Editor's Note

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When I was eight years old, my family moved from a small town in the Appalachian Mountains to a 600-acre cotton farm in northern Alabama. Four years later, we moved again to a dairy farm in northern New Jersey, and finally we settled on our own 40-acre farm in southern Michigan. My father was not a farmer, but in each of these communities I learned something more about the drama of farming. It was exciting to watch our neighbors sitting on their tractors digging up the soil and dropping in the seeds. Later, I'd watch the long rows of green shoots sprouting in the sun, and later still came haying, when neighbors shouted for my brother to earn a little money helping in the fields. Home is still associated with the rustle of drying corn and the feel of fresh-picked cotton in my hand.

In Michigan I first became aware of the kind of school often found in farming communities—the one-room school. Ours was a rather dilapidated, white-frame building to which two of my younger brothers walked more than a mile each day. I did not attend the school, as I was old enough to ride the bus for high school in town.

This was not my last experience with a one-room school. Several years ago, a dilapidated one-room school was donated to the museum I curate. To reconstruct the building on campus, we estimated that we needed to raise $125,000; we also needed the approval of university officials on whose land the building would sit. We set to work with the able assistance of a committee of volunteers, one of whom had farmed nearby fields. In September 1999, the reconstructed one-room school was completed and opened to the public. This beautiful new artifact expanded the work of the museum greatly. Now as never before, I became involved in myriad activities surrounding the school, from publicizing the availability of the building and working out arrangements for keeping it open for visitors to planning programs, recruiting volunteer docents, and training them to lead school groups in simulations of life in one-room schools. There seemed so much to learn! What better way to do that than to invite like-minded people to a conference. Here was an excellent opportunity for experienced curators, docents and educational historians to share their knowledge. Another group I hoped to attract were farming families and others interested in historic Illinois. I'll never forget the dances I attended with the Dutch-American farmers in their huge New Jersey barns. Would it be possible to provide a rich cultural experience in a festive country school fair on the grounds around our reconstructed one-room school? This is what I set out to do.

What can one-room school attendees and their teachers add to our understanding of American education? What can those old one-room schools teach us about the values of our ancestors? What can the study of one-room schooling contribute to education today? This issue of *Thresholds* answers those questions in a rich diversity of historical essays, including **personal, family, institutional, professional,** and **state histories.** The essays begin with the personal and move to ever larger contexts. In several cases, family history converges with institutional and local histories. Sites of the schools and schooling practices range widely—from the Midwest to the Mid-Atlantic States, the Northwest and Southwest—and draw on a rich mix of sources. Despite regional distinctives, all the one-room schools explored in these essays shared remarkable similarities: cohesiveness, unity, local control and insularity. All managed to

inculcate prized American values that we struggle to foster in today's children.

The final essay is the conference keynote address by Paul Theobald, author of the much-read *Teaching the Commons*. Theobold uses a historical lens to critically examine the current state of the nation and its educational purposes. Theobald believes educated Americans have largely turned away from the important traditional values of truth, goodness, beauty, and justice and focused on self-serving materialism. "If we can change the way we think about education's purpose," he writes, "if ... we embrace the agenda of the one-room schools, we might educate the next generation of leaders to do a better job with it."

These essays were selected for publication by a review committee consisting of Professors Emeritus David Ripley and James Johnson, graduate assistant Jan Woodhouse and myself. Many thanks go to the committee and Betty Lahti, editorial assistant, for their valuable contributions.

Always Amber

Fayann Stone
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She was a spellbinder and I was bound. It was Amber Morgan, my teacher at Lakeside, a one-room school, who did this to me. She influenced my attitude toward life, my career, and even some of my hobbies. Because of her, I, too, became a one-room schoolteacher in McAuley School for thirty years, and I even founded Sholes One-Room School Museum. Because of her, I am also a musician and a calligrapher. She not only taught me to become a life-long learner, she showed me, through her example, ways to imbue that ideal in my students, as well as my own children and grandchildren.

As her pupil, sitting in a row of hardwood varnished desks with smooth-worn fold-up seats, I had plenty of opportunity to observe this lady. From nine-to-four every weekday, September through May, year after year, I shared my days in that country school with the most important person in it: my teacher, as she gently wove the future patterns of my life.

She was a large woman and her presence permeated the room. She always seemed to know what was going on around the corner in our tiny library, in the cloakrooms, even out on the playground. I know now, from experience, it was keen listening rather than visual oversight, but we were convinced she had eyes in the back of her head.

Her whole appearance was certainly unique. Her brown hair was perfectly marcelled every week into the same stiff little finger waves. The older boys joked behind her back about her "wig." Her body and the clothes that covered it were definitely matronly. We knew that she was married, her husband worked their family farm, and they had no children

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I always thought she had huge feet, but perhaps it was just the shoes. She wore heavy, square-heeled, black-and-shiny laced oxfords. Those solid brogans could sound ominous approaching my desk when I'd been whispering across the aisle to a friend or when my lessons weren't completed. And how they could clomp an unmistakable beat to teach us the rhythm while we learned to dance or march together!

Her legs were covered with thick cotton stockings, often with rumpled revelations of long underwear underneath, just as we wore. It was the only way to stay warm during the long Wisconsin winters, sitting in front for recitations as she did, farthest from the pot-bellied stove.

Large and heavy-set, her bosom was ample with, to me, a shocking cleavage, often accented by a gold pin, set with a cameo or an amethyst brooch, embellishments that riveted my attention unduly. By contrast, the women in my family were small-breasted, almost bony, so her generous figure seemed awesome.

She was too nice and too tidy to be repulsive, but certain things about her were highly unusual. For example, she rasped when she moved about the classroom, indicating underpinnings of things like garters and girdles and other firm foundations. These were things my female relatives only struggled into for very special occasions. It never

occurred to me that she had "dressed up" to come to school to teach us.

Her outer garment was always a silky dress of a floral or print design on a dark background. Modestly draped sleeves came nearly to her plumpish elbows in summer and to her wrists in winter. Slacks, of course, were unthinkable, even for us girls. In cold weather, we sometimes slipped them on under our skirts at recess time, but they were never worn in the classroom. Amber Morgan, with her heavy frame, dark flowered dresses and black oxfords, definitely had a grandmotherly look. I was surprised to learn years later that she was actually about my mother's age.

But Amber Morgan's face made any other little oddities insignificant. No, it was not her beauty; it was her smile: her radiant, magnanimous, contagious smile. It spread across her face like a benediction upon us all. And she smiled a lot. She even laughed a lot. Then her warm amber-brown eyes sparkled in their depths with the pure pleasure of being with us and learning together. I often wondered if her eyes begot her name.

Looking back, I realize she probably only owned a few dresses, chosen for serviceability, just like the heavy shoes. Certainly services were demanded of the country schoolteacher. Being the only adult among thirty or more children all day long taxed her in many and unpredictable ways. There was no telephone, so she had to handle all emergencies herself. I remember once a child fainted, and she calmly knew just what to do. We often went ice skating on a nearby pond during noon hour, and it was not uncommon for someone to fall in, getting a wet foot, or worse. She figured out a way to get the soaked child modestly behind the stove, hanging his things around him to dry. But it didn't excuse participation in class time. She'd just ask questions in a louder voice.

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Since we had no well, much less running water, she sent two students to the neighboring farm for a bucket of water each morning. The older boys who had this job got little slack time from their studies, however. She knew to the minute how long it should take. In the front hall, they filled the crock, which had a bubbler at the base for drinking. No common pail and dipper for us! But if we ran out of water in the afternoon, we just went thirsty 'til we got home. We learned to ration ourselves on warm days. Of course, we had no electricity or indoor plumbing either. She made it clear that if possible, we were expected to take care of natural urges at recess. She originated "Plan Ahead." It was part of her duties to manage the care of all the school materials and the premises as well. There was no custodian to clean up after a sick child or an accident. She did it, or more often, we did it ourselves. All the preparations beforehand and any cleaning up after school were done by her or by one of us. Through her pleasant courtesy and frequent praise, she made us realize that she really needed and appreciated our help.

Therefore, we all had chores to do, and we daren't forget or shirk them because our peers and our teacher depended on us. We had a Busy Bees Club that met during our lunch hour every two weeks when duties were changed, so we shared both the good and the bad. If you didn't do your work well, though, you heard about it at these meetings. Sometimes you didn't get a turn at one of the more fun chores to do, as a punishment from your peers. Our clever teacher used this meeting time to teach us "Roberts Rules of Order," protocol for conducting a business meeting. Talk about teaching to a need!

So we volunteered to be responsible for sweeping, emptying wastebaskets, erasing boards and clapping erasers, keeping toilet paper in the outhouses, filling inkwells—in short, all the small

maintenance jobs our teacher didn't have time to do. This formal meeting time was also our opportunity to discuss playground behaviors and lunchtime decorum, to plan holiday parties, or to bring up anything else that might be on our minds. Our teacher often deflected and delayed "differences of opinion" between pupils, suggesting they "should bring this up at the next club meeting" for discussion. All participated, from first grade to eighth. It was our introduction to cooperative democracy.

Since there was no one else to back her up, the buck really stopped right there. But she made us want to behave and cooperate for the good of all. She reminded us often that students before us had cared for our school and the materials in it and that we had a responsibility to those who would come after us. I've talked to many others who attended one-room schools, and they feel, as I did, that we were taught to discipline ourselves, be grateful for what we had, and be careful to preserve it for those to come. This sense of ownership that encouraged responsibility was the mainstay of a small rural community school. You might call it "longitudinal learning." You were committed for the long haul of eight years. You all knew it. That certainty, in a stable environment, encouraged mutual respect and created motivation to "learn to get along together."

Our teacher made learning both fun and a challenge. Rarely did she answer questions directly. Instead, she'd ask where we could find out for ourselves. Or perhaps she'd make a statement and then ask us to prove or disprove it. She seemed to be trying to let us in on her secret, to discover a new way, seek a smart solution, explore different ideas. Although she maintained strict discipline, she managed to find ways to let us fly on our own. While she was busy with other classes, we were encouraged to make scrapbooks depicting the subjects of our studies, write additional composition on our research, or perhaps do a page for extra credit. She made us think this was all our idea and she could hardly wait to see what we came up with! Although I'm sure I made errors and got corrected or sometimes was criticized for poor effort, what I remember is frequent praise and encouragement.

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A real opportunity for student success in this one-room situation was the physical fact that we sat within earshot of classes above and below ours. If we didn't learn something the first time, we always had a discreet chance to listen in a second, third, or fourth time. Conversely, when our seatwork was done, we could always challenge ourselves with the more advanced work going on before our eyes.

First thing every morning, after reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, we sang songs together. Mrs. Morgan taught us how to read notes, stay on pitch and harmonize. Her glossy pink fingernails on long, slender fingers effortlessly rolled out flowing chords, inspiring us all to sing. Those sturdy shoes kept us all in time! How I longed to create music like that. Then, the daily routine of the classroom began, like a steady metronome, predictable as the Regulator clock on the wall between portraits of Lincoln and Washington. We worked quietly at our desks, while each class in turn went up in front with the teacher to recite and be instructed. The rest of us concentrated on learning our lessons, either because she wanted us to, or because we didn't know what might happen at home if we didn't. Our parents respected Mrs. Morgan, and we knew it. But mostly, she made us want to. She encouraged and praised hard work. She nodded affirmation of every attempt with that smile. Oh, she scolded any shirking, and would keep us in from recess if she thought we weren't trying hard enough. Recess was the only social time there was for

isolated farm kids, so it was a real incentive. Yet even this wasn't done in a harsh, punishing way but as "a chance to talk alone together over what was the problem." She really believed and acted on "the spoonful of sugar."

Every day, several times a day, she would fill all the blackboards with lesson assignments, questions and problems for the different grades to do at their seats. Her writing was almost too perfect to erase later. Her penmanship took some of the frills out of the Spencerian style, yet added grace to the plain Palmer method. How I yearned to have her faultless, beautiful writing "hand." In my free time, I faithfully practiced penmanship in my copybook, surreptitiously copying her decorative capitals. My wooden pen, with its steel point, seemed to scratch and blot so often on the cheap, lined paper. I filled up blotters and I used handkerchiefs, laboring on one letter over and over, trying to duplicate the writing I admired every day on the blackboard. My present creative pleasure in doing illuminated calligraphy was born at that old wooden desk with its black-capped, refillable inkwell from which I dipped my letters.

Mrs. Morgan filled our little isolated school with other beauty, too, introducing us to the world of classical music and art through *The Wisconsin School of the Air*. These were radio classes, broadcast from the university at Madison, offering culture in the humanities to all the isolated, rural schoolchildren in the state. We rarely forgot the *Let's Draw* program on Tuesday. We not only learned the rudiments of color and perspective, but we also studied and tried to reproduce, with our limited crayons, the old masters of Millet, Rembrandt or Renoir. The class sparked my lifelong love affair with art and my enjoyment to this day, 60 years later, of creating with watercolors.

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On Wednesdays, Professor Gordon's *Music School of the Air* inspired us to greater heights with "Finiculi, Finicula," "Stout Hearted Men" or "The Open Road." It was fun to sing along with a real chorus. We sure sounded good together! Those broadcasts were a window to the world, opened, Pandora-like, by the magic of radio, enlarging our views beyond the classroom forever.

This master teacher had one gift that endeared her to me above all: her vast knowledge of poetry. Classes up in the front of the room might drone on predictably for hours, even days, when something would remind her of an appropriate poem; and suddenly, she'd start reciting "Little Orphan Annie," or "Hiawatha," parts of "Snowbound" or "Evangeline." All activity in the room ceased, studies stopped, pencils hovered mid-sentence. For us, the room melted away as we canoed with the Indians in Gitche Gumee, sympathized with the poor, little, hired girl who told scary stories, or cried over a lost lover dying in a faraway hospital. On and on she'd declaim, from memory, with such rich expression and deep emotion that Longfellow himself would have wept upon hearing her masterful interpretation. Her voice literally filled that little classroom, and all of us in it, with such deep poetic emotions, we were pulled by our eager ears into the realms of classic Romanticism.

Amber is what I've come to call her because I knew her as a friend and mentor when I became an adult and a teacher in training. She was truly a spellbinder, and I am still bound. I have spent a lifetime and a whole career trying to do what she did: make sense out of phonics and give the gift of reading and writing. I love that look on a child's face when s/he realizes those funny marks in a book have meaning. S/He's cracked the code!

I, too, have tried to illuminate my student's world with beauty through frequent nature walks, seeking and naming the birds and animals, hunting wild asparagus and elderberries to learn of nature's bounty. We always picked the wild grapes in September, then had several math lessons while making a large recipe of jelly for our parents at Christmas. We took in special art shows at the Art Institute in Chicago, too, and visited the other great museums there. Because my pupils had little exposure to classical music, we had a noon-hour listening program every day while we ate in silence. Their reward was a ten-minute longer lunch recess and a trip to a local orchestra's children's recital. Mine was lunch in peace, and the littlest ones had enough time to eat. Right after noon break, we always had a fifteen-minute rest-your-head-on-your-desk, while I read a book, sort of a chapter-a-day, or, like Amber, a dramatic poem. Some former students recall this as the most inspirational part of their day.

