

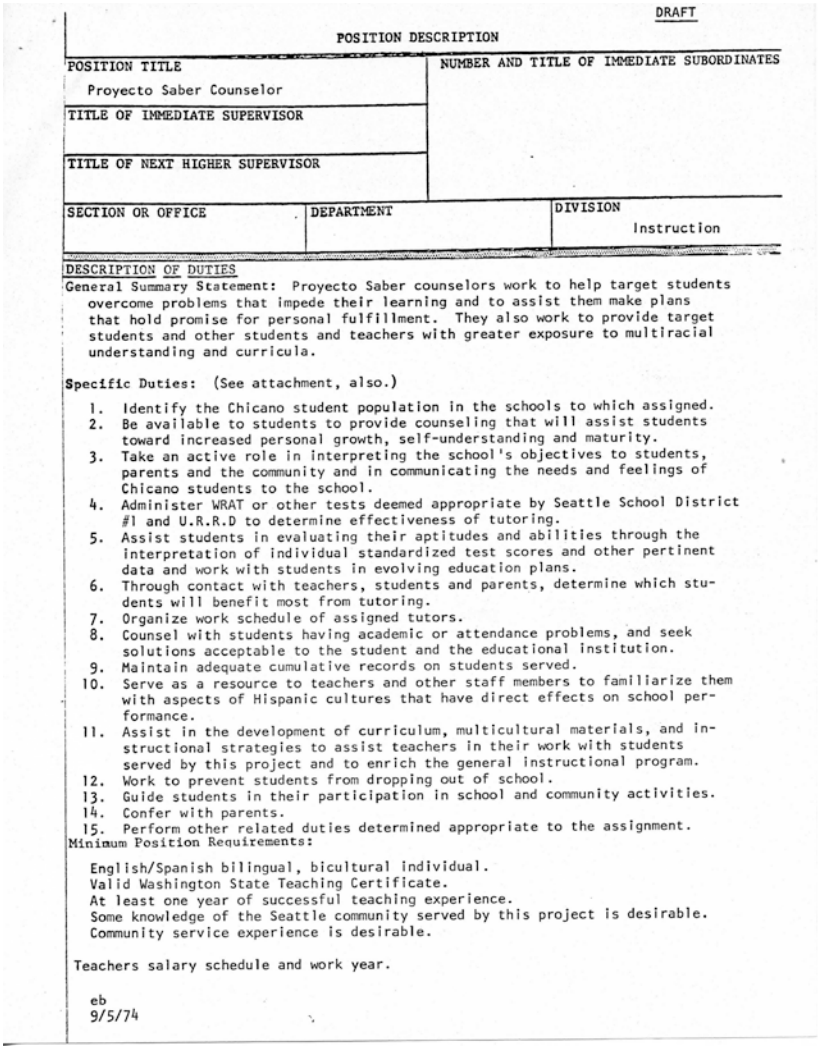
The primary function of the tutor will be to work directly with the student to determine to what degree he/she is deficient and then work to overcome deficiencies. The tutor will also determine the degree of fluency in both Spanish and English and assist the student primarily in the language with which he/she feels more comfortable. The tutors will also be expected to seek out materials which are relevant to the self-image and cultural background of the student. Counselors will assist in this effort. This function is of prime concern as the child's self-concept is essential to his learning and security.

IV. OBJECTIVES, PROCEDURES, EVALUATION

1. The need to provide a bicultural/bilingual program for Chicano students in Seatt1e School District #1 (Table 6.1).

**Table 6.1** Objectives, procedures, evaluation of Proyecto Saber

| *Objectives* | *Procedures* | *Evaluation* |
|---|---|---|
| To establish a bicultural/bilingual program and serve at least 250 Chicano students in the Region II of Seattle School District #1 as measured by program counselor and tutor records | A list of possible student clients will be made from enrollment records, community organizations, (e.g., SER), interviews with students, and Chicano teachers<br>Five counselors will be hired to provide the following services. One counselor will be designated head counselor and assume the managerial and liaison duties necessary for operation of the program<br>1. The counselors will provide counseling, guidance, and advocacy services to Chicano students<br>2. The counselors will offer guidance related to ethnic identification and conduct group sessions when appropriate<br>3. The counselors will assist in. establishing community contacts for students<br>4. The counselors will serve as a community/school liaison<br>5. The counselors will serve as role models and help students explore personal alternatives.<br>6. For further detail, see the counselor position description<br>(Appendix) | Staff will maintain cumulative lists of students served. These lists will indicate the type and number of services each student has received by month (e.g., home visits, tutoring, counseling). The number of names appearing on this list June 1, 1975, will reflect the total number of students served |



DRAFT

POSITION DESCRIPTION

| POSITION TITLE | NUMBER AND TITLE OF IMMEDIATE SUBORDINATES |
|---|---|
| Proyecto Saber Counselor | |
| TITLE OF IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR | |
| TITLE OF NEXT HIGHER SUPERVISOR | |

| SECTION OR OFFICE | DEPARTMENT | DIVISION |
|---|---|---|
| | | Instruction |

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

General Summary Statement: Proyecto Saber counselors work to help target students overcome problems that impede their learning and to assist them make plans that hold promise for personal fulfillment. They also work to provide target students and other students and teachers with greater exposure to multiracial understanding and curricula.

Specific Duties: (See attachment, also.)

1. Identify the Chicano student population in the schools to which assigned.
2. Be available to students to provide counseling that will assist students toward increased personal growth, self-understanding and maturity.
3. Take an active role in interpreting the school's objectives to students, parents and the community and in communicating the needs and feelings of Chicano students to the school.
4. Administer WRAT or other tests deemed appropriate by Seattle School District #1 and U.R.R.D to determine effectiveness of tutoring.
5. Assist students in evaluating their aptitudes and abilities through the interpretation of individual standardized test scores and other pertinent data and work with students in evolving education plans.
6. Through contact with teachers, students and parents, determine which students will benefit most from tutoring.
7. Organize work schedule of assigned tutors.
8. Counsel with students having academic or attendance problems, and seek solutions acceptable to the student and the educational institution.
9. Maintain adequate cumulative records on students served.
10. Serve as a resource to teachers and other staff members to familiarize them with aspects of Hispanic cultures that have direct effects on school performance.
11. Assist in the development of curriculum, multicultural materials, and instructional strategies to assist teachers in their work with students served by this project and to enrich the general instructional program.
12. Work to prevent students from dropping out of school.
13. Guide students in their participation in school and community activities.
14. Confer with parents.
15. Perform other related duties determined appropriate to the assignment.

Minimum Position Requirements:

English/Spanish bilingual, bicultural individual.
Valid Washington State Teaching Certificate.
At least one year of successful teaching experience.
Some knowledge of the Seattle community served by this project is desirable.
Community service experience is desirable.

Teachers salary schedule and work year.

eb
9/5/74

**Fig. 6.4** Appendix. The counselor position description

V. COORDINATION

1. The head counselor will be responsible for intra-program coordination.
2. The head counselor will maintain contact with units of the Human Relations Task Force and, whenever possible, solicit their assistance.
3. Community organizations will be kept abreast of happenings within the program.
4. The counselors will be·in contact with the served students' regular school counselors.
5. The head counselor will be in regular contact with the principals of all cooperating schools to keep them informed of program activities and to solicit suggestions for improving service.

VI. DISSEMINATION

Information regarding the program will be forwarded to a variety of agencies, organizations, and institutions. Groups will include:

Active Mexicanos
El Centro de la Raza
Chicano E. S. L.
Chicano E.O.P., University of Washington Chicano Education Association (Che)
Seattle School District U.R.R.D. Advisory Board Chicano Cultural Heritage Program
Multiethnic Curriculum Unit
Project SER
L.U.L.A.C. Education

RKH/MC: eb
9/5/74 (Fig. 6.4)

* * *

Chicano Cultural Heritage Summer Program

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This summer school program has been repeated three consecutive summers in 1972, 1973, 1974, to involve young Chicanos in activities directly related to their culture. Planned to accommodate 20 students from grades 1–6 classes were again held at Brighton Elementary School, one of the locations for general summer programs. Emphasis in language arts and social studies was based on Chicano literature, history, and heritage. Bilingual texts were used although many of the students were not fluent in Spanish. Swimming was a weekly activity.

ENROLLMENT

38 students were enrolled from Concord, High Point, Fairmount Park, and Beacon Hill. Nine students attended from non-Seattle Public Schools.

OBJECTIVES

The program designed to generate students' curiosity about Mexican American history and literature

- Produced a feeling of pride for their heritage.
- Encouraged students to question textual materials.
- Provided an experience for bilingualism to either increase Spanish vocabulary or to offer opportunity for a beginning learning experience in Spanish.
- Presented information on Chicano heroes which had been omitted from textual materials or depicted negatively, and
- Used Spanish language to help students feel proud and comfortable when hearing their language even though they do not speak it.

OUTCOMES

The following survey (questions) reflect impressions of the Chicano Cultural Heritage Summer Program:

1. *What is your overall feeling about the value of this class?*
    - My feeling about the value of this class and thinking in the Chicano population is that Spanish should be spoken more. And I know that it is a great help for the Chicano children.

- A most valuable class for Spanish Americans to enhance basic skills and increase their knowledge, bi-lingually [sic], of their ethnicity.
- The class has been very valuable to the children who attended regularly. That was about 12 students. The other 10 or 12 received less but they learned when they came and probably benefitted in ego strengthening because of the positive attention received from the staff.

2. *How does this class enrich social studies?*

- The Mexican influence is an actual fact but not often touched in regular classes. It is additional information that serves the double purpose of building ego as well as facts.
- Helps students to realize that minorities have made America great and to be proud of their rich heritage…broadens their perspective on contributions made by their ethnic history and people.
- The class was very well prepared by films, so they can find out who they are, the customs, traditions, and heritage, also with maps work [sic], pinatas, making of tortillas, and other artwork, also learning the most common expressions and popular songs.

5. *What have you gained from this class?*

- I have received useful activities for my 4th grade class. I will show some of the films, teach information on race and influence of Mexican heritage. I plan to incorporate Mexican art in my schedule too.
- The rich experience of working with minority students on an elementary level.
- I have gained that children need help to understand the differences between the cultures, so they can be proud of their own heritage.

7. *In this short period have you noticed any changes in the students?*

- Some very shy children became more outspoken and happier. One girl who is quite aggressive seems more calm and content.
- They have gained an appreciation of their Chicano heritage.
- The children after a few days feel more comfortable and tried to practice what they learned and are not afraid to speak the language.

8. *Have parents been involved? If so, what is their reaction to the program?*

    - Unfortunately, I haven't had the opportunity to meet some of the parents, and I am sorry for that because they don't know what their children are learning during the classes. (Only 5 mothers showed up during the piñata party.)
    - Yes, they expressed positive feelings about the program.
    - Several parents visited. One mother said she likes the program and hopes it will continue. She works and likes her children usefully active.

9. *Do you recommend extension of this program? Why?*

    - Yes. It was a positive influence on the children involved. I'm in favor of programs that get idle, unhappy children involve in learning academic and social skills.
    - Yes, I think it's necessary that minority students be afforded the opportunity to be involved in a program of this nature.
    - Yes, I highly recommended the extension of this program because it is the only way for Chicano children (and those who are interested) to have a better understanding of their background and heritage.

10. *How would you like to be involved, should the program be extended?*

    - I would like to be involved trying to contact parents and explain to them what it is all about. As a Mexican I feel myself well prepared to be a teacher's assistant.
    - Same capacity–teacher.
    - I would like to be involved in the same way or in a way that puts more minority cultural information into the regular school program. May be once a week sessions.

PROPOSAL FOR FOLLOW-UP

Since the close of this summer program it has become known that URRD Funds are tentatively available for establishing a program for Chicano heritage. Multiethnic Curriculum will be available to work toward the fruition of such a program with Region II staff and designated others.

### *6.5.3 Source VI.C: An Oral History with Dr. Phala Chea/ Interviewer: Christopher Strobel*

This oral history project centered on Phala Chea, Ed.D., an educator and administrator who has worked at the Lowell Public School in Lowell, Massachusetts since 1995. This source is from The Center for Lowell History: Oral History Collection at the University of Massachusetts Lowell (UML). The interviewer is Christoph Strobel, a faculty member at the Department of History at UML. The project develops an in-depth illustration of the nexus of language and culture. Phala came from Cambodia in 1981 has been active in introducing Cambodian culture serving as Chair of the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association and as Treasurer of the Southeast Asian Water Festival. This excerpt of oral history is edited to focus on her immigration story, the role of language and cultural identity as Cambodian, the value of bilingualism for her, and the importance of the sociocultural network in which she participates. The symbol *** indicates where full transcripts were edited. As indicated in her interview, Cambodian communities in Lowell have advocated implementing curriculum that teaches the history and culture of racial and ethnic groups. For example, Lowell High School offers a broad selection of electives. Diverse ethnic and language backgrounds are appreciated, including an honors social studies course entitled, *4524 Cambodia: Culture and Conflict*. This course explores "the history and culture of Cambodia from its earliest beginnings, as a protectorate of France, and as a modern independent nation. Students will also examine the causes, events, and aftermath of the Cambodian Genocide" (Lowell High School, 2017, p. 41). She emphasizes the need to respect immigrants' cultural identity and language, including the Khmer language, and introduces a local high school that provides Khmer language classes. This oral history project ends with her lived experience as an immigrant in Lowell. In the text, C refers to the interviewer and P indicates Phala.

**Source VI.C.**

Chea, P. (2008). *An oral history with Dr. Phala Chea/Interviewer: Christopher Strobel*. Center for Lowell History Oral History Collection, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Lowell, MA. Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/WPL-Chea/Chea,%20Phala%2008.14_djvu.txt.

Tape 08.14

C: First if you could just please state your name, address, place of birth, and your background?
P: Sure. My name is Phala Chea. And I live on Lawrence Drive in Lowell. I came from Cambodia in 1981.
C: What were the decisions that motivated you to move to the United States? Was it family?
P: We had a very difficult situation in our country. The Khmer Rouge took over our country from 1975 to 1979, so because of that, we were forced to escape to save ourselves. So basically, my immediate family and I left Cambodia in 1979 and fled to refugee camps in Thailand.
C: What was your first impression when you first came to the United States? But also the first time when you came to Lowell? I mean did you have any preconceptions about the United States?
P: We really didn't have any. I mean my parents went to an ESL class in Indonesia for three months. And they learned about the culture of the United States, but then we really didn't, hmm, know exactly what to expect just from what we've heard from teachers and what we could see in books. Seeing the actual United States was rather different from our imagination. So we were quite shocked when we first arrived. The weather, the environment, the people, and everything else around us were startlingly different from our imagination.

* * *

C: Do you feel that, the Cambodian…the language, the cultural heritage, do you feel that this is still playing an important role in your life?
P: Very much so. I mean more so than when I was younger. Hmm when I was younger, the most important thing for me was to be able to fit in school and to fit in with my friends. I tried to assimilate and tried to be like them as best as I could, even sacrificing my own language and my own culture sometimes. But now I realized that my culture and language and my Khmer identity are very important to me, and that I should try to maintain it, and also work with the community to try to preserve it for the young generation as well.
C: Did you go to school both in Oregon and in Lowell, or?
P: Yes.
C: Did you feel that because there was a stronger Cambodian community here, that it was a little bit easier, or did that even make it harder?

P: Hmm, well, I went to Oregon, hmm, in elementary school. I started fourth grade, then went on to middle school. We had very little. There were only, maybe two or three other students with the same background as myself. And I found that to be very difficult because I had really no one to communicate or relate with because they were in other classrooms. And I didn't know the language when I first arrived. It was very difficult for me to understand what was happening in the classroom, what was happening at school. Over here, you may have a teacher or sometimes a paraprofessional, or other students who you may talk to in your language.

C: So here there was more of support network?

P: Yes, yes.

C: You still speak Khmer?

P: Yes.

C: Do you feel like, having those two languages is actually an asset or does that hold you back?

P: It's quite an asset for me in my line of work because I deal with a lot of families, many of whom are Cambodians. I work in a center where families come register their children for school and where they can learn about the school system. Or if they need help with anything, I'm able to communicate and assist them.