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A favorite part of our social studies program was to cook and eat foods of the countries we studied. Food, I found, reflects the unique environment of every culture and is a concrete learning tool. Once we had a "Breakfast around the World" for parents, and all were astounded at the variety of foods other children ate for breakfast. Of course, I also included a nutritional plug for a good breakfast every day.

In these ways, and many, many more, I have tried to pass on a desire to become bigger than we are, better than we know, go farther than we dream all because this was Amber Morgan's gift to me in that little one-room schoolhouse.

Rock Point School #2, Anne Arundel County, Maryland

Edwin T. Calvert
Local Historian

This paper deals with the history of a specific one-room school, Rock Point School #2 and its impact on a family, their neighbors and an area, Anne Arundel County, Maryland. Records of the school have been preserved with the hope that the school can someday be reconstructed as part of a demonstration project in connection with Hancock's Resolution. Hancock's Resolution is the name of one of our family farms with lands occupied by ancestors from the mid-18th century and containing a stone farmhouse built in 1785 by an ancestor who was a veteran of the American Revolution. The restored stone house and twelve acres of land are protected by a perpetual deed of trust to the Historic Annapolis Foundation. The trust property is currently surrounded by an additional 14 acres of Anne Arundel County Park land. A recently formed non-profit corporation, Friends of Hancock's Resolution, is currently directing the operation. Several outbuildings have been restored or reproduced at the site. A future goal is to build a replica of Rock Point School #2. Having dismantled the original building and having had the opportunity to talk with students who attended it, it seems to me that I have a duty to preserve the information, which can be used now or in the future to replicate the school building. It is hoped that the building will someday be operated as a demonstration project of an important aspect of rural American life.

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My grandmother, both parents, and older brothers were all students at the Rock Point School. My children and I are products of the Anne Arundel County public schools. During my children's schooling, I was an officer of the local Parent Teacher Association, area vice president, and liaison to the superintendent of the county schools for five local PTA's. During employment in the engineering department of a national corporation in Baltimore, I attended The Johns Hopkins University, receiving the Bachelor of Science Degree in 1966. I am currently the full-time manager of a local government unit in Pennsylvania and serve on the boards of the South Central Assembly for Effective Governance, the Adams County Transportation Planning Organization, and the Greater Hanover Chamber of Commerce. I have also served on the Board of Directors of Historic Annapolis after the property was deeded to that association, and on various other committees in York and Adams Counties. A primary hobby is ongoing genealogical research for additional details of all branches of my ancestral family. I am a member of the tenth generation of the Hancock family in Maryland, and probably the eleventh generation of the Calvert family in Maryland.

Schooling in Anne Arundel County

Early schooling in Anne Arundel County took place in part in Sabbath schools. A roll book for Magothy Church and Sabbath School, which survives in our family records, is dated 1825 and 1826, along with a later section dated 1835 and 1836. My great-grandfather is listed in the roll book for 1835. This book, in addition to names and

attendance records, includes the subjects being taught. "Reading in Testament" is listed for second, third and fourth classes. "Ciphering" is listed for third and fourth classes, and "Geography and History" is listed for fourth and fifth classes.[1] Magothy Church and Sabbath School at Watersford, Anne Arundel County, was on the Severn Circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

G. M. Hopkins designated Rock Point School as School #2 on the 1878 Map of the Third District of Anne Arundel County.[2] This one-room schoolhouse was the only source of formal education for both of my parents and two of my grandparents. The local farmers built it sometime after the middle of the 19th Century. My grandmother, Rhoda Virginia Hancock (1866-1958), attended all eight grades at Rock Point School.

The Rock Point School was constructed of the same local materials as the surrounding farmhouses. The sandy soils of the coastal plain were stable during the winter cold, and foundations consisted of native, flat sandstone placed on the surface to keep the wooden sills above ground. Sills, floor joists and vertical framing were all hewn from chestnut trees cut from the adjacent forests. Edge grain pitch pine was used for flooring, and white pine was planed and grooved to provide horizontal clapboard siding for the exterior walls. The interior walls were covered with sawed laths and plastered with lime plaster reinforced with horsehair as was customary in farmhouse construction. The rafters were rough sawed 1-¼" thick by 6" wide. Strip sheathing and cedar shingles completed the roof. Ceiling joists were placed on 2' centers, the same spacing as rafters and wall studs. The building was 20' by 20' with seven windows; three along each side and one beside the front door. A brick chimney at the center of the back gable end provided for the big pot-bellied cast-iron stove to provide heat in winter. The main entrance door was in the front gable end, and a second door was provided on one side of the chimney at the other end of the schoolhouse. Trees from the adjacent woods were cut for firewood to provide heat.

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Parents, older brothers and sometimes seventh- and eighth-grade boys in need of discipline, cut and carried the wood to fuel the stove. The teacher was responsible for building the fire in the stove each morning and operating the stove to maintain some semblance of comfort.

A Gift to Its Builder

This one-room school house, built by 1865, served the community until the turn of the century when it was replaced on the same site by a larger two-room school with small "ante-rooms" on either side of the front entrance to provide storage, a cloak room and, according to my parents, discipline for those students who tried to disturb class work in progress. The local carpenter/farmer (my grandfather) who had built the new school received the one-room school as payment. Using teams of horses, the building was moved intact on skids and log rollers approximately a mile to his farmhouse where it was set up and used as a summer kitchen for fifteen years, then as a general storage building. I remember as a youngster, along with my four brothers and two sisters, keeping our bikes, sleds and other childhood treasures in the old building.

I took the building apart in 1950 and used a portion of the lumber to build a garage. The cedar shingles on the roof had been replaced three or possibly four times. The white pine siding and window frames had never been painted. There were some traces of whitewash that was probably applied after it was converted for use as a summer kitchen.

Memories of Schooling

My grandmother told of walking the three miles to school each day and her encounters with neighbors' dogs, miscellaneous wildlife, and especially her father's bull that would come up to the fence in the pasture and snort

and paw the ground as she ran by. Many of the other farm families served by Rock Point School lived five miles or more from the schoolhouse. Family members in horse-drawn buggies transported some of the younger children and some of the older boys rode farm horses to school, but most of the children walked the distance.[3]

Two or three local parents, with approval of the county, administered this school. Teachers were hired by the county and boarded with a family near the school. Most teachers lived with a student's parents, but any family having a spare room who would accept responsibility for housing the teacher could be approved by the parents.

Later Developments

The two-room school built around 1900 was utilized until 1926 when the county consolidated Rock Point School with two other schools at Jacobsville in a new four-room building. In 1930 an addition further enlarged the building to eight rooms and included indoor plumbing for the first time. When I entered the first grade in 1932, I was the first member of our family to attend school in a building where each class had its own room. The first graduating class from Jacobsville Elementary School (5 students) included my oldest brother, Roland Calvert.

When my grandmother's family home became available for restoration in 1962, we found among the family papers and books more than seventy-five schoolbooks from the Rock Point School. There were at least five sets of McGuffy Readers for grades one through eight, arithmetic books by McGuffy, and others for various grades. There were books to teach geography, spelling, English grammar, "the mother tongue," biography, philosophy, "familiar" science, "how to keep well, and various history books including one with an appendix entitled *Our Late War With England* printed in 1816.

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These books, published from 1809 to 1919, have been deposited with the Anne Arundel Retired Teachers Association in their museum at Davidsonville in the southern part of Anne Arundel County. The restored school, converted to a museum with museum quality heating and air conditioning, is the only early school in Anne Arundel County constructed of stone. We have retained only a select few of the schoolbooks that contained signatures of my mother, grandmother, and/or other close family members.

School as Community Center

The one-room schoolhouse was much more than an educational institution. The schoolhouse was the community center as well. Holidays were celebrated at the school, particularly on weekends and during the summer months. Mother and Dad spoke of the annual May Day and Independence Day celebrations. The residents of the Rock Point Area were very proud and thankful for their America. These gatherings were some of the few times shared with families away from their individual farmsteads. The schoolhouse at Rock Point was also used for occasional Sunday services. On the Sundays when the circuit-riding minister was not available, two or three local families would gather at the schoolhouse instead of making the five- to seven-mile trip to the church. There were also prayer meetings held at the school instead of individual homes. The separation of church and state was not an issue then. All of the farm families were Methodist, Lutheran, or Presbyterian and shared a deep personal faith. The building was merely protection from the elements, a building they had built with their own hands from local materials and one they would maintain or replace as necessary. Teachers were active participants in community life joining in the local celebrations of birthdays, holidays, and attending church with the students and their parents.

Family-Teacher Cooperation

The Parents Committee supervised teachers and filed formal reports with the county once or twice each school. Teachers were hired to help the children learn. They were only asked to teach the children; the parents accepted the responsibility to further their children's education. The children were taught to respect the teacher, and the children who complained about the teacher had to describe their own behavior that made the teacher react. Parental discipline was almost always more severe than anything the teacher would adminster. Teachers corresponded with students for years after their association in school. My mother cherished wedding presents from one or two of her schoolteachers and visited with the retired elderly teachers she had known as a child. One of the best features of the one-room school was the close daily cooperation between parents and the teacher to further the children's development as individuals—with classical three "R's" education a primary (but not the only important) component of their education.

Rock Point School was the product of the local parents' investment: the building, programs, maintenance of building and grounds, and supervision of its operations. The county owned the land and provided a qualified teacher and essential supplies such as books, but the school was a truly local school controlled by the parents. I heard many times from parents, grandparents, other relatives and neighbors that the most important job in life is to be a good parent. To have children that grow up to be competent, responsible adults is the greatest achievement for any person.

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After the school was consolidated at Jacobsville, my parents continued their involvement with the school with active membership in the Parent Teacher Association. They supported the establishment of a library in the school to provide additional books and encourage children to read. They assisted the teachers with decorations and contributed homemade cookies, cakes, and candy, for special events. Several of the teachers during my attendance at school were regular attendees at church and taught Sunday school.

School Then and Now

What are some of the things that made the early schools, and particularly the one-room school such a different experience from today's schools?

- Lack of transportation: Students and parents were confined to a much smaller area and limited their exposure to a much smaller population. They understood their neighbors and their community, and realized they shared both the good and the bad of that local community.
- Lack of diversity: Almost everyone at any given school had the same interests. Craftsmen, carpenters, blacksmiths and many watermen operated small farms for their own food. Almost all these farm families were Protestants. Roman Catholics were primarily Irish or Italian immigrants and tended to live in the cities and towns rather than on nearby farms.
- Respect for elders: Parents were not looked upon as obsolete; rather they were looked to for their experience and knowledge. Parents were the industrial arts teachers, teaching their children the carpentry and blacksmith skills they would need for farming or working a trade. Children observed firsthand the processing of animals for food. Almost every household in the county kept chickens for eggs and fresh meat. Most also raised hogs for meat and lard that was the universal cooking oil of that era.
- Continuity: Most students knew they would be living in the same area for the rest of their lives. Leaving for higher education or a profession would only mean a move to Baltimore, and such changes of lifestyle were not the usual choice. The children did not expect a world different from the one in which they and their parents were living.

- Family cohesiveness: Every child understood the effort required to obtain the bare necessities of food and shelter. Families had the same driving force—survival—that required responsibility and cooperation. Supplemental food from hunting and fishing was a necessity to provide food when cash was short. Refrigeration was nonexistent on most farms until the mid-20th Century. The children knew their help was needed for the family to survive. Growing food, hunting, fishing, cooking and canning foods for winter were totally different experiences from today's visit to a supermarket to make the decision of what to pick up for dinner.
- Conservation: Paper that we assume to be available in unlimited quantities today was scarce and expensive. The blackboard and individual slates were the primary surfaces for writing daily schoolwork because both were easily cleaned and reusable. We have among family records receipts for various items on small strips of paper taken from the blank edges or bottom of an invoice or letter.[4] Most of the scrapbooks that were used for cut-and-paste by both children and adults were actually discarded account books from Baltimore businesses thirty years before. The newspaper clippings, marriage and death notices, poetry, pictures, recipes, etc., were all attached with paste made from flour and water. It is very interesting to moisten a page and lift an old clipping to find handwritten records of a ship chandler's delivery to a ship at anchor in Baltimore Harbor, including the captain's name and sometimes where the ship was bound on the next voyage.

Teachers corresponded with students for years after their association in school.

Lists of wooden barrels and casks of wheat flour, corn meal, vinegar, molasses and whiskey, along with blankets and other necessary supplies, were delivered to the ships in the early 19th century. Some of the old scrapbooks were account books from the earliest general stores in the area, providing itemized lists of the supplies sold to local families with the hope of being paid when a crop or some of their livestock was sold.[5] Most storekeepers shared both good times and bad with their neighbors because almost all of their neighbors were "as good as their word" and paid when they could.

Concluding Reflections

The affluence of today, our throwaway society, the desire to surpass our neighbors with more possessions, more technology, and the learned dependence on society rather than oneself for survival, has created an interdependent mass of humanity. Even though society continues to develop more and more rules and regulations, many adults are having extreme difficulties finding their way and selecting a meaningful track through life. With such diversity and increasing contradictions, how do we assist children to make the right choices? An old cliché, often heard in my youth, is still true today, "your most valuable asset is what you have between your ears." Our most critical challenge today is how to teach our children to think for themselves as they grow to be responsible adults. Just as important is the need to establish the routine of daily learning, a habit that must continue from cradle to grave, for that is the only true fulfillment for any human being.

[1]Roll Book of Magothy Sabbath School, 1825, 1826, 1835, 1836, Hancock Family Papers, privately owned.

[2]Rock Point School #2, shown on the 1878 map, was not listed among the schools operating in 1860. See G. M. Hopkins Map, Library of Congress, 1878, Simon Martinet Map, Library of Congress, 1860.

[3]This information is drawn from interviews with Rhoda Virginia (Hancock) Cook, 1866-1958, grandmother of author; Charles Hancock Calvert, 1881-1972, father of author; Annie Virginia (Cook) Calvert, 1890-1971, mother of author; and other relatives and friends. See also Hancock Family Bible.

[4]Letters, receipts, bills, account books, tax bills, Hancock Family Papers, privately owned.

[5]Ibid.

The Jore Schoolhouse: A Professor's Dream

Rita Seedorf, Professor
Eastern Washington University

A crowd gathered to watch the arrival of a one-room schoolhouse on the campus of Eastern Washington University on the morning of August 17, 2000. Students, professors, university employees, parents with babies in strollers and interested bystanders waited patiently as the 20' by 40' structure was inched into place. Watching most carefully of all was Dr. Charles Miller, professor in the Education Department. For Charlie Miller the presence of a one-room schoolhouse on campus fulfilled a dream he had been working on for over a decade. He had begun his teaching career in a two-room school over 50 years before and felt that the presence of a one-room schoolhouse on campus would attest to the university's origin as a normal school. Miller stated, "The historic significance of the one-room schoolhouse in building a democracy is a legacy that I had hoped to pass on to future teachers. It symbolizes our heritage of providing education for all citizens."[1]

The Search

Charlie searched the countryside for years, examining every schoolhouse he could find. Some were privately owned while time and nature had ravaged others. He located one in 1997, but it burned to the ground before the university could acquire it. He and his wife, Carolyn, resumed their Sunday drives in search of a schoolhouse. Finally, during Christmas break of 1999, he found the Jore (pronounced Jury) schoolhouse in the woods near Newport, Washington.