C: How, again maybe to draw comparison with your parents, how was language a different issue for them? Was it easy for them to learn English? Was that something that they always struggled with?

P: Hmm, more so for my mother than my father. Both of them came here knowing French, so they were somewhat able to relate and transfer some of that knowledge into English. My parents never had the opportunity to take in-depth ESL courses here. They really didn't have time to focus on learning English. So for them, they basically learned English in their work settings. Even now, my mother is not as proficient in English as she hopes to be. She just knows enough to get by. But for my father, he was able to continue his education in the US and is proficient in English.

* * *

C: Yes, yes. Do you find that it's typical for most Cambodians of, hmm, or does it matter on if it's first generation, second generation? In other words, is that the same, does the same hold true for your parents, or maybe for your father but not your mother so that language is an issue there?

P: Language is an issue. It's a major issue in determining which group you feel comfortable with. If you feel comfortable with staying within your own community, then you do so. But for me, I try to make an effort to fit in the mainstream world so I can be more successful in my work.
C: Are you, a member of a neighborhood or a Cambodian cultural organization or anything of that sort?
P: I'm actually the president of the Cambodian Mutual Association and also a member of the Southeast Asian Water Festival
C: Ok, excellent. Hmm, what are some of your tasks that have come with being the president of the Cambodian Mutual Association? What challenges do you face?
P: Networking is a big task for me, hmm, and making connections with members of the community. As a president, I want CMAA to be recognized by the mainstream community and I want to find ways to get more funding for the organization. These are my goals as well as my challenges. Each year, I feel that we have to scramble for city, state, and federal funding to keep our programs running. We try to do what we can yearly to make our organization known to the public. We try to reach out to the community and improve our relationships.
C: Do you find that the mainstream community is receptive [to] the work that CMAA is doing or what the Water Festival is doing? Or is it up and down or do you feel like maybe now it's more supportive that [sic] what it used to be?
P: I think we are getting more involvement from the city. I think they are starting to be more supportive of us, more so than in the past. The City Manager met with us several times to listen to our concerns and our issues. We are beginning to work closely with the Police Department as well. The Chief of Police is very nice. He is very open and very supportive of CMAA and is appreciative of our collaborative efforts. CMAA and other Southeast Asian organizations do not want to work in isolation—we want to work with the city to help improve our community.

* * *

C: Did you feel that when you were going to school either here or in Tyngsboro.. . that you had the ability to participate in [a] bilingual program, whether Khmer classes offered, these things? I think it's changed now.
P: It has changed. Hmm, I did not get to participate in a bilingual program because when I came to Lowell, I was already a sophomore in high school.

C: But at least did they offer Khmer classes?
P: No, there weren't any Khmer classes.
C: Has that changed now?
P: That has changed for Lowell. At Lowell High School there are Khmer language classes available for students.
C: Do you feel that there's an effort within the school system to respect the cultural identities of Cambodians and other immigrant groups?
P: I think we are doing a lot more to learn about the cultures that are in front of us in the classroom. And I think we are trying to be more sensitive to the needs of our diverse students.
Teachers are taking courses and are participating in trainings in order to improve their instructional strategies and to improve their understanding of the students' backgrounds.
C: Do you feel that was the same when you were a student in the system?
P: No, I don't think so. I mean, like I said earlier, I didn't experience elementary and middle school education here. What they had in the past was a bilingual education program, where students receive instruction in both their native language and English. Now it's different. We no longer have bilingual education. We have English Language Education Program where students receive sheltered English language support, in most cases, in the mainstream classrooms.
C: And that's because of the state policies and the school system has to comply?
P: Right…We think it would be a great idea to showcase Lowell's diversity. The only way for people to see the full diversity of Lowell is to tour different sections of Lowell and be able to taste different foods or be able to shop in different stores.
C: Have you experienced any sort of racism discrimination in the past or present here in Lowell? How does it feel being a Cambodian-American in the city?
P: Sometimes. I try not to take notice because if I notice this, it makes me feel sad and uncomfortable. So I try to ignore it and pretend that everything is good, and everything is safe.

But I know there are racism and discrimination out there in Lowell. The only thing I can do in this situation is to be calm about it and try to be friendly with people. I know that to change the course of racism and discrimination, we need to educate our community about the different cultures. I think that would help eliminate or decrease racism. I also think that when a person has a negative attitude about a group or an individual, it's mostly based on misconceptions and misunderstandings. If people have a chance to learn about the history and cultures of others, they may develop sensitivity, compassion, and tolerance for them.

C: Ok. What dreams do you have for your future, for yourself, for the city, for Cambodia, for [the] United States [sic]?

P: Right, for the whole world [Laughs]. (C: Yes, world peace.) Well, for Lowell, for our community, I hope that in the future we'll be able to have more multicultural activities, collaborations, and partnerships. I think in order for us to live together more peacefully, we need to have all of that; we need the opportunity to get to know each other so that we can grow together. And for Cambodia, I dream for peace, stability, and democracy.

C: If you were there to ask questions about the experience of immigrants in Lowell, what would it be? Or in other words, what is the question I should have asked you but I didn't ask you?

P: Hmm, I think questions about adaptation and background experience. Lowell is known historically as a city of immigrants. In order to help immigrants and refugees transition smoothly and successfully in our society, we need to understand the adaptation process and the different background experiences that newcomers bring with them to Lowell. Through my own experience as a newcomer, I learned that when a newcomer arrives with strong educational background and strong skills that are transferable in his/her new setting, he/she is able to adapt quicker. As we are learning, this is not the case for many newcomers. Most of them arrived here with trauma, with fear, uncertainty, and limited skills making adjustments and adaptation an everyday struggle. As a community, we need to work together and help encourage each other to become successful citizens.

C: So how do you think that your background helped you? [C laughs] Just sort of developing your question now…

P: How did my background help me? Hmm, I came here at a very young age so I was able to go to school, learn English and learn a set of skills that are very different from my parents'. So I was glad of that opportunity. I think being able to survive the ordeal of the Khmer Rouge has made me a more resilient, more sensitive and more compassionate person. I feel that I can try many new things and be able to survive them all because nothing can compare to the Khmer Rouge experience.

C: So this level of persistence and survival. Do you feel like that the Khmer Rouge genocide that that is sort of the corner stone [sic] in your family's life?

P: Yes. We always have that experience to push us towards survival and success in this country. Our family feels fortunate to have survived the Khmer Rouge genocide and be able to enjoy peace in our new country.

C: It's interesting too because we've, I've been talking to an Armenian woman, and there's a genocide that occurs in Armenia in 1915.

And even though she wasn't born at that time of the genocide, there was still such, her parents had undergone this experience and it was still such a shaping experience for her. Thank you for your time (P: You are very welcome.) and sharing your family's and your personal stories with us. We very much appreciate it. Thank you.

P: You are very welcome and good luck with your work.

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CHAPTER 7

# How Do We Know What Students Have Learned?

"Is this for a grade?" It is such a common question, but one that sometimes makes a huge difference for students and teachers. Jackson (1968) notes that so many aspects of classroom life are connected to grading and assessment that it may well be impossible to precisely describe how grades work within the education system.

> The dynamics of classroom evaluation are difficult to describe, principally because they are so complex. Evaluations derive from more than one *source*, the *conditions of their communication* may vary in several different ways, they may have one or more of several *referents*, and they may range in *quality* from intensely positive to intensely negative…When the subjective or personal meanings of these events are considered, the picture becomes even more complex. (pp. 19–20, emphasis original)

Consider that teachers variously use grades to measure growth, to assess attainment or mastery, to motivate students, to shape student behavior, and to communicate about the student to families or others beyond the classroom. Since these grades can be derived from any combination of individual or group writing, speaking, or other performance, the complexity of exactly what grades mean and do in classrooms can be overwhelming. Yet, from another perspective, grading and assessing are a routine part of teaching and a constant part of being a student. Therefore, grading constitutes a practice that is complex yet commonplace.