The historic significance of the one-room schoolhouse in building a democracy is a legacy that I had hoped to pass on to future teachers.

Time had been kind to the building located near the crossroads of Deer Valley Road and Coyote Trail. It rested on a cement slab, was covered with a metal roof, and had been well sealed for grain storage. Charlie knew that this was the right building for the campus, but he still faced obstacles like gaining title to the building and raising the money for renovation.

Charlie gained tremendous support when University President Steve Jordan became enthusiastic about the plan. Jordan had recently come from Kansas where one-room schoolhouses were plentiful. When Jordan and Mike Irish, associate vice president for facilities, arrived to look at the school, Jordan knew that it belonged on campus. He said: "We've got to get this. This is an essential part of the history of education in the Inland Northwest."[2]

Gaining title to the building was the next hurdle, complicated by the fact that the land changed hands just after Miller found the schoolhouse. However, Riley Lumber Company, which had just acquired it in a land swap, agreed to give it to the university in exchange for four football tickets to the EWU-University of Montana football game. The next challenge was financing the fifty-mile move to the campus.

The Spokane Teacher's Credit Union, excited by the prospect of the one-room school on campus, agreed to make a substantial donation of $62,000 to the project, and the one-room schoolhouse was finally on the move.[3] The fifty-mile journey began on August 15, 2000, after professional movers removed the

bell tower and rolled wheels under the school. The press covered the five-mile-an-hour move on secondary roads through the city of Spokane and on to Cheney.

A Brief History of Jore School

The Jore School was named for the family who donated the land for the building. John Olsen Jore and his wife Betsie were married in 1878 and had fourteen children. The family moved to Newport in 1890 and claimed a homestead of 160 acres.[5] Grandma Jore, as Betsie was known to early-day school children, was a tiny woman, remembered for smoking a corncob pipe.

The Jore land was covered with thick forest which John Jore cleared to make room for roads, buildings, and farming. According to the Homestead Proof document, the family established actual residency on February 1, 1891. The same document described the Jore property as holding two houses—one log house 16' by 28' and one frame house 14' by 16'. Three barns were also erected on the property, a frame barn 20' by 50' with a shed and two log barns, one 20' by 28' and the other 16' by 40'. About 15 acres were dedicated to crops, beginning with one acre the first year.

The Jore or Diamond Lake School District was formed in 1891, and the first school building was constructed in 1892. It was a shed with vertical siding and few windows. After that school burned, the present building was constructed in 1905. Known as School District #22, the school was mentioned in *The Newport Miner* from time to time; for example, when a pupil achieved perfect attendance or when the school hosted a declamation contest, which required students to give persuasive speeches.

Catherine Burley's Recollection

Catherine Burley Ritland attended the Jore School between 1917 and 1925. She was born in 1909, and in 1917 her family moved to the Newport ranch. That same year she began her schooling.[8] She was one of the legendary children who really did walk to school uphill. Her route to the school was a one-mile trek through a burned-out forest. The path went over a hill so she and her sisters climbed uphill and ran downhill. In the winter, her father plowed the path with his sled. Sometimes while walking, Catherine and her sisters would see bear tracks and coyotes.

Whenever snow was so deep that Catherine and her older sister could not walk home, they spent the night in the teacher's cottage.

While Catherine was attending the Jore School, a teacherage was built on the school grounds. Until that time, Catherine's teacher, Mrs. Mary B. Headrick, had commuted from her farm every day. Once the cottage was completed, however, Mrs. Headrick lived there during the week and returned home on the weekends. Whenever snow was so deep that Catherine and her older sister could not walk home, they spent the night in the teacher's cottage. A small horse barn was also added to the school grounds while Catherine attended the school. She remembered two families who sent their children to school on horseback. One family came a long way down the mountain in a little two-seater wagon pulled by two horses. Another family who lived to the north sent their first-grade son to school on horseback. Ivan Troyer rode as far as the Burley farm where he left his horse in the family barn. He then walked the rest of the way with Catherine, her older sister, Bernice, and her younger sister, Josephine.

The Jore School day began at 9:00 a.m. Just inside the building were two entry halls, one for coats and the other for lunches and other items. There were usually children in all eight grades and the class usually totaled ten to twelve pupils. Parents provided paper and pencils. Catherine remembered some of the older students helping the younger ones with their seatwork. A big pot-bellied heater sat inside the room, and on cold days the children would sit around it and eat their lunches.

An old piano was along the wall, but Catherine's teachers couldn't teach music so it remained unused. The school had a two-seater toilet out behind it, one side for the boys and the other for the girls. The school day ended at 3:30 or 4:00 p.m.

Catherine recalled evening programs at the school. Students would stand up and speak a piece, recite a poem, or sing a song. Afterwards, the families would share food. It was often after midnight when the Burley family started home along the cross-country path. Catherine's father would walk in front with a lantern while Catherine, her mother, and two sisters followed behind. They never met any bears along the way, but the trees left standing after a 1909 fire made a spooky whine.

Ron Geaudreau's Memories

Another student at the Jore School, Ron Geaudreau, attended during its last year of operation in 1929. He was in the third grade and his teacher was his mother, Mrs. Stella Geaudreau. She taught him for the first seven of his elementary school years. Ron was never accused of being teacher's pet because his mother was strict with him. He was the terrible example that kept the other kids in line.[9]

Of several one-room schools Ron attended, the Jore School is the only one still standing. The well that supplied the school's water stood in the middle of the playground that lay to the right side of the school. A flagpole stood on the other side. Ron remembered seeing two Jore gravesites on top of the knoll behind the school. On the left side of the school stood the teacher's cottage with a connected woodshed. The outdoor privy for the teacherage was connected to the woodshed. The four-stall horse barn was still on the grounds although, at the time, only one boy rode a horse to school. Ron and his mother lived in a two-room teacher's cottage during the week. It had basic furnishings including a bed with metal slats and a pump in the kitchen. Ron thought that having a well on the school grounds was a luxury. In the other one-room schools he attended, water was harder to come by. Because Ron was the teacher's son, he had the job of bringing water and wood into the school, for which he was paid $1.50 each month.

Ron thought that having a well on the school grounds was a luxury.

A country boy in a one-room schoolhouse needed certain essentials. Ron recalled, "Back then a little country boy who didn't have a jack knife and slingshot just wasn't properly dressed."[10] He remembered that whenever a new boy moved into a new school, he had to fight to determine his place in the hierarchy. The newcomer began by fighting the littlest kid, then one his own side. After that, he kept fighting bigger and bigger boys. Once he had established his place in the pecking order, he was left alone.

Ron remembered blackboards on the walls in the interior of the school. He also remembered that gasoline lights illuminated the school with mantles inside them. The water was poured into a barrel with a spigot and every child had a cup. Each school day began by marching outside to raise and salute the flag after which the students came back inside for singing. Each student had a songbook, and each day a different student got to choose the song. The pupils sang while the teacher played the piano and class began when the song was finished. Ron's mother didn't need to take roll formally; she could tell who was present with a quick glance around the schoolroom. Each grade level would be called up separately. A small one-room school like Jore School did not usually have a child in each grade; for instance, there might be 3 fourth graders but no one in second grade.

Ron recalled other aspects of life in Jore School:

> The teacher would ring the bell to bring the students in from the playground in the morning and after lunch. Mother was pretty smart. It was fun to ring the bell so she would let the kids take turns ringing it. Jore School was the only one-room

school I went to that had a bell tower. In the other schools, a hand bell was used.

We had a big clock in there and we wound it every day.

Chalk and books were provided. Parents were expected to provide paper and pencils. I remember that one really poor family would write real lightly on the paper and then erase it after the teacher saw it. That family had thirteen kids and usually a new one every spring. They were all healthy. We were all dirt poor but didn't know it.

Let's say I was in the first grade. I had to read and so I went up right next to the teacher's desk and I would read out loud to her and I would face her so that my back was to the other students and my voice wouldn't carry. After I read, she would give me my math problems and I would return to my seat to do them. Then another kid would come up. We knew almost to the minute when we would have to be up. If someone else was in the same grade, two or three students might come up at the same time. If I was in a group, she would stop me and someone else would take a turn reading. Then we would be called up for math. Some would write on the board and others did their work on paper.

Everyone brought their own lunch to school. Once a year we made a special lunch. Each school had a big stove with a circular shield around it and a flat top. On this special day, everyone would bring a vegetable or a piece of meat and my mother would put it in the stew pot and we would have stew for lunch. The smell of that stew cooking all morning was wonderful.

At lunch we had an hour to play ball or tag or whatever. One time we were building a log cabin next door in the woods. It wasn't big and didn't have a door or window so we had to climb into it. We usually had swings. In Lost Creek we put a big board on a stump and we could push it around in a circle and get it to swinging fast. We had beanbags and we would throw them over the school, and yell "Ollie Ollie over" and the person who caught it would run around the school and throw it at the others.

In the winter we played "fox and geese." A circle was made in the snow. The middle was the safe zone and only one person was allowed in it. The fox was chasing the geese. If you ran into the safe zone, the person in there had to leave. If the fox caught you, you became the fox.[11]

We always had Christmas programs and the parents would come and the kids all had a recitation to give and Santa Claus always came and gave us a little trinket that we valued greatly. Maybe we would get an orange.

In order to graduate, students had to pass both a seventh- and eighth-grade exam usually proctored by a school board member. The exam covered a wide range of subjects, even agriculture. Ron remembered being asked to identify pigs and horses and grains in the agricultural section of the examination.

The Jore School Today

The Jore School is looking more and more comfortable on its foundation on the campus of Eastern Washington University. It has new windows and the newly constructed bell tower has been hoisted into place. The old paint has been removed and fresh coats applied. An addition at the back houses a handicap accessible bathroom. A porch, designed by consulting old pictures of the school, has been built on the front.

Completion of the interior of the schoolhouse will begin when additional funds are raised. The original floor and some of the wainscoting is still in place and will remain part of the

refurbished schoolhouse. Because former owners had sealed the building, installed a metal roof, and set it on a cement slab, it was preserved for the 71 years between 1929, when it was last used as a school, and 2000 when it was moved to campus.

Books, desks, a school bell, and other donated items lie in storage in various buildings on the campus awaiting the completion of the interior of the schoolhouse. Donation of artifacts from the one-room schoolhouse era and money for the restoration of the schoolhouse are now coming in.

Dr. Charles Miller's dream will be complete when the building is opened to the public. A steering committee is currently making plans for the interior finishing and uses of the building, now formally named The Cheney Normal School Heritage Center.

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[1]Grayden Jones, "One Man, One School." *Perspective: A Magazine for Alumni and Friends of Eastern Washington University*. 11.4 (Fall 2000): 5-6.

[2]Jones. "One Man, One School." 6.

[3]Judy Rogers, director of development for the College of Education and Human Development, made a presentation to the marketing committee of the Spokane Teachers Credit Union in June of 2000. At the end of the presentation, she mentioned that the president of the university had approved the acquisition of the one-room schoolhouse and that the Riley Lumber Company had donated the building. The idea of financing the school building was exciting to the Board and Steve Dahlstrom, a graduate of EWU.

[4]*Cheney Free Press*, 24 August 2000; *Spokesman-Review* (Spokane, WA). 16 August 2000.

[5]Homestead proof-Testimony of Claimant. n.d. (approximately 1902). John Olsen Jore. The date is estimated from the statement that John Jore was 42 years old at the time he prove up on his homestead. He was born in 1860.

[6]Homestead proof-Testimony of Claimant.

[7]*The Newport Miner*, 2 August 2000.

[8]Information on the school years of Catherine Burley Ritland, interview with author, Spokane, Washington, 13 March 2001.

[9]Ron Geaudreau, telephone interview by author, 19 December 2000.

[10]Ron Geaudreau, telephone interview by author, 8 February 2001.

[11]Ron Geaudreau, telephone interview by author, 19 December 2000.

The Decision to Teach: The Challenges and Opportunities of a One-Room School Teacher in Turn-of-the-Century Texas

Karen Benjamin
University of Wisconsin-Madison

"Why on earth do we want to be teachers?"[1]

After a hard day at school, Nannie Dorroh routinely asked the question in her diary, and she never failed to suffer a severe headache the day before the outset of a new school term. "Uneasy lie the heads of all who rule; the most so is his whose kingdom is the school." Nannie cut this verse from a newspaper and placed it in her diary. While she agreed, she wrote that the author should add the word country before school. "No, no position's so trying as the country teacher's. Then, there's no sympathy either."[2] Even though Nannie threatened annually never to return to the profession again, she did so nine times. Why did Nannie Dorroh continue to teach for almost a decade if, as late as 1920, less than 10 percent of Texas teachers had more than four years of experience? For the most part, the rewards outnumbered the often lamentable conditions. Teaching provided Nannie a creative outlet and instilled self-reliance, confidence, and the self-satisfaction of succeeding at meaningful employment. Moreover, teaching provided a respectable means of postponing marriage until Nannie procured a husband who met her high standards.

Born in Mississippi in 1877, Nannie Dorroh and her extended family moved to the Texas hill country while she was still a young child. The land in Driftwood, Texas, was fertile enough to adequately support a generation of cotton farmers despite the falling prices in the 1890s. While growing up, Nannie enjoyed an active social life surrounded by friends and family.

Even though Nannie threatened annually never to return to the profession again, she did so nine times.

She began writing her diary in 1894 while attending high school in nearby Dripping Springs. In the fall of 1895, eighteen-year-old Nannie began her teaching career after completing only five months of secondary schooling.[3] She accepted a position co-teaching with her cousin, Mary Garison, at the Liberty Hill School in Driftwood where they both had attended grammar school for eight years.[4]

Nannie's teaching career illustrates the frequent occurrence of rural teachers changing schools almost annually. She taught in seven different schools during her nine-year career. From 1896 to 1898, Nannie spent two years teaching the primary grades at the three-room Dripping Springs School where she had briefly attended high school.[5] Since Dripping Springs was located about eight miles north of Driftwood, Nannie boarded with a familiar family in town. For the 1898-1899 school term, Nannie accepted an offer to teach at the Bluff Springs School located only a mile south of her home in Driftwood.[6] From 1899-1901, Nannie taught two terms at the Pound's Chapel School in Gatlin, about five miles west of Driftwood. She boarded with her close friends, Lucy Black's family. For the 1901-1902 school term, Nannie taught the Rock Springs School in Fitzhugh, located about six miles north of Dripping Springs.[7] Although her father's second cousin lived in

Fitzhugh, Nannie boarded with another family who lived closer to the schoolhouse. The following year her cousin Mary Garison obtained an interview for her in Duggerville about ten miles from Mary's school in Carl. Dugger School was thirty miles from Driftwood in neighboring Travis County. Since her uncle John Garison preached in Duggerville on his circuit, Nannie boarded at the home where he stayed while ministering to the community.[8] For the 1903-1904 school term, Nannie spent her final year teaching the primary grades at the three-room Leander School in Williamson County. The Dorrohs had moved to a new farm about a mile and a half south of Leander in 1902. Although the Leander School trustees asked her to return for a second term, Nannie married and willingly quit teaching for good.[9]

The high turnover rate for teachers created the additional stress of job instability. For the 1897-1898 school term, Nannie recorded the movement of her friends into each other's former positions: Mose had Lucy's school, Stuart taught Hattie's, and Jim acquired Nannie's first school.[10] Nannie appreciated teaching in the same school for two consecutive years as she did in Dripping Springs and Gatlin. Even in those two schools, however, Nannie waited as long as four months for notification that she had in fact retained her position. Nannie wrote:

> The trustees told me when school closed, to count on my same position. But I didn't know and was tired of this uncertain condition.
> Mr. Mc [with whom she boarded] would send me word every chance: "Don't be uneasy about your school," But I was getting fretted, wanted to know what I was going to do.
> So today they sent word I certainly had my same room. And now I won't have to bother and worry soon.[11]

Typically, Nannie and her friends spent the majority of each summer concerned about their employment status for the following year.