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This chapter examines the history of grading in American schools and some of its most recent developments. While grading as a practice in schools emerged in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, grades as we are familiar with them today became standardized in schools during the first couple decades of the twentieth century. But almost as soon as there were grades, there were educators and students criticizing them for perceived negative effects on both teaching and learning. This has been a driving force behind a large number of experiments of different ways of grading, including not grading (Marshall, 1968). The most common response, though, involves teachers developing creative ways to simultaneously meet institutional requirements and meet the individual needs of students. In this way, how teachers grade often looks very different from classroom to classroom within the same school; all of the teachers are giving the grades in the same form, but employ different ideas about fairness and accuracy when generating those grades. In recent years, new efforts to improve grading, such as standards-based grading, have led to a proliferation in the number of assessments and grades given to students. The rise of "data-driven instruction" has brought constant grading as a way to inform teachers of what students know and what to teach next. This presents current educators with problems that are part novel and part historical.

## 7.1 Early History of Grades in American Schools

The roots of grading in American schools stretches back to the spring of 1787 when Yale's president, Ezra Stiles, deemed a number of the freshmen class' oral examinations to be exceptionally disappointing. Stiles organized his students' performance into four categories: "Present at exam. 58. Sick 2. Out of T$^{o}$ 11. Of these 58, 20 Optimi, 16 2$^{d}$ Opt., 12 Inferiores (Boni), 10 Pejores" (Stiles, 1901, p. 154). A Yale student at the time, Dyar Throop Hinkley, wrote in his diary that Stiles admonished the students that,

> tho' many had acquitted themselves well & were above their Standing, yet some had pass'd so poor examination, that they dishonored themselves and the College, but he hoped that the mortification they may undergo, in seeing other so far above them, would spur them to closer application, that they may acquit themselves better at the next Examination. (Hinkly, n.d.)

There is no direct evidence of grading outside of Yale for the next 28 years, though there is no clear evidence of its use each year. The approach was simplified and quantified in 1813 to a numerical scale, 1(*optimi*) to 4 (*pejores*) in a move to facilitate the aggregation of grades and the specific designation of the student (Boyd, 1998; Smallwood, 1935). By 1830, Harvard started a similar system, first using the 1–4 scale and seven years later changing to a 1–100 scale. In 1869 the faculty at Harvard voted to de-link students' conduct from academic measurement and award grades for only scholarship arguing that gentlemanly behavior should be accorded a different evaluation beyond straight calculation (Smallwood, 1935).

The first recorded instance of grades awarded by public schools in the United States occurred during a review of the Boston school system in 1845. A proto-standardized exam was given to students across the city to generate straight percentages of right and wrong within each classroom. The approach supplemented the typical practice of publicly ranking students in order of merit and, in some cases, giving students medals in accordance with relative merit among classmates. Massachusetts Board of Education Secretary Horace Mann noted that the examinations removed the "officious interference of the teacher" (as quoted in Cureton, 1971, p. 3).

From these early, Eastern educational centers, the general concept of grading spread with the movement of educated merchants and social elites as well as improved means of travel and communication (Smallwood, 1935). Still, the particular grade forms varied widely among the colleges, secondary schools, and primary schools that implemented grading (Odell, 1925; Rugg, 1915). For instance, between 1860 and 1880, Harvard moved from the 1 to 100 scale to a quartile system (students ranked in groups of 25% relative to each others' performance) and then to an A–E scale (Smallwood, 1935). Meanwhile, the majority of American universities moved to a related 1–5 scale (Cureton, 1971).

By 1901, the S for satisfactory and U for unsatisfactory was being widely used for the youngest students in elementary school, while Nashville public schools developed a standard "passed," "conditioned," and "not passed" scale (Cureton, 1971; McClusky, 1920). The University of Georgia was concurrently pioneering a system of 1* (*high*) to 1, 2, then 3 (Boyd, 1998) while Knox County, Tennessee was aligning the 1 to 100 scale with the A to F scale (in this case, F literally corresponded to "failure"; Kirschenbaum, Simon, & Napier, 1971).

The famed "grading curve" was first devised in 1905 at the University of Missouri in response to an inordinately high failure rate in the natural sciences and an inordinately low failure rate in the Humanities (Meyer, 1908). The notion was simple: grades, like any other natural phenomena, should be appropriately distributed over a normal curve (see Associated Source A for an example of how this made its way into high school assessments).

The implementation of grades both in part constituted and was a constituent part of two related, major movements in American education: the rapid expansion of public schooling and the rapid expansion in pedagogical knowledge. This first movement not only swelled the number of students being schooled, it also demanded the construction of countless new schools and new administrative techniques. There was unprecedented stress placed on the capacity of American schooling at all levels. To deal with a quickly growing student body, ideas and practices were borrowed from another burgeoning field of knowledge which also included clear, scientific designations of rank and quality: industrial management (Callahan, 1962). The use of grading in its various forms became a tool of efficiency in dealing with the student body on a mass scale.

The second movement, the rapid expansion in pedagogical knowledge, shared the characteristic of efficiency and the tenets of scientific management (Callahan, 1962), but it also incorporated psychology, another relatively new science (Harris, 1898/1969; Thorndike, 1904). Whereas efficiency was a response to the growing student body, the expansion of pedagogical knowledge occurred in response to the bodies of students: how they learned, acted, reacted, and could be accurately, precisely measured. To do so meant moving the curriculum further away from the individual teacher and into the sphere of formal, pedagogical knowledge (Hamilton, 2001; Popkewitz, 1986).

## 7.2 Standardization of Grading Practices

The shift from investing responsibility for grading in individual teachers to creating formal, consistent systems for grading was a move towards standardization. For instance, William Torrey Harris, educated at Yale from 1855–1857, later became superintendent of St. Louis schools and subsequently U.S. Commissioner of Education from 1889–1906. During his tenures in educational administration, Harris was central

in pioneering the implementation of grades as a curricular and a managerial reform, one that improved the overall functioning of schooling (Byerly, 1946). Harris did not, however, aim to use grading to measure overall student achievement in response to particular curricula. His goal was to increase the capacity of schools to serve large numbers of students efficiently.

Over the first two decades of the twentieth century, there was an explosion of scholarly literature on the use and practice of grades and grading. In general, grades were considered a key administrative element of pedagogical knowledge, one that permitted the functioning of large schools from elementary through higher education. Yet debates occurred over the source of and elimination of teacher bias in grading and the creation of standardized grade forms to create coherence across geographic regions and levels of schooling. After the close of World War I, the authors publishing literature on grades and grading continued to debate ways to improve grading practices, ways to remove teacher bias, and ways to more accurately measure specific student learning (see Associated Source B for examples of teachers experimenting with grading practices).

Teachers also developed piercing critiques of grades and how they shaped students' classroom behavior. In the widely read professional publication *The Clearing House*, the teacher Dorothy De Zouche used humor and exaggeration to skewer the ways grades can warp students' motivations, harm youth's self-esteem, and pose unending quandaries for teachers. De Zouche, who taught high school English in a suburb of St. Louis from the early 1910s into the 1950s, wrote numerous articles and several books about teaching during her career. Here, she lays out what she sees as the damage grades can do to a student.

> If I were asked to enumerate ten educational stupidities, the giving of grades would head the list…How often have I listened to the protest: "But when I give Jim an *I*, I don't mean *he's* inferior. I just mean that represents the level of work he does, and *I'm sure Jim understands* that's what I mean."
>
> Like heck he does. What Jim understands is that he's been pigeonholed as poorer mentally than his classmates. What does she do, I wonder – call Jim in after class and say, "Look, Jim, you're not inferior as a person. You're just inferior as a student." Jim no doubt would love this. It would make everything just fine for him. Does she think that Jim's mind works exactly as hers works and that Jim separates himself as a person from

> himself as a student?… Instead of figuring out ways to figure out what letter best describes John, I ought to spend my time figuring out ways to help John learn what he needs to learn. If all the time we spend figuring out what grades to give John were spent working with John himself, John would be a better educated boy. (de Zouche, 1945, pp. 339–344)

Informed by these widely shared criticisms, a broad upheaval in the late 1960s through the mid-1970s reexamined the purpose and rationale for grades along with other fundamental tenets of American pedagogy (Marshall, 1968; Simon & Bellanca, 1976). Grades were particularly singled out, though, as potent devices of social control and discrimination (Atkinson, 1975). During this period of sometimes ephemeral change, a number of colleges permanently introduced "Pass/Fail" grading options, while other universities were founded as educational institutions that did not grade, such as New College of Florida, Hampshire College, and the University of California-Santa Clara. The reexamination of grades found few permanent inroads into secondary and elementary public education during this time. With the later issuing of *A Nation At-Risk* (Education, 1983), debates about grading returned to discussions of eliminating teacher subjectivity and improving precision as standardized measures began to gain a foothold in administration of schooling on state and national levels. Moreover, the standard grade forms became well cemented as pedagogical mainstays: the A–F scale matched the 1–100 scale, the 4-point grade point average, Pass/Fail, and the S/U (*satisfactory/unsatisfactory*) elementary designations. These are often used to represent learning across a range of schooling contexts, from the individual student report card to the report card for a nation.

## 7.3 The Move to Data

In the first decades of the twenty-first century, a new movement around assessment and grading has emerged alternately known as "data-driven" or "data-informed" instruction (Petersen, 2007). The hallmark of data-driven instruction is that teachers continually assess their students in order to understand what has been learned and what has not; this information is then used by teachers to develop or revise future lessons to remediate what has not been learned. There is also the benefit of being able to review data about which lessons or strategies lead to more or better student results. With a constant stream of data generated by

assessments of student learning, data-driven instruction has the promise of providing teachers with timely, actionable information to better support their students.

In a historical perspective, the move to data-driven instruction appears to be a proliferation in the number of grades teachers are asked to give. The earliest grades at Yale and Harvard were only earned by students through their end-of-year examinations. As grades became part of elementary and secondary schools, marks were given out quarterly and then by subject area; by the 1920s, major student assignments and tests were also given grades. The shift from grades to data extends this trend by asking teachers to assess students every day on their mastery of one or more lesson objectives. These are in addition to grades for projects, quizzes, tests, performances, homework, and other activities. There are more and more grades being given and received.

New grading systems have been developed to make the growth in grades manageable and productive. One such approach that is currently expanding in use across the country is standards-based grading (Muñoz & Guskey, 2015), which seeks to break down instructional standards into discrete, specific skills and knowledge that students need to master. By being assessed on their mastery of each particular skill or content element, students will receive many dozens of grades, but each one will communicate whether or not each student is able to do what the instructional standards expect. And further, teachers can use that information to better plan their lessons. (See Source C for a discussion of how standards-based grading is used and adapted in one classroom).

The challenge facing teachers is that standards-based grading and data-driven instruction do not necessarily solve the problems with grades that educators have pointed out over the past two centuries. There may be more information and with computers, more sophisticated ways of handling that information, but teachers still face questions about how grades influence students' motivation, their self-esteem, and their relationship to school. If anything, the situation may be more complex than the one Jackson wrote about 50 years ago.

## 7.4 Introduction to the Sources

The following sources provide windows on how teachers have approached the assessment of students' work over the twentieth century and into the early twenty-first. The first artifact, from 1918, describes

how the superintendent of Hot Springs, Arkansas schools introduced a new grading system as well as how some of the teachers reacted to the new system. The second source, a collection of reports from high school teachers across Michigan about innovative approaches to grading, shows the ways that teachers continually tried to adapt and modify their assessment practices. The final source is a contemporary look at standards-based grading by a high school math teacher working in a large city district.

As a group, these sources provide glimpses of how teachers have perennially raised questions about grading practices, offer pointed criticisms, and found ways to balance the institutional requirements to grade in specific ways with the varied needs of their students. While the forms that grades and assessment have taken changed and the number of grades and assessment steadily increased over time, teachers' struggles to make grading an effective and meaningful part of students' education persists.

As you read the sources, consider the following questions as well as develop your own:

1. How have teachers mediated the requirement to give grades with complex, sometimes negative effects that grades can have on learning?
2. Does the form of a grade—a number scale, a letter scale, or standards-based—or the way in which it's given make a significant difference in how it impacts students?
3. Of the issues raised by educators in each source, which do you see most often in classrooms today? Why do these concerns persist?

## 7.5 Associated Sources

### *7.5.1 Source VII.A: The Ranking System of Grading*

The first source is an article written by O. L. Dunway, the superintendent of schools for Hot Springs, Arkansas, for the *High School Journal*. This journal, still in print today, was an important professional publication in the early twentieth century; it was a space where educators from across the country could share their own practices and research and learn from what was happening in other schools. In this piece, Dunway shared a new grading system he had implemented in Hot Springs schools: a 1 through 5 scale that should roughly correspond to the normal curve so

that a small number students should get high grades, a small number should get failing grades, and a large majority fall in the middle. Dunway wrote during a period of rapid standardization in grading practices in schools, and his attempt to marry a numeric scale to a grading curve did not catch on nationally. But what is particularly interesting is that Dunway included responses from his teachers, some positive and some critical, which allows readers to grasp teachers' perspectives on the new mandated grading system.

Dunway, O. L. (October 1918–July 1919). "The Ranking System of Grading in the Hot Springs, Ark., Schools" *The High School Journal, VI*, 224–227.

Five steps, or ranks, are used: 1 means excellent, the best grade; 2 means superior, the second grade; 3 means good, the average grade of the class; 4 means very doubtful, a poor grade, close to the borderline of failure; 5 means absolute failure.

The standard given to the teachers is as follows: From 5 to 15 percent of the pupils should get l's; 15–25%, 2's; 40–60%, 3's; 15–25%, 4's; and not over 10% should fail. This standard, for any unselected group of pupils, is not far from correct. A standard of about what the grades ought to be is a great help to anyone, especially the young teacher.

The principle underlying the ranking system of grading is this: That the average pupils of the class should set the pace for the class; that what they can and actually do is a more nearly correct index to what they should be expected to do than what any teacher, principal, or superintendent, or school board may think they should do.

It is not right to let the best pupil in the class set the standard; neither is it right to let the poorest one set the standard. But from 40 to 60% of the pupils of the middle ability in any unselected class should show by their work (both quantity and quality) what could reasonably be expected of the class. The pupils of the middle ability are given 3. All other details depend upon this fundamental principle of setting the standard.

In grading a set of papers by the five-step ranking system, the first paper read will constitute the first pile. If the next paper is better or poorer than the first one, it will start a second pile. Should the third paper be better or poorer than either of the first two, it will form the third pile. The best papers will constitute your pile of l's; your poorest, your pile of 5's.

If all pupils show exactly the same ability (I have never seen such a class)—of course, you would have only one grade—to be determined by the teacher. To use the ranking system successfully, it will be necessary for the teacher to forget about the old percent system. Averages are not to be considered.

If I should ask you your opinion of your neighbor, you, perhaps, would reply that he is an "excellent man;" a "good man;" or a "very sorry man," etc. You would never think of saying that he " 91 2-3 percent of a good man," or that he is "69 8-15 percent of a good man." So in passing judgment upon a pupil's work, we should use these broad distinctions. If you say that "John is a 3 pupil," you mean that he is good, and doing good, average work. Mary is ranked as a 2 pupil because she is well above the average. Susie gets a 4 because she is noticeably below the average. Occasionally, some pupil is given a 1 because he is noticeably brilliant; or unhappily a 5 because he is markedly dull.