Acquiring a position required so much effort and maneuvering that Nannie and other teachers referred to the process in political terms as "lectioneering."

In fact, acquiring a position required so much effort and maneuvering that Nannie and other teachers referred to the process in political terms as "lectioneering." One key problem was the surplus of teachers: "Rogers [Odom] told Mary [Garison] & me that '*teachers*' were the commonest things yet, it's true we haven't positions."[12] Nannie herself described Driftwood as "alive with teachers." She named forty-six teachers in addition to herself who either lived or taught in northern Hays County while she herself still worked.[13] In 1898 Lucy Black depicted the process of outmaneuvering other teachers to gain employment. She wrote, "Mose [Calvert] is out lectioneering for the D.W. [Driftwood] school as Miss Annie beat him at Bear Creek."[14] The following day Lucy planned to see about the Liberty Hill School also, but rain forced her to postpone her visit with the Driftwood trustees for one more day. The following week the trustees offered her the school. Meanwhile, Mose Calvert volunteered to help Nannie obtain his old school, but the effort failed. Jim Black offered to recommend Nannie at the Wayside School, but Nannie accepted employment in Bluff Springs the following day. Although teachers often helped one another obtain work, the competition for schools not only created stress for teachers but surely strained friendships as well.

With so many kin and close friends qualified to teach, members of the Driftwood community often disagreed about who should be hired at the Liberty Hill School. Further obfuscating the process, various members of the community invited their favorites to teach whether or not they had the authority to do so.[15] Before Nannie and Mary were hired to teach Driftwood's Liberty Hill School, Nannie's father had already promised the school to Annie Wilhelm, also of Driftwood. At a Just Us Girls' (sic.)

(J.U.G.) club meeting, Annie angrily confronted the young women about the misunderstanding. After her "tongue lashing" Nannie charged, "such from a lady—I never heard" but seemed most shaken by Annie's criticism of her father.[16] In 1902, another conflict ensued over who would teach Driftwood's school. Nannie expressed relief when the disputants, including her father, finally agreed upon an outsider, Frank Nevins.[17] In December of that year the Dorrohs moved to Leander. The following spring Albert Odom and Nannie's sister, Kate Hall, each wrote to inform Nannie that she would be offered the Liberty Hill School for the 1903-1904 term, but Nannie recalled the previous infighting when she reluctantly declined the offer.[18] "[I] am so afraid it wouldn't be satisfactory with all, so I guess I'll just say no."[19] Although Nannie longed to live in Driftwood again, she thought it best to avoid returning under strained circumstances.

In addition to the conflicts among trustees or residents of a community, a dispute with the family where a teacher boarded might ruin the year. Sometimes host families tried to take advantage of young teachers. For example, in Leander a Mrs. Stewart invited Nannie to board with her so Nannie could tutor her son at night without remuneration.[20] Understandably, Nannie graciously declined. She avoided problems with safety and propriety by exclusively boarding with family friends and acquaintances, but she frequently felt homesick for her extensive social network in Driftwood. She greatly preferred living at home and often thought she would feel less ambivalent about teaching if she could do so.[21] At the first five places she boarded, Nannie lived close enough to Driftwood to return each weekend unless inclement weather, illness, or end-of-the-year school preparations prevented her. When circumstances kept her away, someone usually visited her. Nannie cherished her correspondence with home and complained of having "the blues" whenever plans fell through.

In the larger schools she had sympathetic colleagues with whom to vent frustrations and share responsibility if a problem arose.

Working in a two- or three-room schoolhouse seemed to lessen Nannie's loneliness. In the larger schools she had sympathetic colleagues with whom to vent frustrations and share responsibility if a problem arose. After she and Lucy Black stayed up late one night relating school troubles Nannie acknowledged, "it's some relief to confide in another."[22] Moreover, Nannie appreciated transferring some of the burdens of running a school to the principal. In Dripping Springs and Leander, she eagerly shifted the responsibility of handling incorrigible discipline cases to the principal after having no one else to turn to for help in the one-room schools. Most of all, Nannie simply liked having another adult in the building because she often felt threatened by the isolation of the one-room school. Because the Pounds Chapel School in Gatlin had no homes or other buildings in sight, Nannie panicked when two drunk "scalawag boys" kept harassing her. She even wrote to the county superintendent for assistance. Although her trustees eliminated the trouble by threatening the boys with arrest, she still felt frightened.[23] In fact, Nannie preferred working as an assistant in a larger school even though she made about ten dollars less per month.[24] Nannie was more than willing to sacrifice income to gain more peace of mind.

Adding to the isolation of the one-room schoolhouse, rural trustees rarely provided teachers with any supervision. One trustee usually stopped by on the first day of school and then another might visit once during the year. Nannie described Mr. Roberts as "a splendid trustee" after he visited her class one day.[25] In 1896 Judge Ed R. Kone became county superintendent of Hays County and remained in the office throughout Nannie's teaching career. Occasionally Judge Kone visited Nannie's school and gave the children a motivational talk.[26] Weighing his responsibil-

ity for the entire county, Kone stopped by the rural schools more consistently than the local trustees. His elected office held more prestige and power than that of rural trustee so he worked harder for reelection. According to Nannie, the local trustees seemed to regard their responsibilities as an unwanted burden. The trustees cared more for the immediate welfare of their farms than ensuring that the school had everything it needed.

An experience Nannie described in Leander demonstrated how the Progressive Era campaign for increased supervision could protect teachers. A parent complained because the Leander School required children who were absent to bring excuse notes when they returned to school even though Texas had no compulsory attendance law.[27] Despite the fact that he lacked any concrete legal standing, the principal, Mr. Owen, refused to budge on the issue causing the parent to take his grievance to the local school trustees. The parent sought an injunction to prevent the teachers from enforcing the new rule and threatened to sue the trustees for damages. Nannie worried that the teachers' pay would be withheld. After the trustees defended the teachers, the parent brought the dispute before the county superintendent of Williamson County, but Superintendent Hamilton also supported the school. An editorial in the Leander newspaper complained that the rule requiring a written excuse deprived students "of their inalienable rights to free schooling." Nannie lamented, "such a little matter and Oh! such an ado."[28] Finally, the parent conveyed his objection to State Superintendent Arthur LeFevre. LeFevre concluded that the school made a reasonable request and it was a request of good schools.[29] Without such a hierarchy of authority, Nannie—and the other teachers—would have been left to the mercy of local politics and some impetuous parents.

The large number of German and Mexican immigrants prompted the restriction of teaching school in languages other than English.

Nannie gained greater peace of mind at a larger school by sacrificing income and control, but the greater job security and better working conditions promised by increased state supervision required teachers to assume additional responsibilities and obligations. Even though Nannie gladly accepted the give and take at larger schools, she complained vehemently about almost all of the Texas state mandates. As of 1893 the official duties for Texas teachers were to use the English language when teaching, make a monthly report to hand in to the district trustees before receiving each monthly pay voucher, submit under oath an end-of-term report to the county superintendent, and attend summer normals and county institutes. In 1899 the Texas legislature added the duty of maintaining a daily register.[30] Since Nannie spoke only English, she wholeheartedly supported the first mandate. Texas had a unique situation compared with other southern states because it had more foreign immigrants. The large number of German and Mexican immigrants prompted the restriction of teaching school in languages other than English. In Duggerville Nannie complained of instructing German students who spoke English as a second language. She wrote that her "little Dutch Polly & Albert" had not yet mastered English and protested that she "didn't make a contract for anything of this sort."[31] In southern Hays County, Mexican-American students attended segregated schools; but in northern Hays County, the smaller number of Chicano children was simply excluded from the White rural schools.[32]

As for the other state regulations, Nannie saw almost no benefit for herself. She described the monthly and end-of-term reports as what she "hated to do" most, but she received no paycheck until she finished the paperwork and swore to its accuracy before her trustees.[33] At the end of each term, the law required that teachers swear before the county superintendent. But despite the gravity of the

oaths, teachers regularly made mistakes, and Nannie claimed that it would take a lawyer to keep the school reports straight. For example, Garrett Black asked Nannie to help him figure out his monthly report after his calculations left him with 5-1/5 boys and 3-17/20 girls. During one particularly troubling report, the principal at Dripping Springs told Nannie, "Oh just guess at them & send them on any way," but inaccurate numbers made it difficult for county and state superintendents to measure progress in rural schools.[34] Nannie dreaded swearing falsely before the county judge at the end of each term, so she worked diligently to fill the reports out correctly.

Second only to school reports, Nannie resented traveling to county institutes. Teachers had a genuine complaint about the institutes because they paid all of their own expenses. While Nannie gladly accepted lower wages to gain security at a larger school, she did not necessarily view the expenses incurred in traveling to teacher institutes as a fair exchange for state protection. Neither did she believe the training to be immensely useful. Nannie saved the program for a teacher's institute in Leander planned for 12 December 1903. County Superintendent Hamilton presided over the meeting, and local educators presented lectures such as "Relations of the Teacher and the Trustees," "Sisk's Grammar as a Text," "Fractions: Methods for Beginners," and "Aids and Devices in Primary Grades." The program listed Nannie as scheduled to present "Development of the Number Idea," but either the institute was canceled or Nannie coaxed her way out of participation because she spent December twelfth shopping in Austin.[35]

While Nannie gladly accepted lower wages to gain security at a larger school, she did not necessarily view the expenses incurred in traveling to teacher institutes as a fair exchange for state protection.

While teaching in Dripping Springs, Nannie decided to go home to Driftwood rather than attend the San Marcos Institute. She justified herself by writing in her diary, "Mr. Richard & Mr. Stubbs went, they'll put in our excuse, I don't think they'll fine us, for what's the use. To be forced to attend is not a bit of fun.[36] Nannie's prediction proved true; she received neither fine nor reprimand.

But no matter how much training a teacher received, it mattered little in managing the hectic schedules of one-room schools. A teacher was responsible for eight grades, each of which had seven subjects; she taught up to fifty-six, five-or ten-minute classes a day. In Gatlin Nannie recorded, "have them now from 1st reader to Algebra & Philosophy."[37] Curiously, Nannie appeared to be teaching a subject she was not yet qualified to teach since only teachers with first-grade certificates took the algebra exam for certification, and at the time, Nannie had only a second-grade certificate.[38] Pondering her heavy workload she fantasized, "How I'd like to teach just one branch, shall surely do so if ever I have the chance."[39] In Fitzhugh she shouldered extra work as well. Her trustees "were not satisfied with common school branches, but wanted rhetoric." Nannie complained, "I had just all I could do I thought."[40] Nannie and her students frequently worked past the usual four o'clock dismissal time. In Gatlin she wrote, "getting pokey, can't get thru—nearly five when I dismiss school."[41] In Fitzhugh and Duggerville, Nannie opened school a half-hour early to try and catch up but met with little success. Although school officially began at eight, students trickled in until nine. Since Texas had not yet mandated compulsory attendance, Nannie could think of no way to discourage tardiness. The widespread belief that school began sometime after eight further impeded Nannie's attempt to rush through the day and still do an adequate job. She anguished, "I was behind time all day-- an hour most." Nannie often panicked when she failed to complete all

the subjects. "If I can't quicken my pace, don't know what I'll do."[42] Frequently, Nannie's school fell so far behind schedule that she held some of her classes during recess and lunch.

Further exacerbating the hectic schedule, the chronic problem of poor attendance left Nannie constantly assigning make-up work and trying to determine where each student was in the curriculum. Most families determined their own school term rather than adhering to the official one. When cotton-picking season lasted into the winter, students helped with the harvest. During the 1902-1903 school year, attendance for children statewide dropped by almost 18 percent because high cotton prices forced children to work in the fields. Nannie often wished cotton-picking season would end "then perhaps they can all come."[43] While teaching in Gatlin, Nannie wrote "hurray for me today" when finally, a month into school, she had a full class. On most days she described her school as a "little single handful."[44] In some cases, new pupils continued to enroll with only two weeks left before school closed.[45]

Nannie could never establish a routine for long. If the one-room schools had not promoted self-paced education, grading student achievement would have been hopeless. In the rural school, an older pupil who worked on the family farm might finish a grade by attending school for a month each year for three years. Given such conditions, Nannie found that filling out her monthly and end-of-term reports was a nightmare.

Teaching enabled her to demonstrate her intelligence, experience success, and make her life feel more meaningful.

Nannie's work often continued when she returned home after an exhausting day at school, especially as the close of school drew near and she began preparations for the end-of-term entertainment. For the Dripping Springs production, Nannie began choosing pieces two-and-a-half months before the end of school. She described the daily quest for gender-differentiated, age-appropriate recitations as "right vexatious" and complained of reading until her eyes hurt. Once she located a sufficient number of appropriate passages, she copied pages by hand for each student. One night alone she wrote seventy-five copies.[46] The plays, songs, and recitations required practice at recess, lunch, and in the evenings. Nannie groaned that practice was even worse than school, and she always predicted that the entertainment would prove a disaster. After one practice she complained, "one more such and surely we'd be insane."[47] In the end, however, the entertainments always came out "so much better than while getting it up."[48] The students cleaned and decorated the house by "bumming nearly everyone in town" for flowers and other props, and a few students provided the violin and piano accompaniment. Regardless of the chaotic preparations, Nannie always relished the actual night of the entertainment.[49]

In addition to the academic workload, Nannie also had the difficult task of maintaining discipline. The threat of rebellion always existed; the isolated one-room schools made mutiny a tempting and fairly easy accomplishment. In extreme instances, an adolescent became violent. A student at Nannie's former school in Bluff Springs stabbed a male teacher after receiving a harsh punishment.[50] Nannie never experienced excessive trouble herself, but she did have to assert her authority at almost every one of her schools. In Gatlin she wrote:

> Some said that part would
> scheme around & not recite,
> But I proved up my authority
> this time. . .
> This shows that I have the
> school under control.
> There's a bit of contrariness
> existing I'll admit,
> But I think I'll straighten all
> this.[51]

She even expelled one adolescent girl for refusing to do recitations. When another girl refused to take part in Washington's birthday exercises, Nannie "plainly laid

the law down" and the girl recited.[52]

Some nights Nannie worried about particularly troublesome discipline problems and received little rest until she effectively resolved the situation. Nannie used a switch to whip naughty children, placed offenders facing the wall, separated talkative seat mates, made disruptive boys stand near the girls, and commonly kept disobedient or lazy students in at recess. She sent students outside to choose their own switches, and in one case she ordered switches through a local merchant. She triumphantly wrote that her "naughty elves" calmed down once they viewed her new purchases.[53] An effective lecture was often a more productive discipline technique than corporal punishment. Only once did Nannie go "on the war path" and apply the switch three times in one week, but many teachers did rely heavily on corporal punishment.[54] Nineteenth-century education theories advocated hiring women as teachers because they supposedly nurtured students rather than always resorting to coercion.[55] Perhaps Nannie endeavored to conform to the stereotype of women teachers, but regardless of the implicit sexism, the softer techniques seemed effective. Although Nannie constantly worried about discipline, it appears she maintained sufficient control over her classes.