What does it mean to say that "John is worth 87 2-3 percent in geography?" I confess that I do not know. Do you? Is it mathematically possible to say that a pupil has attained 94 per

I pause for an answer…

On April 2, 1917, I sent the following to the teachers of the Hot Springs, Arkansas, High School:

> Fellow Teachers: I have been asked to write an article on our ranking-grading system. I am anxious to give only facts in this article. You remember a little more than a year ago, we decided to abolish term examinations, and I am anxious now to find out whether you would prefer to go back to the old examination and per cent system, or whether you would prefer to do as we are doing now by ranking the pupil in one, two, three, four, and five classes.
>
> As the system stands and as I understand it and want the teachers to carry it out, we do not say that any pupil shall fail or that he shall have any particular grade; but we want them ranked according to the work that they do. If your class is a selected group, it may be that they would all do practically the same grade of work; and, under that condition, might all he classed in no more than two groups.
>
> Now, I shall appreciate a frank statement from each teacher as to your opinion of our ranking-grading system, for I shall expect without calling any names to use the data that I get from you.
>
> Sincerely,
> O. L. Dunaway, Superintendent of Schools

The following eighteen replies were received:

1. I think this system is the only fair way of grading pupils.
2. I find the ranking system correlating closely with the system in the past, and feel that inasmuch as it undoubtedly is to be universally in the future, that if we keep pace with educational advancement, we do well to fall into line.
3. I find it the fairest plan in judging boys' ability in wood work.
4. In following the ranking system of grading, I have not departed from my former method of grading. It fits with my old way of grading. I think it is the only way to get uniformity in grading from the first grade through the high school.
5. I think our present grading system the only fair one.
6. I think the present grading system is the only one in which all pupils are fairly judged and ranked. It gives uniformity in the grading throughout the school.
7. I cannot grade by the ranking system conscientiously. I think and in fact, am convinced, that it destroys individuality on the part of the students. It is mechanical in its application. However, I have been and shall always grade by it as best I can.
8. I have graded both ways the first semester, and the grades were practically the same. The new system seems more fair to the normal grading teacher.
9. This system is not a new one with me. I have used both systems; but I find this method the fairest to both teacher and pupil in my judgment.
10. The system is not new to me. I have graded each way and used each of the systems. I find it to be the fairest for all concerned. I do not say that any one must fail, nor that there is an iron-clad fixed limit as to per cent.
11. I have no objection to the grading system. The method of ranking is the only fair way.
12. This system introduces a standard and secures uniformity in the matter of grading, and I like it for these features. It should be elastic enough to meet all requirements though.
13. I think the ranking system is the only way to secure uniformity in grading.
14. I think the ranking system superior to the old system in that it is fairest to the pupils, and by it uniformity in grading is gained.

15. The class of pupils should set the standard of work done— not the teacher. The grading system with no certain fixed percentages is the fairest to the pupils.
16. I do not approve of term tests. As to the ranking system, it is the most up-to-date method of grading. I think the criticism has been brought about by several things: (1) false idea of definite limits; (2) too rapid change from one system to another; (3) idea gained by pupils that teachers do not understand the system.
17. In my opinion it is better to promote pupils upon the showing made in daily work and monthly tests, than to depend upon the results of term examinations. As to the grading system, when it is as elastic as stated above, it may be made to fit any class.
18. I endorse the ranking system, provided it is sufficiently flexible.

Nearly all of the teachers made replies. A few did not. One teacher in particular gave no reply. When her grades were handed in to the office, it was discovered that several of her pupils made 2's, and 3's, notwithstanding the fact that the pupils were not in school a single day during the whole month. This needs no comment. I might add that this teacher is not with us this year.

During this session, 1917–1918, I have heard no objections to the ranking system. I believe if the teachers understand they will see that fair to the pupils, and that will help to unify the marking throughout the whole system.

### *7.5.2 Source VII.B: In Evaluation of Work*

For almost as long as there have been grades in American schools, there have been teachers adapting, modifying, and trying out different approaches based on their experiences with students. The source below gives us several glimpses of how teachers were trying to improve upon the A–F grade scale, which had only been in common practice for a couple decades by the early 1940s. *Seeking Better Ways* (Michigan Study of the Secondary School Curriculum, 1941) was a report published by the Michigan Board of Education that collected descriptions of innovative practices from teachers across the state with the intention of sharing those ideas for other educators to consider. As stated in the study's preface, "One of the ideas regarded as basic in the Study is the discovery, development, and evaluation of effective modifications of secondary

education through extensive experimentation by teachers and administrators with modifications in realistic school situations."

Included here are the five teacher responses that make up the grading and assessment section of the report, "In evaluation of work." The teachers worked in rural schools (Big Rapids, Wakefield, Centreville), a suburban school (Roekfield), and an urban school (Grand Rapids), but all were seeking more effective ways to grade students. As a source, this piece shows us some of the ways teachers have constantly struggled to assess students in ways that promote learning and help students become reflective, self-motivated young adults.

Michigan Study of the Secondary School Curriculum (1941). "In evaluation of work." In S*eeking better ways: teachers' descriptions of newer practices in secondary schools* (pp. 29–32). Lansing MI: Michigan Study of the Secondary School Curriculum, State Board of Education.

## IN EVALUATION OF WORK

A few descriptions reveal a venture into democratic ways of evaluating work and of arriving at marks and grades or substitutes for them. Pupils and parents have worked with teachers in an attempt to make the evaluation more meaningful and valuable and more than a dictatorial statement by the teacher.

### A COOPERATIVE REPORT CARD IN SHORTHAND
By Keith Morford, Big Rapids High School

A cooperative student–teacher evaluation sheet is used by shorthand students in Big Rapids High School. It has replaced the traditional letter mark, which represented the judgment of the teacher only, and which offered no definite suggestion as to how the student might make improvement.

The original group of goals was drawn up by the transcription class in 1939 after a week of study and class discussion. The form adopted for setting up the goals was that used by several of the departments in the University High School at Ann Arbor. The students tried in each case to select goals that were specific and not general and also goals that obtained in the business office rather than in the classroom. The list of goals was reviewed thoroughly by the present transcription class and few changes were made…

One of these sheets is placed in the hands of each student at the beginning of each marking period. This allows him to make a daily

evaluation if he chooses. At the end of the period, the student and teacher make an evaluation, independent of each other. After the sheets are sent home, the students have conferences with the teacher to discover the best ways to bring about improvement where the evaluation showed a need for it, or why the student and teacher evaluations on any goal differed.

## A PLAN FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
By Kenneth B. Hunt, Centreville High School

A committee made up of members of the community and parents was formed to consider the problem of dissatisfaction with the "A", "B," and "C" type of marking system. As a result of their work a revised marking system was formulated. When the committee had completed its work, a meeting of all parents was advertised in the paper. At this meeting the work of the committee was endorsed without alteration. In the revised system only three marks are given in grading the work in various subjects: "E" for exceptionally high quality work, "S" for satisfactory working up to ability, and "U" for unsatisfactory work or work which is not up to the full capacity of the student and therefore does not necessarily indicate failure.

Every student is capable of receiving the highest rating and is marked only in comparison to his own ability. No two students can be compared in ability by their grades. The markings are an indication of cooperation, courtesy, effort, and other qualities mentioned in the card.

Also, marks are given for each of the citizenship traits of cooperation, effort, initiative, dependability, promptness, neatness, accuracy, self-control, courtesy, respect for property, resourcefulness, problem solving, personal appearance, interest, carefulness, perseverance, and judgment. For commendable traits "x" is given and when these traits are lacking to some degree in these students an "o" is placed in the proper square. If a student is neither lacking in a trait nor yet can be commended, the corresponding square is left blank.

Space is also allowed for teachers' remarks for each of the three six-week periods.

These report cards are sent home with the students for parent signatures and, except in unusual cases when letters concerning the particular problems are sent to the parents, are the only reports to the parents.

A few days immediately preceding each marking date, the student is urged to have private conferences with the individual teachers about his work and attitudes. In these conferences it is understood that the student is to take the initiative in pointing out his own weak and strong points.

The students are tested throughout the semester at the discretion of the teachers. Practically every acceptable form of tests, either teacher-made or standardized, is given.

A faculty committee has studied the making of individual case records. A small beginning has been made in compiling these records so that they will contain anything that will help to give a true picture of the student.

## STUDENTS EVALUATE THEIR OWN WORK

By Gertrude Ullrich, Wakefield High School

Several years ago a number of students in the homemaking classes were not well satisfied with the grading of their sewing projects. They felt that because they had put forth a great deal of effort and had spent time on them they should receive a high grade, regardless of the appearance and quality of workmanship of the completed product.

A general class discussion brought the suggestion that each girl compares her work with the work of others in the group, and then writes out her opinion of the results of her work.

Class comments on the finished product also help the girl to see the good and the undesirable qualities of her work. Girls observe similar work on garments and other items in their environment in order to establish a broader concept for comparison. The teacher finally works with each girl to help her determine the value of the project.

Each student, who makes a garment in school, in addition to writing an evaluation of the project, lists points of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. She also states how she plans to carry on a similar project in order to obtain better results. This information is kept on file for reference when the girl makes her next attempt.

One of the most important results of this activity is to raise an interest in doing better work by establishing higher standards of workmanship and satisfaction.

## PUPILS TAKE SOCIALIZED EXAMINATIONS

By K. Zierleyn, Roekford High School

Final examinations are stimulating when the socialized examination is used! For three successive years, seniors in Roekford High School's English department, where they study world literature in the twelfth grade, have responded enthusiastically to this examination method. Debatable questions, which involve careful judgment, comparative analysis, literary appreciation, are given to the class prior to the examination.

Class members bring with them any data they feel are valuable when the class meets for this "examination." The discussion that follows is entirely in the students' hands. They have been warned to guard against quibbling and overworking a single question. The instructor? She sits in the discussion circle, says nothing (unless, as has occurred only once, the discussion is checkmated) and records briefly the ideas advanced by the students. Evaluation comes later when the enthusiasm has "cooled".

Another stimulating examination method used at Roekford is the one-act play staged by speech class students as a school assembly. Choice of play, casting, directing, staging, advertising, business all are done by students, selected by the class itself with the knowledge that the project is their examination. It constitutes a practical application of theory.

A SELF-EVALUATION SHEET IN ENGLISH
By Bernadean Flynn, Godwin Heights High School, Grand Rapids

I dislike giving marks fully as much as some students hate receiving them. My senior English class discussed the marking system, i.e., the "A," "B," "C" system. The consensus of opinion was that marks don't really mean anything. We devised what we call are port of progress a self-evaluation sheet. This is passed around twice a semester just a week or two before examinations. It gives the student a chance to rate himself honestly and sincerely under several different items the first relating to English specifically and the others referring to his social relationships.

On the following days while students are working individually, I have a little private chat with each student. We talk about his improvements and his deficiencies and come to an agreement concerning his mark. Some students who have done some very fine creative writing but never participate in class discussions check this point, resolving to bring themselves out of their shells and speak up! Others who are quick to learn realize that failure to listen or help the group is a determining factor in deciding their mark.

### *7.5.3 Source VII.C: Standards-Based Grading*

In recent years, many schools have moved to standards-based grading in an effort to make grades more specific, useful, and meaningful to both teachers and students. In short, standards-based grades are given to students to indicate their mastery of a specific skill or topic within the content area identified in the standards for the course being taken. For instance, a student in an algebra class might receive a standards-based

grade on her ability to factor polynomials; this would be one of several dozen grades she earns during the year, each one of those grades reflecting her ability to perform a specific algebraic skill. This is in contrast to a traditional approach where the student might have earned a single letter grade for the entire year.

The source below is a short report from a high school math teacher who implemented standards-based grading as part of a school-wide adoption of the approach. This teacher, a South Asian man teaching in an urban school that enrolls over 90% Latinx and African American students, describes the very particular and intricate way he has adapted his school's standards-based grading system for use in his own classroom. Though at points technical and very specific, this source illustrates the creative work teachers perform as they implement mandates and policies into their classrooms with the intention of supporting their students' success.

"Standards-Based Grading in an Urban Public High School Math Class" (2016)

Calculating Grades

There is some strategy in trying to persuade the district's Gradebook software to play nice with the school's implementation of Standards-Based Grading. Gradebook categories represent "standards." In the math department, those standards are basically just unit titles decided upon by planning teams. Planning teams also decide, somewhat arbitrarily, on relative category weights. Units that are longer OR perceived to be more important are weighted more heavily. Although, in many instances, most categories are weighted pretty close to equally.

Within each category, quizzes, tests, homework, and other assignments are assigned a multiplier commensurate with their relative importance in assessing student understanding. Homework is worth least. Every day, I record on a clipboard whether OR not the student completed his/her homework that day. At the end of the unit, I enter their homework completion as a single assignment.

Test and quiz items are mostly graded as either correct OR incorrect. (Some items are broken into sub items. For example, on an absolute value assessment, students might receive a point for each of the answers to an absolute value equation, e.g.) In theory, planning teams administer the same assessments, and are supposed to decide on performance bands in advance. In practice, many of us modify assessments slightly. Many of us grade them with slight differences in what we counted as a

single correct answer as opposed to several independent correct answers. That makes it impossible for us to use the same performance bands. And, most of the time, we set those performance bands after we've graded the assessment and are trying to decide what performance bands create the distribution we want.

Performance bands—Number of correct answers needed for a 4, for a 3, and to pass.

Every once in a while, we'll complete a project, which we'll grade using a rubric.

At our school:

> 4 – Exceeds standards, goes into the gradebook as a 100% (4/4, in my gradebook)
>
> 3 – Meets standards, goes into the gradebook as an 85% (3.4/4 in my gradebook)
>
> 2 – Approaching standards, goes into the gradebook as a 70% (2.8/4 in my gradebook)
>
> 1 – Not yet meeting standards, goes into the gradebook as a 55% (2.2/4 in my gradebook)
>
> 0 – Missing, goes into the gradebook as a 40% (1.6/4 in my gradebook).

A note on percentage grades: A student is theoretically supposed to receive a 55% just for submitting an assignment. Given that a 60% is the lowest passing grade, students only have to clear the minimum "you turned it in" grade by 5% to be passing. This difficulty in failing students frustrates many of the school's teachers. Some math teachers will record a test that has no OR almost no correct responses as a 0, give the student a 40%, and encourage them to retake the assessment.

Lastly, the school is pretty big on retakes. Most math teachers require that students perform corrections on their original assessment. We then allow them to take a similar assessment with different numbers. While we have been trying to set deadlines for retakes, in theory we subscribe to the philosophy that it does not matter when a student masters a standard, so long as they do ultimately master that standard. When a student passes an end-of-unit exam, I go back and enter passing grades for all of their quizzes for that unit.

I do not allow 4's on retakes, although there is some debate on that matter.

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CHAPTER 8

# Ongoing Curriculum Lessons

We have argued throughout this *Reader* that curriculum is perpetually constructed and reconstructed as it is a political act of (re)interpretation of lived experiences. Therefore, this *Reader* concludes with a discussion of ongoing lessons that we are developing and redeveloping through curriculum. The sources, topics, and discussions throughout this book have been our way of inviting readers to think through and join these conversations around the shape and content of the curriculum. They are a hallmark of the teaching profession and by taking part in these discussions, readers become part of a long line of educators through history who have sought to make schooling and education more meaningful and more effective for students. We hope the interactions with this book, the sources included in it, and the deliberations that have resulted from topics presented creates an opportunity for emerging and enduring learning.

## 8.1 Historically Conscious Educational Spaces

At the outset of this *Reader*, we noted that all of the authors teach curriculum foundation courses for general teacher education and graduate programs. One of the aims of this book is to introduce theoretical and historical analyses of curriculum and education to support teacher candidates and current teachers as they explore curriculum from varied historical perspectives. The critical issue here is not only to understand the past on its own terms, but to see its relationship to the present and future (Stearns, 1998). An essential aspect of this relationship is understanding



A. M. Ryan et al., *The Curriculum Foundations Reader*,
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that the past can have implications for our actions in the future (Rüsen, 1993 as cited in Seixas, 2017). In this sense, the relationship between past and present involves consciously recognizing that we inherit histories and that we shape histories through the choices we make and the actions we take. For educators, this recognition is evidenced by the content and practices that are promoted and, equally, by those that are not endorsed.

In this book, the sources authored by Edward A. Johnson (Chapter 3) and John C. Bruce (Chapter 4) stand out as quintessential examples of historically conscious educators. Johnson and Bruce both illustrated a deeply rooted awareness of their history, an engagement in their present, and focused actions with an eye to the future. Bruce (1937) noted,

> Today is the result of yesterday; tomorrow will be the outcome of today. The hundreds of boys and girls studying history at the present moment will do much to determine the kind of tomorrow that millions, yet unborn, will have. (p. 40)

Johnson and Bruce each called for students, particularly African American students, to learn the history of Black people in the United States. Not only did they call for this to happen, but they also took steps to bring this about in their respective school districts through generating textbooks or organizing the curriculum to include that history.