But despite the daily classroom stresses, Nannie believed "the worst job of the day was going."[56] She dreaded walking to school in the rural areas because she feared running into snakes, "mad dogs," and strange men, especially on misty days."[57] On one occasion she became "terribly wrought up" over a couple of *"scuzy"* boys she encountered on her way to Pounds Chapel School in Gatlin.[58] Nannie's blatant racism added to her often irrational fears—particularly in Duggerville where African Americans and Mexican Americans made up a larger percentage of the population.

The threat of rebellion always existed; the isolated one-room schools made mutiny a tempting and final easy accomplishment.

While walking to church or an entertainment, Nannie always traveled with a beau or a group of friends. Walking or riding a horse to school was the only time she had to travel completely alone, and she had to summon the courage to do so.

In addition to Nannie's active imagination, tangible difficulties such as muddy roads, swift creeks, wind, rain, and sleet made the walk to school a precarious one. Without radios or even telephones, Nannie could not inform her students when she canceled school. She often risked formidable weather conditions just in case a small pupil came to school and was stranded alone outside. Once during a hard rain, Nannie arrived at school to find one young student there all by herself—no other students appeared for another hour.[59] During cold and wet weather, Nannie described the Pound's Chapel School as a regular washroom with all the aprons spread around to dry. Almost every time it rained, the Gatlin Creek swelled so that Nannie and her pupils would "almost need a little canoe to cross."[60] Eventually the Gatlin community constructed a bridge so that Nannie and her students would no longer need to search up and down the creek to find for a safe place to cross.[61] When the creek rose in Duggerville, Nannie joked about having cavalry but no infantry at school because only the students on horseback could safely cross. Duggerville also had a number of mud holes, and Nannie wrote that she no longer needed a dictionary to fully comprehend the meaning of mud: "gluey, nasty, and stickey is not near enough [sic]."[62]

Nannie complained of exhaustion after walking to and from school and claimed that the wind made her feel as though she weighed two hundred pounds. Out of curiosity, she weighed most of her wraps one day, and the scale read eleven pounds. She guessed the total would have reached fifteen pounds if she had weighed them when still wet. As early as February, the afternoon temperature in central Texas

could be "hot enough to melt" making for an uncomfortable walk home in a corset and winter dress. Spring's "changeable weather" meant cold mornings, hot afternoons, and unpredictable thunderstorms. Nannie dressed for wintry mornings and possible showers then had to "wag" all her wraps home in the warm afternoon.[63]

The weather remained a problem once Nannie and her students arrived safely at school because the schoolhouse provided little relief from the heat or cold. On spring-like days Nannie opened the door and windows wide, but unfortunately, nice days did not last. She often confronted the problem of whether to open the windows to ventilate the school or keep them closed to preserve heat. A small, wood-burning stove provided the only warmth for the entire classroom. Often the ventilation was so poor that the stove smoked out the room or an adjoining class. In Fitzhugh the wind actually carried away the stove pipe. After listening to students complain about the cold, Nannie decided to build a fire in the stove anyway.[64] The ventilation at the Dripping Springs School was so inadequate that even when the "poor little children were so wet and cold," Nannie could build no fire at all without smoking out the other two rooms. In Leander the stove tipped over during class, and the entire three-room school had to dismiss early.[65]

Although providing fuel for the stove was the responsibility of the trustees, Nannie frequently sent her students outside to chop wood. If no one volunteered, Nannie "wrapped up" and collected the wood herself. Sometimes she dispatched one of her pupils to borrow a match so she could light the fire.[66] In 1901 the Fitzhugh trustees waited until November before putting up the stove, making repairs to the house, and hauling in wood. Nannie furiously chastised them since a cold front had arrived the week before.[67]

Because the poorly constructed schoolhouses created a thin barrier between nature and the classroom, Nannie competed for space with squirrels, mice, snakes, lizards, wasps, and mosquitoes.

While Texas weather might not turn cold until late October or November, Nannie felt the school should be prepared. When the Duggerville trustees failed to put up the stove until late November, the children were forced to build fires outside, huddle around the heat, and wait until Nannie called in their class to recite.[68] Nannie also had few resources to provide relief from the heat. Early one February she complained that it had already become too hot to study. As the weather warmed up, she used the wood to prop up the windows rather than as fuel for the stove.[69]

Although the job of trustee also included upkeep of the schoolhouse, routine construction jobs often devolved to Nannie. She hung up the blackboards in the Liberty Hill School and kept them painted. She replaced the windows in the Dripping Springs School "bottom upwards" but decided they were "bound to stay."[70] The following school term she tried to keep out the draft by nailing boards over cracks in the walls. She held up a young boy by his feet to nail boards where she herself could not reach. Nannie patched the windows in the Pounds Chapel School by using pieces from the blackboard, and in Duggerville she constructed a bench for new pupils after she ran out of desks. She described her work as a "poor job," but the students had to sit someplace.[71] In fact, the one direct censure Nannie wrote in her diary about Texas rural education criticized the condition of the schoolhouses. While teaching in Gatlin she wrote:

> We patched up our windows today with "pasteboard,"
> Such school houses as Tex. does afford!
> It's a shame and disgrace to the state,
> They ought to be comfortable at any rate.[72]

Nannie considered moving her classes outside when the wind seemed strong enough to blow down the old walls of the Rock

Springs schoolhouse. She joked that she would be forced to teach under a tree if the winds kept up. Because the poorly constructed schoolhouses created a thin barrier between nature and the classroom, Nannie competed for space with squirrels, mice, snakes, lizards, wasps, and mosquitoes. In Fitzhugh she groaned that the squirrels had taken possession. At one point students counted five squirrels on the ceiling at once. Nannie also complained of a mouse that visited the school every afternoon writing "[I] can't stand for it to come near me."[73] Because mice and other creatures played havoc with her discipline, Nannie relied on the larger boys to "murder" the pests.[74]

The uncomfortable conditions and poverty Nannie witnessed probably fueled her desire to postpone marriage until she and her spouse could afford a clean, comfortable, well-maintained house. In Driftwood her family had a spring-fed well near their home, in Leander their house had waterworks with two hydrants, but at most of her schools Nannie and her students drank from a bucket of stagnant water. In Fitzhugh Nannie expressed her disgust when she found two dead mice in the school's water bucket even though the fatalities failed to diminish some of her students' thirst.[75] Even worse, Nannie was appalled that the children in Duggerville actually drank from a mud hole. After a good rain shower, Nannie described the water and mud mixture that provided their water supply as "soup."[76] At a few of her schools Nannie witnessed a poverty rarely seen among her close friends and family. On occasion she noted with surprise that all of her pupils came to school despite the freezing temperatures and the bare feet. She promised herself that her own family would never go barefoot or be deprived of any of the finer things in life.[77]

Her diary largely contradicts the assumption that White women were forced to quit teaching when they married.

Nannie's material ambitions required patience before committing to matrimony. Unfortunately, her parents viewed the domestic labor of six unmarried daughters as unessential to the family economy, and so Nannie felt pressure to marry earlier than her brothers did. Teaching afforded her the financial means to postpone marriage while remaining close to her friends and family. The few other options available to her would have required that she board at a distant college or move to an urban area. Nannie preferred teaching close to home: she spent two-thirds of her career at a school within eight miles of Driftwood. But, because she had few options, teaching often felt more like a trap than an opportunity, and the burdens placed on rural teachers tended to drive her out of the profession. Nannie complained, "So trying on the nerves, it'll ruin anybody—Don't see how I've stood it nine years, hardly."[78] The fact that she continued to teach despite the undesirable working conditions demonstrates her determination to choose wisely in marriage. She wrote, "We're tired of teaching, that's a fact, and anxiously awaiting a good chance. Yes, it has to be good—the very best."[79]

Nannie certainly did not postpone marriage to extend a beloved career. Her diary largely contradicts the assumption that White women were forced to quit teaching when they married. Education reformers repeatedly expressed the view that since married women had to divide their attention between keeping house and teaching school, they would fail to do an adequate job at either task.[80] Nevertheless, Nannie's friends and relatives refuted the idea that communities would not hire a married teacher. Nannie taught with a husband and wife in Leander, and her cousin in South Carolina continued to teach after marriage.

For Nannie, the more oppressive situation was not being forced to quit, but being forced to endure the classroom whether she wanted to or not. Nannie's parents and the other members of her community expected her to continue teaching and earning an income until she married.

If I were to quit teaching,
people'd have fits,
Seem to think we have to
marry when we quit.
I'll show them a thing or two
some day.
Will rest or teach, as I like,
have things my way.[81]

In fact, the greatest motivation for Nannie to marry was the desire to quit teaching. "Teachers have so much to aggravate," Nannie confided to a friend, that she could not "blame them for marrying to quit."[82]

Nannie could imagine little worse than combining housekeeping with teaching. She expressed horror when she learned that her cousin, Bessie Dorroh, continued to teach after marriage.[83] When boarding, Nannie escaped the burden of heavy, domestic labor. After returning home at the end of one school term, Nannie complained "such a washing, starching, sprinkling this child has done. The first I've done in six months...I'm so tired that I can hardly move."[84] Once she married, however, she would no longer board for half the year and would lose the benefit of having her sisters and mother share the onus of domestic work. Nannie realized that continuing to teach after marriage would more than double her responsibilities. While she never once referred to a community's reluctance to hire a married teacher, Nannie made clear her assumption that any sane woman would quit teaching upon marriage because doing both required too much sacrifice.

Despite Nannie's frequent complaints, teaching allowed her to define herself before she married. She gained a creative outlet and an opportunity to prove her competence at a wide range of tasks from disciplining children to carpentry. Teaching enabled her to demonstrate her intelligence, experience success, and make her life feel more meaningful. She sometimes acknowledged her value as a teacher, "[there is] nothing more important than training Texas youths, preparing them for many vocations in life."[85]

Most families determined their own school term rather than adhering to the official one.

In addition, teaching gave her more self-reliance as she conquered her fears of walking alone to school and engaged in creative problem solving to contend with the wide variety of minor catastrophes each school day.

Most importantly, however, teaching provided Nannie with financial autonomy.[86] By the time she married, she had accumulated enough wealth to make a substantial contribution to her marital alliance far and above the traditional quilts and other pieces of a trousseau.[87] Nannie wanted to avoid marrying someone who would squander away her hard-earned money. In fact, with every year she taught, Nannie gained more of a vested interest in protecting her property. By the time she retired, she had saved and invested $700—almost 40 percent of her gross earnings. During her career, Nannie loaned out money with her brother-in-law and invested in cattle and chickens.[88] In addition, she purchased forty-five acres of her father's best land in Driftwood.[89] When she married Albert, Nannie had created quite a substantial nest egg to add to his farm. She built up financial wealth not necessarily for her own independence, but for comfortable dependence. Because of that fact, she wanted to marry someone who would manage their estate responsibly. Nevertheless, she still refused to rely completely on another individual. Nannie believed that by contributing property that she herself had earned, she would not have to grovel for pocket change. Teaching allowed her to contribute her own wealth and thereby gain more empowerment in her marriage. In countless ways, Nannie's diverse experiences while teaching rewarded her for the rest of her life.

[1]Nannie Dorroh Odom diary, Alyne Gray Collection, Southwest Collection, Texas Tech University Library, Lubbock, Texas, 23 January 1903.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Nannie's nineteenth birthday was 21 October 1895.

[4]Dudley R. Dobie, *A Brief History of Hays County and San Marcos, Texas* (San Marcos: privately printed, 1948), 60; Frances Stoval, et.al. *Clear Springs and Limestone Ledges: A History of San Marcos and Hays County from the Texas Sesquicentenniel* (Austin Eakin Publications, 1986), 335. Liberty Hill was the original settlement by Onion Creek at present-day Driftwood. In 1885 when the community became large enough to add a post office, the leaders of the community changed the name to Driftwood since another community in Williamson County, northeast of Austin, was called Liberty Hill.

[5]Dorroh diary, 2 February, 24 May, 2, 19 July, 16 September 1897. Stoval, *Clear Springs*, 435-437, 478; handwritten Hays County Superintendent's School Records, Hays Courthouse, San Marcos, Texas, 1893-1897.

[6]Dorroh diary, 3, 29 October 1898.

[7]Henry Poellnitz Johnston, *Pioneers in Their Own Rights* (Birmingham: Featon Press, 1964), 277. Henry Dorroh was D. L. Dorroh's second cousin.

[8]Dorroh diary, 5, 6, 10 June, 2 November 1902.

[9]Ibid., November 1903; 7 April 1904.

[10]Ibid., 11 January 1898. Mose Cavett was a pupil at Dripping Springs while Nannie taught there. Hattie Martin was Nannie's aunt, although they were the same age. Stuart Stone was an acquaintance of Nannie's. Jim Black was Lucy's brother and a beau of Nannie's.

[11]Ibid., 2 July 1897.

[12]Ibid., 12 June 1898.

[13]Ibid., 23 April 1902. This is a conservative count. I only added those teachers she referred to by name which she connected to northern Hays County. She of course met many other teachers at institutes, normals, while traveling and when she lived in Caldwell and Williamson counties. While visiting relatives in Mississippi, Nannie noted, "Teachers here are like they are at home, on all sides" (13 May 1899).

[14]Lucy Black diary, Nola Harding Collection, Harding Foundation, Raymondville, Texas, 5, 6, 7, 14 June 1898. The third trustee was most likely Nannie's father.

[15]Dorroh diary, 4 April 1897; Black diary, 1 June 1898.

[16]Dorroh diary, 13 July 1895. J.U.G. Club refers to the "Just Us Girls" club, popular throughout Texas at the turn of the century. Pricilla Thompson, "Just Us Girls' started library in 1900," *Amarillo Sunday New-Globe*, 23 August 1987.

[17]Dorroh diary, 4 July 1902.

[18]Ibid., 30 March 1903.

[19]Ibid., 11, 28 May 1903. Albert Odom married Nannie in 1904. Kate Dorroh Hall was Nannie's older sister who remained in Driftwood after the family moved.

[20]Ibid., 6 September 1897, 19 October 1903.

[21]Ibid., 29 January, 7 November 1901; 3 March, 5 April 1903.

[22]Ibid., 23 November 1898.

[23]Ibid., 2 March 1901.

[24]Ibid., 9 March 1901. In Dripping Springs, the male principal earned $65.00 a month, the first assistant made $35.00, and Nannie received only $30.00 a month.