Connecting these sources to educational work today is vital to understanding the importance of curriculum history in daily lived experiences in educational places and spaces. As educators we need to acknowledge the rich histories our students bring with them and build on those deep and important legacies when teaching. Those histories offer a way to connect with students and, in collaboration with our students, make meaning out of new and unfamiliar content. As we dove into the past, familiar terrain for experienced curriculum historians and theorists, we found ourselves pleasantly surprised and at times challenged, taken aback at new discoveries and by new perspectives on histories we thought we knew. We took familiar questions in the field of curriculum and pushed ourselves to think about them in fresh ways through new and diverse historical sources as well a range of secondary sources we needed to consult to support and make meaning through (re)interpretation of those primary sources. This provided lessons in how we might remain open to how history can inform and surprise us while serving as an

anchor to ground our understanding. We were pushed to think in novel ways and grapple with the past—shaping and reshaping lessons about twentieth-century curriculum making in the United States.

## 8.2 Rethinking Assumptions

Throughout this book, we provided sources that raised important questions about the assumptions of how school experiences vary based on who you are (race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, age, [dis]ability, first language, national origin, other social identifier, or combinations of these), where you live (urban Midwest, rural South, suburban Northeast, etc.), and when (late nineteenth century, early twentieth century, mid-twentieth century, and late twentieth century or later). In Chapter 4, Carolyn McCaskill (1984) described the difficulties she encountered as an African American girl in Alabama seeking education where, as a deaf child, she could use American Sign Language. Her multiple identities collided with the sociopolitical barriers she faced as a Black student with a (dis)ability in the 1960s. Attending the Alabama School for the Deaf improved her situation in one respect, because the language of instruction was American Sign Language, but the academic expectations were so low that she found herself disappointed. Carolyn McCaskill's account of eventually attending Gallaudet College in Washington, DC provides a story of one student's success, but raises many questions about the inequities she faced along the way and the other students who did not have the same opportunities that she ultimately found.

We examined how schools have not always worked or looked the same as they do today. Some interesting examples of how schools took on more informal organizational structures, such as the open air schools, were explored in Chapter 2. In the early twentieth century, open air schools regularly held class outside, regardless of the temperature, for the health and welfare of their students. Several decades later, the open education movement of the 1960s experimented with schools without walls, promoting open space concepts. Very few of these schools in their original formats still exist today, but the legacy of informal education in schools has had some lasting power. We have recently seen a resurgence of community schools that call for more unstructured and choice-based options for students before and after school. This is not a new model of

school, in fact it has been in existence for over a century. It comes back, in evolved forms, again and again because involving a diverse group of external stakeholders affects the organization of schooling in ways that promise to broaden and deepen learning (Maier, Daniel, Oakes, & Lam, 2017).

We have also identified the error in the assumption that schools only function in a top-down manner. In reality, teachers, students, and community members have had varying degrees of influence on how schools function, even though it is oftentimes assumed that these groups have little input into the way schools operate. Chapter 6 highlights one of the more interesting ways that a school district involved community members in developing a program addressing a growing demand to meet the needs of students that the district feared were dropping out at a rapid rate. Proyecto Saber grew out of a grant-funded summer program to meet the needs of the academic and social-emotional support for Chicano students in the Seattle School District in the mid-1970s. The project brought teachers, counselors, and community members together to shape the summer academic enhancement program with a bilingual/bicultural design. This particular program became a regular part of the curriculum by the 1990s.

## 8.3 Into the Classroom

A major area of focus of the curricular inquiry in this book examined what curriculum looked like at the level of the classroom. In several of the chapters, we examined how teachers addressed specific teaching and learning problems of practice. Many authors have used the metaphor of the black box depicting the everyday classroom experience as largely opaque or unknowable to symbolize what goes on in the classroom, but we feel fortunate to have garnered some insight from the sources we consulted.

In her essay related to the merit-oriented culture of schooling, Ms. De Zouche (1945) soberly gave her assessment of grading: "Instead of figuring out ways to figure out what letter best describes John, I ought to spend my time helping John learn what he needs to learn" (p. 341). At mid-century, Ms. De Zouche and the teachers featured in the *Seeking Better Ways* (1941), both in Chapter 7, struggled with the disconnect between instruction and assessment, but an urban

school teacher in 2016, also highlighted in Chapter 7, saw a deeper relationship between these two components of teaching. It is important to note these accounts of curriculum were separated by decades, but they present a timeless struggle, that does not invalidate either experience. The field of curriculum had certainly changed during the intervening years, but both raised valuable points about how we assess students and their work.

We presented examples of curriculum from different eras and locations to highlight culturally relevant classroom practices. The 1987 U.S. Congressional hearing included in Chapter 3 highlights how the Navajo Nation and its Rough Rock Demonstration School had forged a collaboration with the Kamehameha Early Education Project to develop a culturally compatible education model. The two programs approached the U.S. Congress for additional funding to expand the programs to better serve the Indigenous Peoples of the United States, who had suffered under failed Anglo-education efforts. As a result, schools supported Indigenous children's culture as they worked to rearrange how the room was organized and allow children to work together rather than independently. This type of cooperative learning used at Rough Rock and Kamehameha in the 1980s would become more widely used in classrooms in the 1990s.

These historical examples shed light on the uniqueness of particular eras, circumstances, and beliefs that shaped the practices put into action. These same sources demonstrate some connections to our current practices in classrooms and their implications on future practice. The evolution of the language of instruction in U.S. schools is especially powerful to examine over the twentieth century (Chapter 6). The emphasis on using English, but also spoken English over American Sign Language (Chapters 4 and 6), communicates the overwhelming assimilationist pull in American schooling over the century. The twentieth century poses new opportunities to rethink the assumption that for children and adults to thrive in the United States they need to abandon their language of origin and cultural traditions. We are now in the process of (re)learning what many other educators in the past already knew, that cultural and linguistic diversity is a distinct asset to be nurtured in and out of school. The value of understanding past and present practices from this vantage point makes access to informal and formal teaching–learning artifacts even more vital.

## 8.4 A Call to Archive

There is precious little material that connects educators to their professional history when compared to the amount of material that students and teachers generate day after day, year after year: lesson plans, assignments, curriculum maps, pictures, and much more. The daily life of educators in school and those of educators in informal settings have not typically been collected and preserved by formal archives or other historical organizations. This lack of preserving classroom life is not an accident, but the result of a particular outlook that sees the work of teachers and students as ephemeral and historically less important than other activities. It raises the question of what kind of social norms operates in deciding which materials are regarded as important or not. Even more disconcerting is that the artifacts of educators and students from more marginalized communities, those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, are even less likely to be archived. When we lose these materials, we lose vital evidence that helps us move beyond simplistic, one-sided stories of the past. To read letters from students to district officials or pages from textbooks seeking to forge a place for African history expands our understanding of our professional history and widens our own sense of what is possible. Teaching has always included the creative work of making and remaking curriculum; when this is done in the pursuit of equity and uplifting our most vulnerable students, educators are doing the work of social justice.

This project leads us to conclude that it is essential for diverse groups of students, teachers, parents, community members, and educators to carefully collect curriculum materials (defined broadly) that will inform how we understand the past, act in the present, and shape the future. This would entail historically conscious curriculum archival collecting. The archival sources available to researchers who are working to address the enduring questions of curriculum are somewhat limited. The detailed effects of learning and teaching—curriculum plans, assignments, screenshots, photos of learning spaces and the built environment, student work, data generated and gathered, lived experience represented in teacher journals, etc.—are a few important items with which to begin. These archival collections might take the form of online repositories or collections housed at local libraries or universities. The role of universities, community libraries, schools, and community institutions, along with schools, could be powerful. The importance of working with

communities and enlisting local archivists and their institutions is also essential so that future educators can learn from our own successes and struggles.

## 8.5 Concluding Thoughts

After examining the rich content provided by historical sources and developing a deeper understanding of the histories of curriculum, schools, educators, and students, we argue that it is essential to archive the artifacts that we, as educators, produce, while still maintaining an ever-dynamic, responsive curriculum. Our exploration of curriculum in the twentieth century has examined how educators have made sense of teaching and how students have made sense of learning in different contexts. As we noted in the introduction to this *Reader*, the sources we chose to include underscored the struggles to make voices heard and to promote equity through a curriculum foundations framework emphasizing political, sociological, and cultural elements. This broader understanding of curriculum, that is curriculum as the (re)interpretation of lived educational experiences, sees curriculum as a verb. Curriculum becomes the lived experience, the ongoing lesson.

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