[25]Thad Sitton and Milam C. Rowold, *Ringing the Children In: Texas Country Schools* (College Station, Texas, A&M University Press, 1987), 178; Dorroh diary, 27 March, 29, 30 April, 30 September 1901.

[26]Newspaper clippings, Nola Harding Collection, Harding Foundation, Raymondville, Texas.
Dorroh diary, 28 October 1898; 13 January 1899; 4 April, 26 November 1901; 29 March 1904.

[27]W. F. Doughty, *Compulsory School Attendance*, Department of Education, State of Texas, Bulletin 53, 1 July 1916. Texas would not legislate a compulsory attendance law until 1911.

[28]Dorroh diary, 4, 7, 8 February 1904.

[29]Clipping from Leander paper, inserted in Dorroh diary, 20 February 1904.

[30]J. M. Carlisle, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Digest of the School Laws of Texas* (Austin: Ben C. Jones & Co., State Printers, 1893), 25; J. S. Kendall, *School Laws of Texas, 1899* (Austin: Von Boeckmann, Moore & Schutze, State Printers, 1899), 34-35.

[31]Paul Cubberly, *Rural Life and Education* (1914; reprint, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922), 57; Dorroh diary, 18 November 1902. "Dutch" was a common mispronunciation of German "*Deutsch*."

[32]Hays County Superintendent records.

[33]Dorroh diary, 17 November 1897.

[34]Ibid., 8 April, 27 October 1899; 27 January, 23 February 1900; 27 May 1902.

[35]Ibid., 12 December 1903.

[36]Ibid., 23 October 1897.

[37]Ibid., 24 October 1899.

[38]Ibid., 2, 16 January 1900; 5, 20 February 1900. Nannie taught algebra, a high school course, to Minnie Black. Minnie may have wanted to take algebra to prepare for certification, but even though all three of her brothers and sisters taught, Minnie never took the examination.

[39]Ibid., 19 January 1900.

[40]Ibid., 14 October 1901.

[41]Ibid., 29 Janaury 1901.

[42]Ibid., 26 January 1900; 29 January, 20 February, 12, 13, 15, 25, 26 November, 16, 18, 20 December 1901; 6 January 1902; 17, 24 February 1903.

[43]Arthur LeFevre, *Public Education in Texas*, Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1 September 1903, 10; Dorroh diary, 2 December 1901; 18 December 1902.

[44]Dorroh diary, 6 November, 23 October 1899.

[45]Ibid., 1 March 1900.

[46]Dorroh diary, 26 January 1898; 13 December 1899; 22 January, 11, 12, 15 April, 29 October 1901; 3 February 1903.

[47]Ibid., 4 April 1904.

[48]Ibid., 29, 30 March, 7, 8, 12 April 1904.

[49]Ibid., 20 December 1901; 7, 8 April 1904.

[50]Driftwood Dots, 12 November 1901, inserted in Dorroh diary; Wayne E. Fuller, *The Old Country School: The Study of Rural Education in the Middle West* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 209.

[51]Dorroh diary, 28 January 1901.

[52]Ibid., 30 January, 20, 28 February, 26 March, 19 April, 2, 11 December 1901; 19 February 1902.

[53]Ibid., 28 February, 11 March 1901; 23 January, 9, 10 December 1903.

[54]Ibid., 30 November 1899; 19 April 1901; 26 February 1902; 29 January 1903.

[55]Fuller. *The Old Country School*, 161; Donald Warren, ed., *American Teachers: Histories of a Profession at Work* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1898), 315; Redding S. Sugg, Jr., *Motherteacher: The Feminization of American Education* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 103-105.

[56]Dorroh diary, 14 December 1899; 8, 25 February 1901.

[57]Ibid., 16 December 1898; 6 February, 2, 3 May 1901; 15 May 1903.

[58]Ibid., 25 October 1899; 9 December 1902.

[59]Ibid., 2 May 1901; 14 January, 4 November 1902.

[60]Ibid., 27 October 1899; 11 February, 11 October 1901.

[61]Ibid., 5, 12 January, 11 April 1900.

[62]Ibid., 14, 19 January, 11 March 1903.

[63]Ibid., 19 February 1897, 8, 19 March 1901; 12 December 1902.

[64]Ibid., 18, 19 February 1901; 5, 6 March 1902.

[65]Ibid., 26 October, 8 November 1897; January 1904.

[66]Ibid., 14 December 1899; 7 March 1901; 3 February 1902; 2 January 1903.

[67]Ibid., 11 November 1901.

[68]Ibid., 17 November 1902.

[69]Ibid., 12 February, 27 March 1902.

[70]Ibid., 10, 13, 30 December 1895; 1 March 1897.

[71]Ibid., 1 November 1897; 14 December 1899; 6 January 1903.

[72]Ibid., 30 January 1900. C. E. Evans, *The Story of Texas Schools* (Austin: The Steck Company, 1955), 111. In 1890 State Superintendent Oscar H. Cooper valued school buildings in urban areas at $33 per capita, but only $3 per capita in rural areas.

[73]Dorroh diary, 11 December 1900, 22 April, 3 October 1901; 27 February, 4, 19 March 1902; 29 February, 31 March 1904.

[74]Ibid., 3 October 1901. Even though she lived in a rural community, Nannie remained uncomfortable with small animals. Once she mentioned that a lizard created excitement at prayer meeting. On another occasion, a snake under the arbor scattered everyone during a sermon. Dorroh diary, 20 June 1897.

[75]Ibid., 22 January 1902.

[76]Ibid., 27 November 1902.

[77]Ibid., 7 March 1901; 19 November 1903.

[78]Ibid., 11 April 1904.

[79]Ibid., 28 February 1904.

[80]John E. Carrico, "A Study of the Employment of Married Women as Teachers in the Public Schools," master's thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1933; Hoy Chaddick, "The Problem of the Married Woman Teacher in the Public Schools," Master's thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1939.

[81]Dorroh diary, 6 April 1902.

[82]Ibid., 8 January 1900.

[83]Ibid., 13 November 1900.

[84]Ibid., 24 March 1897.

[85]Ibid., 21 March 1901.

[86]Ibid., 26 February 1901.

[87]Nannie rightly complained about her meager pay. According to her diary, she earned only $1800 gross pay for all nine years of her career. Dorroh diary, 16 April 1904. During the 1895-96 school term, Nannie's first year to teach, the average yearly salary for a White female teacher in Texas was $241.43. This average rose to $266.82 by the 1902-3 school year. In 1902, a White male teacher received $261.31, and a Black female teacher only earned $207.92. Arthur LeFevre, *Public Education in Texas*, Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1 September 10903, 11.

[88]Dorroh diary, 17 November 1899; 1, 25 May, 6, 18 September, 3, 27 October 1900. In 1900 her father and brother-in-law purchased and branded eight cows and calves for her that she claimed cost about one hundred dollars. The new cows raised her total herd to twenty-five head. Once while she was away teaching, Nannie's father informed her that three of her cows and a calf died. Nannie cried when she heard the news of her financial loss.

[89]Hays County Deed Records, Hays County Courthouse, San Marcos, Texas, D. L. Dorroh and Nannie Dorroh, 1904.

"Banida is Dying!" A Conversation about a One-Teacher School Community

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Just off State Highway 91 in southeastern Idaho, the arrow on a small, green road sign points to a cluster of homes surrounded by open fields, farm equipment, and memories. At the center of this neighborhood, where a church once stood, a field of grass with swing-sets and a pavilion serves as a faint reminder of regular gatherings to worship, learn, and socialize. In time, consolidation of schools and religious congregations forced church-goers and school children to convene in nearby towns. Some residents continue to operate family farms, but many now travel to surrounding areas to find employment. The post office, store, church, and school that contributed to the identity of Banida, Idaho, have been boarded-up or torn-down.

Between 1906 and 1910, thirteen families moved to this area of Franklin County and resolved to make a living in agriculture.[1] In time, the bit of earth once known as Poverty Flats yielded food enough to support growing families. In 1915, community members celebrated the completion of a schoolhouse, a monument to their cohesion and ideals. Along with the church building, on the opposite corner, the school stood as a tangible declaration of hope for the future.

Banida grew from a few farms to a rural community with a 1920 population of about 200. Families worked toward and achieved self-sufficiency, replacing sage brush with cultivated crops. Census information from 1920 listed 43 heads of household with most of those employed as farmers. Miles Geddes explained that many families ran small dairies and produced milk hauled to Preston for processing.[2]

No amount of educational research could persuade some that the schoolhouse in their community was outdated or inadequate.

Other job titles included telegrapher, merchant, miner, blacksmith, laborer, and teamster. The few females with designated occupations were teachers.[3] It was in this context, a rural Mormon community, dependent on agriculture, that children attended school in Banida, Idaho.

Banida school participants described their childhood in oral histories. Family served as a metaphor for the community. Swainston stated that she didn't have just one mother, she had a bunch.[4] Many remembered feeling accepted and cared for by adults throughout Banida. Few in number, children felt important as they received individual attention.[5] Olsen recalled that children in Banida all believed they were "special, bright, and good looking" because adults told them that three times a day.[5] Every participant in this study had fond memories of growing in an environment where people cared about each other.

Informants described Banida with words such as "tight-knit, cohesive, and oneness." Baxter related the acceptance he felt upon returning to Banida for a church service. It had been 47 years since he had moved away, yet residents made him feel he was still part of them.[6] Literal family ties coupled with shared religious faith and lifestyle nurtured the prevailing spirit of community. Cattani attributed the sense of self-worth and

belonging she felt to the wonders of a small community that fostered unity.[7]

Miles remembered Banida as safe, the type of town where a boy could ask a neighbor for a drink of water and be served milk and cookies instead.[8] Doors did not have locks, neighbors looked after neighbors, and youth played a central role in community life.

The loss of community identity motivated some to contest consolidation.

A road sign still points the way to Banida, but it is not the place informants remember. Whereas physical buildings and functions formed common ground in the past, memories now hold the community close. Although caution must be exercised in analysis of overwhelmingly pleasant memories, participants painted a picture of Banida as a cohesive, caring community.

The Concept of Community

The use of community as an educational construct has intensified in recent years. Mission statements from elementary schools to institutions of higher learning cite the ideals of community as guiding principles. Toennies defined community as a group of like-minded individuals engaged in a common purpose. He contrasted community with society which promoted self-gratification and an ideal of personal wealth and success. In his assessment, communities share values and beliefs which served to unite individuals while societies held no obligation to the group.[9]

Schools have applied this concept of community in two ways. Epstein suggests that to build learning, caring communities, partnerships must be created between schools, families, and communities.[10] In addition to building ties to the greater community, schools should also create a community culture within the school. Meier illustrates the power of relationships between students, families and communities in an urban setting. She directed the division of a large school to form smaller houses of students, an arrangement that promoted relationships that fostered communication.[11] Sergiovanni and Starrat outlined the building of community within a school. From their perspective, community in schools rested on the promotion of continual learning, constant caring, and the creation of covenants. Such schools celebrate learning in students and staff, caring for a common good rather than individual desires, and decisions based on universal principles and values.[12] Sergiovanni suggested that when a school community works from a common purpose, schools move from secular organizations toward becoming sacred organizations, those to which individuals attach feeling and emotion and expend effort to build, support, and sustain.[13]

Recent works about one-teacher schools reveal similar themes. Apps listed community focus among the strengths of the schools he studied in Wisconsin; and Leight and Rinehart concluded that a spirit existed in one-teacher Pennsylvania schools that needed to be rekindled.[14] Given the larger conversation of school communities, oral history transcripts of students and a teacher who attended Banida school offered an opportunity to explore a one-teacher school through the recently defined lens of learning, caring, and covenant community.

Children in Banida all believed they were "special, bright, and good looking" because adults told them that three times a day.

This historical case study includes seventeen students and one teacher who learned and taught in Banida between 1938 and 1963. For nearly fifty years, the two upstairs classrooms and, at times, the downstairs recreation hall furnished a place of learning for children. Between 1915 and 1938, the school operated a big room (grades 5-8) and a little room (grades 1-4). In 1938, pupils in the seventh and eighth grades joined the high school students on a bus to

Preston. The final twenty-five years Banida operated as a one-teacher school with about twenty students from first to sixth grade assembled in one of the upper rooms.

The Banida School Community

Location and local loyalties placed Banida at the center of families' lives. A trip to town meant twelve miles on roads of uncertain quality. Christensen declared that the small community was "where it was at" growing up.[15] Miles compared the twelve miles from Banida to Preston to the distance from Banida to Los Angeles. He suggested that trips to Preston were necessary, but to be avoided when possible. In his mind, everything in Banida and the life of Banida residents centered on children.[16]

Participants believed low tolerance existed for behavior such as "bullying" or "putting others down" and felt these actions did not happen often.

Baxter remembered the school as the community center that served to unite students and local residents.[17] Rumsey recalled that the whole town came out to school productions during holidays or the end of the school year.[18] The school acted as a partner in raising and educating youth. The community supported the school and believed it would serve the needs, desires, values, and beliefs of the community.

The arrival of new residents tested the social scheme. A few Scandinavian immigrants made Banida their home as did three Navajo youth who stayed with a local family during the school year.[19] Participants believed that the more seasoned residents of the community accepted and respected these individuals. With few resources, new families usually labored for other farmers with a goal of establishing a place of their own. Hard work was regarded as their ticket to full community inclusion.

The issue of school consolidation provided a cause for united action. In 1945, districts on the west side of Franklin County reorganized to form one district. Three years later, east side districts voted to consolidate. The number of districts in the county shrank from thirty-four to two.[20] The state legislature passed the School Reorganization Act in 1947. Intended to create large, independent school districts, this law appeared effective as the number of districts in the state dropped from 1,128 in 1945 to 117 in 1965.[21] The promise of better facilities and trained personnel at lower costs allowed school boards to restructure the system.

The mosaic of local districts and common schools built over a century did not pass away without notice. Burrup explained that attempts to reorganize met with lingering issues of localism, location, and transportation.[22] Isolated communities proved difficult to reach, a problem compounded by severe winter weather. Functional roads and vehicles solved practical problems, but did not address citizens' desires to continue operation of their school.

Toennies defined community as a group of like-minded individuals engaged in a common purpose.

No amount of educational research could persuade some that the schoolhouse in their community was outdated or inadequate. School administrators soothed fears of losing local schools through assurances that reorganization did not mean consolidation of neighborhood schools.[23] Despite the rhetoric, small schools closed rapidly following district reorganization. All one-teacher schools in Eastside District discontinued operation by 1956, except Banida, which continued to operate for seven more years against the wishes of the District School Board.

A newspaper account from August 22, 1963, announced the closure of Banida with a picture of the "consolidation victim."[24] Patrons of the Banida school had

resisted external pressure to discontinue services for a number of years. In the summer of 1963, Banida residents voted on a school board proposal to suspend classes in Banida and bus students to Preston. Three similar votes in 1959, 1960, and 1962 thwarted attempts to close the school. Although a majority of voters favored continuance, they lacked the two-thirds majority needed to override the actions of the school board.

Opposition to consolidation stemmed from individual concerns of convenience to genuine interest in quality education. Cattani mentioned the sense of community fostered through a local school. The loss of community identity motivated some to contest consolidation. This cause evoked emotion and prompted families to build, support, and sustain the existence of Banida school.[25]

Although the building has been demolished, the school remains alive in the memories of students. Informants remembered the smell of a freshly oiled wood floor, heat from the coal stove, desks assembled in rows, and the basement gymnasium that offered recreation and a stage for school productions. With only one piece of playground equipment and murky newspaper photos extant, student and teacher memories provided a description of the physical plant.

The yellow brick school sat angled on a corner with a cement walk leading to the front door. The two-story structure faced northwest with tall windows in the front. Brick pillars, rising a few feet above the roof, on each corner and above the front door, emphasized solidity of the building. The schoolhouse characterized a basic, business-like approach to schooling. Inside the front door, steps led up to a common area with coat racks and student storage compartments. Doors at both ends of the hallway opened to the two classrooms upstairs. Students remembered using only one classroom with the other providing extra storage.

From their perspective, community in schools rested on the promotion of continual learning, constant caring, and the creation of covenants.

The teacher's desk stood at the front of the class, with student desks arranged in rows. Each desk was attached to long wooden runners that kept them in place. Students marked their progression in school by the size of the desk they occupied. Miles Geddes remembered arriving early on the first day of school to claim a seat. He soon learned that assignments to larger desks favored age over punctuality.[26] A stove in the classroom provided heat and, for older children, an assignment to haul fuel. The room also contained a library cabinet, a piano, and for a time, a large sand box. Blackboards hung around the room and allowed space for the teacher and students to display their work. Paperboard strips fastened above the blackboards illustrated acceptable penmanship. Students remembered the smell of the freshly oiled wooden floor when they arrived each fall and the window decorations created by students to celebrate seasons and special days.

Stairs that led down from the main entrance entered into a recreation hall with basketball hoops and a stage for formal performances. In addition to a space for dramatic performances, the gymnasium offered a place to play during cold spells. Occasional basketball contests favored the home team as they repeatedly practiced shots with little arch.

The school yard contained a giant-stride, a coal shed, water hydrant, outhouse, and a baseball diamond. The coal shed doubled as a jail for children's games. Avoided by children, except in emergencies, the outhouse included separate entrances for women and men in a single building. A game employed the outhouse as a screen with a ball tossed over the top. The giant-stride consisted of a steel pole with a series of chains hanging from a bearing at the top. Children grabbed a chain handle and ran around the pole until momentum swept them off their feet. Today, the giant-stride is the only visible reminder that a school once occupied the lot.

Community of Learners

Johansen cited individuality as a strength of the Banida school. Many memories centered on theatrical productions that allowed every student an opportunity to perform. Miles Geddes still remembered the words to the song "Mighty Wangaloo," a solo part in a school play. He described the feeling of accomplishment as "superb" and assumed only in Banida could he display such talents. Rumsey recalled that she and a friend asked to perform a play they had created. The environment was flexible enough to allow individual creativity and independent learning.[27]

Swainston described her experience as a younger student receiving instruction from children in the older grades. "The kids would just sit with us at our desks and help us one on one." A strength of the program at Banida was that students learned from each other. Swainston believed this stemmed from the community where individual problems became shared problems. In this instance, students approached the acquisition of fundamental skills together. Cattani and Baxter remembered being older students and helping others with their work. When they completed individual lessons they could assist younger students. In Banida, children experienced the continual cycle of teaching and learning.[29]

Community of Caring

Care was a prominent feature of the school community. Students respected the authority of the teacher and relished the love she returned. Townsend characterized the relationship between teacher and students as that of a parent and her children. Positive feelings shared between teacher and students extended to relationships among children.[30] Given limitations of space and numbers, children spent a lot of time together.

Cole explained how the students reached out to newcomers in town whether they were Scandinavian immigrants or Native American students.

Participants believed low tolerance existed for behavior such as "bullying" or "putting others down" and felt these actions did not happen often. Miles Geddes recalled a family in the community who had little money. Children came to school without great clothes but no one made fun of them. He suggested students would not be able to go to school today with soiled clothes and torn knees without being ridiculed. Edwards remembered a safe, secure, loving environment, a great place for children to be and learn.[31]

The words to "Mary Had a Little Lamb" explained a portion of Cole's teaching philosophy. The song suggested the lamb loved Mary because Mary first loved the lamb. Cole insisted that until children felt that a teacher loved them, they might as well be sent home. Her recipe for love included listening to student interests and letting students know she wanted to help them.[32] Students developed strong feelings toward their teacher. When asked to describe her relationship with her teacher Toone simply stated, "I loved her."[33]

The teacher influenced students' lives. Skinner looked forward to a hug from her teacher and appreciated lessons of friendship and looking out for the needs of others. The teacher modeled her beliefs by making sure students received positive messages. She was careful not to make anyone feel stupid or highlight smarter kids. Participants did not feel threatened or afraid of being embarrassed. Townsend believed that students from Banida found success because of their good start which she defined as love.[34]

Baseball surfaced as an example of school relationships. Skinner recalled that even the teacher became involved in baseball games. As Skinner pointed out, "You learned to stick together in Banida, because if you didn't, there wasn't enough kids to do stuff with."[35] Christensen added that when Native American students came to live with a local family for the school year they were accepted like any other student. "We were just glad to have somebody to play with, we could have enough for a team." Regardless of age or gender,

students were included in the activity. Cole mentioned that all children played together. "If they wanted to play a game, everybody had to play so the sixth graders played with the first graders. I think that was good. If they were playing baseball they would help them bat. That is not bad training for kids."[37]

School in Banida evoked feelings of peace, caring, and belonging. Students attributed this to skilled teachers and support of the larger community. Swainston remembered a long stretch when she was ill and unable to attend school. The teacher would make visits to her home and teach her there. Christensen claimed that he had read every book in the school by the fourth grade, and the teacher then brought special materials to keep him motivated. Students, teachers, and families practiced principles of a caring community.[38]

Community of Covenants

Banida was bound by religious, occupational, and family ties. According to oral records, all residents of Banida were Mormon and participated in the same congregation. Most households farmed and relied on nature and neighbors to survive. School children associated with the same peer group in religious and secular classrooms and interacted with these same people as evening playmates. Students remembered each new school day introduced with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. The Banida school community developed covenants that included citizenship, responsibility, and respect.

Cole, a teacher, denied religion surfaced as a school topic. Although students shared a religious heritage, church presumably remained on the other side of the street. Cole contended that truthfulness and honesty were simply the right way of living. After some thought, she settled on citizenship to describe this content. She was confident that a survey of students who attended Banida would reveal good, responsible citizens.

Although their lives reflected social expectations, informants seemed to believe that race, class, and gender were issues of other people in distant places.

Expectations at school were high. Cole prepared students to live with other people and earn a living. She expected every student to learn every aspect of the curriculum to be better prepared to fulfill responsibilities to family and community. As the second prong of the Banida covenant community, students learned responsibility at a young age. Cole surmised students developed more responsibility in Banida than they might have at a larger school.[39]

In addition to citizenship and responsibility, the community valued respect. Students respected the values, beliefs, and expectations of teachers. Miles recalled a verbal exchange with his teacher regarding a television program. He came to school and asked if she had seen Elvis Presley on television. Cole responded, "You know, I can't understand a word he says." Miles thought about that for a moment and decided he didn't care for Elvis either.[40] Participants also showed respect for others. Cole explained how the students reached out to newcomers in town whether they were Scandinavian immigrants or Native American students. She suggested that students went out of their way to be nice to newcomers and that these skills were taught at home rather than at school.[41]

In a sense, Banida stood as a covenant community. Members supported the school, and the school supported the community. Shared faith in themselves and their future fostered a spirit of community. As representatives of that future, children received counsel to find success through orderly accumulation of work ethic, academic knowledge, and meaningful worship. School served to strengthen shared values.

The Efficacy of School Communities

During an interview, Swainston exclaimed, "Banida is dying!" The funeral service of a former resident seemed to

prompt her words, but she explained it was more than that. Her sentiment extended to the community itself. Although an arrow still pointed the way to Banida, structures that brought an identity to the community no longer existed. Swainston recalled hypothetical questions asked during consolidation debates. At the time, residents projected what might happen to the community if the school closed. "They said it would break us up."[42]

A recent article in a Montana newspaper highlighted Willow Creek School in Gallatin County with an enrollment of seventy students, kindergarten through twelfth grade. Familiar arguments of loyalty, community identity, and individual attention ran through the article. Elements of community continued to sustain the school. As we continue to search for answers in education, we must determine whether schools such as Banida and Willow Creek offer useful insight to the larger conversation of effective schooling.[43]

Although some Banida school participants longed for the past, Miles suggested the past probably shouldn't happen again the way the world is. Baxter and Edwards both claimed that, as kids, they had no idea what went on in the outside world. Baxter realized his knowledge base was limited and "nothing like kids should have now." Edwards added that a setting similar to Banida would be useful for the first few years, but that students couldn't get the education they needed under that system forever. On one hand, Banida students had community that provided a safe, nurturing place to stand; on the other hand, that place limited their view of the world.[44]

School in Banida evoked feelings of peace, caring, and belonging. Students attributed this to skilled teachers and support of the larger community.

In many ways, participants in this study were excluded from experiences that would have broadened their perspectives. Issues such as race, class, and gender that have come to the fore in social consciousness held limited meaning. For example, discussion of class was confined to degrees of wealth within their own community while gender was defined as the choice between domestic life and a career. Informants interpreted their interaction with a handful of Native Americans as an illustration of racial harmony. During the interviews, participants interpreted the word "minority" to be someone looked down on in society. Students emerged from their school experience with some notion of inequality, but developed no recognition of the complexity of issues that affect the larger society. Although their lives reflected social expectations, informants seemed to believe that race, class, and gender were issues of other people in distant places.

The proceeding voices of one-teacher school participants opened a window of understanding about school communities. In many ways, the experiences of students paralleled perceived needs in schools. Banida students enjoyed a community that promoted learning and caring. This aspect of one-teacher schools must be captured and coupled with perspectives that broaden student perception and engagement in our complex social environment. Schools must provide children with a firm place to stand while combating parochialism. The lives of Banida students speak to half of that equation.

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[2]Interview with Miles Geddes (March 22, 2000).

[3]Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 Population* (Washington DC: Bureau of the Census, 1992), microform.

[4]Interview with Glenda Swainston (April 13, 2000).
[5]Interview with Beverley Olsen (April 24, 2000).
[6]Interview with DeVerl Baxter (April 19, 2000).
[7]Interview with Karla Cattani (April 19, 2000).
[8]Interview with Monte Miles (April 13, 2000).
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[15]Interview with Verl Christensen (April 4, 2000).
[16]Interview with Monte Miles (April 13, 2000).
[17]Interview with DeVerl Baxter (April 19, 2000).
[18]Interview with Dawn Rumsey (April 5, 2000).
[19]Interview with Jo Geddes (March 22, 2000).
[20]Marion J. Jensen, "An Appraisal of School District Reorganization in Franklin County, Idaho" Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1949, 81.
[21]National Education Association, *Idaho: A State-wide Study of Educational Conditions and School Finance* (Washington DC: National Education Association, 1965), 6.
[22]Percy E. Burrup, "The Progress of School District Reorganization in Idaho" Ph.D. dissertation, Colorado State College, 1951, 57.
[23]Idaho Education Survey Commission, *Public Education in Idaho: A Digest of the Report of the Idaho Education Survey Commission* (Nashville: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1946), 10.
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[25]Interview with Karla Cattani (April 19, 2000); Miles Geddes (March 22, 2000); and Dawn Rumsey (April 5, 2000).
[26]Interview with Miles Geddes (March 22, 2000).
[27]Interview with Connie Johansen (April 13, 2000); Miles Geddes (March 22, 2000); and Dawn Rumsey (April 5 2000).
[28]Interview with Glenda Swainston (April 13, 2000).
[29]Interview with Karla Cattani (April 19, 2000) and DeVerl Baxter (April 19, 2000).
[30]Interview with Lou Townsend (April 27, 2000).
[31]Interview with Renee Edwards (April 13, 2000).
[32]Interview with Wyora Cole (March 29, 2000).
[33]Interview with Peggy Toone (April 19, 2000).
[34]Interviews with Janet Skinner (April 8, 2000); Miles Geddes (March 22, 2000); Jo Geddes (March 22, 2000); Peggy Toone (April 19, 2000); Lou Townsend (April 27, 2000).
[35]Interview with Janet Skinner (April 8, 2000).
[36]Interview with Verl Christensen (April 4, 2000).
[37]Interview with Wyora Cole (March 29, 2000).
[38]Interviews with Glenda Swainston (April 13, 2000) and Verl Christensen (April 4, 2000).
[39]Interview with Wyora Cole (March 29, 2000).
[40]Interview with Monte Miles (April 13, 2000).
[41]Interview with Wyora Cole (March 29, 2000).
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[44]Interview with Monte Miles (April 13, 2000); DeVerl Baxter (April 19, 2000); Renee Edwards (April 13, 2000).

The American One-Room Schoolhouse: A Study of a Community Vernacular Building Artifact

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Vernacular architecture is the architecture that groups of people make or have made for their daily use. Vernacular architecture is often conservative and repeats the known traditional forms; it often uses whatever materials are available and whatever skills the builders possess at the time. The study of change in vernacular architecture encompasses the social idea of spatial needs and the consumption of new goods and ideas. New methods or ideas are adopted by vernacular builders more often when they fulfill a function not performed by an existing vernacular practice and when they do not interfere with any established habit or are analogous to established vernacular practices. A study by folklorist Henry Glassie[1] established a "grammar" of design used by vernacular builders when creating an artifact. The design was felt to embody the intention of the builders since the builders made free choices in using the grammar of design. The study of intention becomes central in the study of vernacular architecture because it is the study of people acting. Often it is people making their own histories in the face of authorities trying to make history for them.

Vernacular schoolhouses remain on the landscape in New England. The schoolhouse type or form was created in America and became a uniquely American vernacular building type that was found in new communities across the land.

This ambivalence towards upgrading and improving their educational facilities and the propensity to continue the status quo meant temporary schools that were quickly built in the time of early settlement remained in use.

What form did the early Americans use to house their educational activities? Why? What did these people think about education? Did their ideas change? If they did, and intentions are inherent in vernacular architecture, these would be reflected in their school buildings. A study of these buildings is important because ordinary people left few written records on their thinking about education.

New England's cohesive governmental/community structure made the development of cultural institutions such as schools more likely there than in colonies in the South where settlement patterns were scattered, independent and over the years lacking in cooperative/supportive activities compared to the cohesive, interdependent settlements of New England. Schoolhouses were not built as quickly in the South in the earliest colonial years.[2] The selected study area was Addison County, Vermont. It is representative of Vermont and early New England. Many schools from the earliest years are still standing. By documenting all the remaining buildings in one area, it is possible to discern patterns and make inferences about the thinking of the builders. New England is viewed nationally as the cradle of educational development in America. Its sons and daughters left New England to influence education

across the country, so its thinking about education is representative of many other American communities.

Some settlements were attempted in Addison County in the years between 1750 and 1783, but Euro-American settlements became permanent in Addison County when conditions were more stable after the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. Settlers came north from Connecticut and Massachusetts and brought with them ideas about schools that had been a part of their lives in southern New England. Although the European grammar school idea took hold in Massachusetts, it did not have early support in Connecticut. However, by 1700 the Connecticut law ordered English schools (wherein English and subjects other than Latin of Massachusetts grammar schools were taught) instituted for the whole year in town of at least 70 families and for half the year where there were fewer families. In 1776 the law further allowed towns and parishes to be divided into districts to make their own district school systems. This law established a district system earlier than in any other New England state. Massachusetts then reverted to district schools. In Vermont, where settlers had come from Massachusetts and Connecticut, the legislature provided for grammar schools in each county and enabled the district system in its State Constitution in 1777. When Vermont became a state in 1791, there was in place a system for providing public education. It was primarily a matter of local responsibility. Each district within a town elected prudential committees for schooling in each district. These committees had total control over the school—raised money, hired the teacher, and supervised the curriculum. Students ranged in age from three to twenty, attended three months in the regular winter term and in spring or summer if enough funds were available for more than one term. The students learned by rote.

An analysis of these buildings shows in their initial form and throughout this period an uncertainty towards changing and increasing common school education and a possible over-reliance on "book learning."

Addison County has 23 towns. In 1871, there were 185 school districts identified in the county atlas. With the 1871 major growth period in Vermont, this was probably the greatest number of districts in place at any one time. Today 89 former district school buildings in Addison County remain. Forty-three of these 89 schools were built in the earliest years from 1790 to 1858. The rest were built between 1858 and 1929. The early schools were visited, observed, photographed, and measured. Information was gathered from owners for comparison purposes. The State Historic Preservation Office published a survey of Addison County historic buildings, and these schools were checked against their information. In addition, existing school committee records and local histories were studied. This information was ordered geographically, chronologically, and by scale for comparison purposes.

In the rural areas, one-room schools seem to have been given concentrated attention by the neighborhood when they were built as permanent buildings replacing hastily constructed, earlier schools. The early schools were plank buildings similar to temporary first homes. Many first permanent schools were stone which, along with brick, was a prestigious choice. The buildings were, however, in many cases allowed to deteriorate which shows an ambivalence about education at this time.

In summary, from the early settlement of Vermont there were laws in place that enabled and expected schooling to occur and to have ongoing supervision in towns within the state. In many cases, schooling began before these laws were enacted. The patterns for provision of schooling and schools had been in place in lower New England, the original home of most of Vermont's settlers. It can be assumed that

most settlers were familiar with these patterns for schooling and with little difficulty repeated them in their new homes. Attendance was entirely voluntary until the 1867 Vermont state compulsory attendance law. Schools were held in all Addison County towns, and children were expected over several years' exposure to master reading, writing and "ciphering" at minimum levels in short, but concentrated, three-month time frames that were offered a couple of times a year if funds could be raised. Each town had several districts that eventually provided a schoolhouse in a central location usually within two miles walking distance from each student's home.

The schoolhouse type or form was created in America and became a uniquely American vernacular building type that was found in new communities across the land.

Schools were funded primarily within the district by tuition, taxes and in-kind services. The buildings when built early, as noted above, were often hastily constructed with the idea of replacing them with permanent buildings later. However, many districts never moved on to the permanent building and continued to use the temporary building even when it became dilapidated. Other districts seemingly supported education and therefore moved to better buildings in a timely manner. The buildings were of the same form; but materials were more permanent brick, stone, or clapboard wood ones—some with cove ceilings and belfries. Using the existing schools as a basis, only about 27% of the districts seemed to have built more permanent structures. The rest languished until forces from outside (state governments, educational reformers, public opinion in newspapers and magazines) insisted on improvements.

The original schools vary in condition and use today: many are homes. Many were used as schools until the 1950s when state regulations encouraged town central schools. Two of the schools remain in use today. Two other schools were only recently replaced by larger, central buildings in their towns. Six of those built between 1790 and 1840 are brick, and eleven are stone. Twenty-six of the buildings are wood frame, clapboard schools built between 1827 and 1858. Except for the earliest one (a chicken coop with the remains of a 1790 temporary frame), the structures were permanent schools for their time. Still standing today are twenty-five of the permanent schools built before 1830. To double this number accounting for those torn down, etc., fifty schools might have been built by 1840. This suggests that 27% of the districts moved to have permanent schools with others still using temporary or other quarters for schools after fifty years of settlement.

When Vermont became a state in 1791, there was in place a system for providing public education. It was primarily a matter of local responsibility.

The condition of schools was roundly condemned by reformers in the years from the 1830s through the 1860s. The years beyond these also saw new schools; however, the Vermont population had begun to decline by the 1850s as farmers moved from worn-out Vermont soil to fertile frontier in the West. The last half of the century often saw new schools only in better economic times.

These early schools were a repeat of the vernacular cape cod or one-half house type which the settlers had put up as they arrived in Vermont in the 1780s. They were familiar with larger houses, but the cape cod/half house was a quick way to construct housing for families. The intention was to move on to better houses when the economy allowed. That happened quickly for houses and barns, but not for schools. The schoolhouse remained a small,

square building. Earlier ones had a fireplace on one end, but all of the schools that remain today had provisions for Franklin stoves which had come into use in lower New England before the settlers moved to Vermont. None of the earlier schools had basements—only a cleared area for foundation stones into which floor joists were inserted. Both early houses and early schools were defined by a square room with a door on the side and a stove in the far end, two windows to each side and gable roof. They were plank buildings with wide, rough planks cut from trees felled on the property. Since they were to be replaced, no siding or permanent material was used. The basic classroom was changed from approximately 20' to 24' over the years. The door was changed from the side to the end where the gable gave it prominence. Lunches and coats were stored on one end. The room was lengthened for the entry and then a wall separated this entry area from the main classroom. The entry area was enlarged from a width of 4' to 8' by the end of the century. Different treatments allowed the entry area to have two rooms and doors for gender separation, a center room with side rooms adjacent, or one long, single room. By the end of the century builders added entries with their own gabled roofs but dropped this design in favor of the entry area inside the main building. This basic structure was post and beams in the earliest buildings. When mill-sawed, lighter boards became more available in rural areas, balloon construction replaced post and beam. The interior walls had horizontal, plank wainscoting above which the walls and ceilings were lath and plaster. The earliest schools had 8 to12 window panes. Several schools had cove ceilings. This feature, along with belfries, was a sign that the builders were more interested in their schools and wished to give them prominence in the community.

Each town had several districts that eventually provided a schoolhouse in a central location usually within two miles walking distance from each student's home.

School sites were located near the center of town. Each town might have six to eight districts. Land not usable for farming might be donated or made available. The schools were built right on the road at first, but set back 30' or more by the middle of the century. There were no toilet facilities nor play yards in the early years. Privies and woodsheds were added as time went by. By the end of the century, privies were often attached to the rear of the school or at an end of the school if the woodshed was used as the entry. By the middle of the century, random placement gave way to symmetry both in building and in placement of windows, attachments, and entry.

Schools varied from district to district depending on the values and resources of the community. In Addison County, the towns that valued book-learning were the ones that first replaced temporary schools. Two or three towns also chose to include a cove ceiling and a belfry for prestige and to set off the community building from the homes. One district that argued about replacing a school tabled the discussion at a town meeting. Yet when the men were all out on a long wolf hunt, the women reconvened the meeting, took the matter off the table, and voted to tear down the dilapidated school. This they promptly did. When the men returned they had to replace the school. Other schools remained in use and it took public outcry, governmental regulations and time to replace most of them.

In Vermont, state regulations were passed, repealed, and replaced from the 1830s through the Civil War. Thirteen of the 43 schools studied (30%) were built in the 1850s at the height of the reform movement. By the end of the century, schools were community centers and many of them looked the part. They had grown in size and in three cases had acquired Greek revival detailing. In one school, Queen Anne detailing was used. In general, they remained simple, square, one-story rooms with an entry area.

Their interiors changed from having desks attached to three outside walls to having desks in rows in the middle of the room. Blackboards came into use, and eventually in the 20th Century, chemical toilets could be entered from a hall off the classroom. While the schools remained basic in form, they did increase in volume in order to improve ventilation. Ceiling heights were raised from 6' or 7' to 12'. Room size increased to 24-26' from 18-20' square. Both early and later schools served up to sixty students.

These early schools were a repeat of the vernacular cape cod or one-half house type which the settlers had put up as they arrived in Vermont in the 1780s.

In general, what educational publications recommended for school architecture in the middle of the century was more elaborate than that of schools built in Vermont. This may have been true everywhere. The Vermont builders had more elaborate homes, barns, and churches; but even in other buildings, they chose simple styles with very little embellishment in the early years. Master builders and architects in Addison County also designed other community buildings in those early years. Only one common school in the study (1878 and not in the early study period) was known to have been designed by an architect. Its form was the same as the vernacular form with one difference—symmetrically measured and arranged openings and parts with a few embellishments on the exterior.

The schools tell a story about the people and their ideas about education in Vermont during the first half of the 19th Century. The schools built in Addison County between 1790 and 1858 express ambivalence about the value of education. The existence of the schools and the rhetoric of the times speak of the acceptance of education as basic to society. However, an analysis of these buildings shows in their initial form and throughout this period an uncertainty towards changing and increasing common school education and a possible over-reliance on "book learning." The Vermont one-room schools tell the story of the self-reliant, rural, independent, traditional, and agrarian way of life that pervaded the state during this period. These schools tell us of a people who believed that which "worked" and who questioned new things and ways which were adopted only when they withstood the "test of time." This way of thinking is common to vernacular builders and presents a challenge to reformers. Change in a culture framed this way happens slowly.

District schools in Vermont became entrenched and promoted local control. As a result schools were much the same in 1830 as they were in 1780. Vermont residents sought to provide rudimentary instruction at a low cost under firm community control.

Several schools had cove ceilings. This feature, along with belfries, was a sign that the builders were more interested in their schools and wished to give them prominence in the community.

They were satisfied with schools which met their needs for literacy and allowed learning on the farm to predominate. Most communities continued with what they found to be satisfactory and traditional buildings while only a few of the more progressive districts built newer structures. This ambivalence towards upgrading and improving their educational facilities and the propensity to continue the status quo meant temporary schools that were quickly built in the time of early settlement and then remained in use. Fewer permanent than temporary schools were erected. Beginning in the 1830s, reformers led a public outcry to improve schools, but there was little support within most districts. Rural residents did not want to lose control to centralized govern-

ment and were satisfied with their schools.

When the rural Vermont populace did heed the cry in the latter part of the century, it was the deteriorating economic conditions on farms that moved them to improve schools to prepare their children for life off the farm. Prior to this, there had been little perceived need for book learning. A person who could read, write and cipher was considered educated. Farmers preferred to teach the basics. This feeling was reflected in the schools they built: They were basic vernacular buildings, used at least three months a year and sometimes for six months. They were uncomfortable but thought to build character by a society that thought of children as conceived in sin and in need of careful molding with the teachings of the Bible.

Still standing today are twenty-five of the permanent schools built before 1830.

The schools improved when geographic and climate constraints squeezed economic conditions in Vermont. These conditions led to changes from an agrarian to a more industrial society. School and book-learning seemed to be the way to go at the end of the century, so they heeded the cry of reformers and improved the schools.

Over time the one-room schools became the centers of community life. Public education for all mattered in a democratic society. Ironically in the middle of the 20th Century, centralized town schools were encouraged, but they were built only after overcoming a strong preference for the one-room schools. The one-room school became a symbol for education in America and one of America's basic tools for ensuring democracy, equality and the progressive improvement of individuals and society.

[1]Henry Glassie, *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia* Knoxville, Tennessee: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1975).

[2]Preceding vernacular definitions summarized from "Introduction" by Dell Upton and John M. Vlach, editors for *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture* (Athens and London: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1986).

[3]Samuel Swift, *History of the Town of Middlebury in the County of Addison, Vermont* (Middlebury, VT: A. H. Copeland, 1859), 276.

[4]In discussion of this idea find the following by Samuel E. Morrison: "Although ambition for popular education was probably no stronger in early New England than in early Virginia, the system of settlement in New England rendered accomplishment far easier. Englishmen in Virginia tended to dispersion, in New England, to concentration." "In the 'Old Dominion' the individual plantation, in New England the village or seaport was the economic and social unit. Consequently, in Virginia the difficulties of establishing schools for day scholars were almost insuperable, while in New England, the village school was as easy to set up and maintain as the village church or the town meeting when the entire population dwelt in a relatively compact group, every child could walk to school." *The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1956), 63.

[5]Abby Hemenway, ed., *Vermont Historical Gazatteer, I* (Burlington, Vt., 1867), Section on New Haven.

[6]Karl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic-Common Schools of American Society* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983) 22-23. In addition, Ellwood P. Cubberly, an educational historian of Stanford University, also wrote at the beginning of the nineteenth century: "Regardless of the national land grants for education made to the new States, the provisions of the different state constitutions, the beginnings made here and there in the few cities of the time, and the early state laws, we can hardly be said as a people, to have developed an educational consciousness, outside of New England and New York before 1820, and in some of the States, especially in the South, a state educational consciousness was not awakened until very much later. Even in New England there was a steady decline in education, as the district system became more and more firmly fixed, during the first fifty years of our national history. There were many reasons in our national life for this lack of interest in education among the masses of our people. The simple agricultural life of the time, the homogeneity of the people, the lack of full manhood suffrage in a number of the States, the continuance of old English laws, the want of any economic demand for education, and the fact that no important political question calling for settlement at the polls had as yet arisen, made the need for schools and learning seem a relatively minor one...There was little need for book learning among the masses of the people to enable them to transact the ordinary business of life." From Ellwood P. Cubberley, *Public Education in the United States* (1919) (Reprint: Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1962.)

Pierre S. duPont and the Delaware Experiment

Laura M. Lee
Iron Hill Museum

Prior to the Civil War, African-American children in Delaware received limited schooling due to private support. The Quakers established one of the earliest Black schools in Wilmington in 1801.[1] In 1830, the Quakers formed the African School Society, which created about seven schools before the Civil War. This organization lasted until 1866. At that point a group called the Delaware Association for the Moral Improvement and Education of the Colored People appears to have taken over.

The post-civil war era was a time of transition in the responsibility of educating Black students, both in Delaware and the country as a whole. During this period, there is evidence in the Delaware School Code of a gradual recognition for the need to educate African-American students for a fixed period of time each year. Evidence suggests that local and state funding, supplemented by limited federal money, supported small African-American schools in Delaware, at least in part. The "Delaware Association" ran schools in each county of the state and provided assistance to the schools that were run by outside groups. In 1867, the Delaware Association supported a statewide total of eighteen schools. The group received some assistance from federal agencies, including the Freedman's Bureau.[2]

The first evidence of recognition in state legislation of African-American schools occurred in 1875. That year a law was passed to tax resident African-Americans to support Black schools in the districts of the persons being taxed.[3] Obviously, this could not have produced a large financial gain for the impoverished African-American schools.

A 1923 study determined that over half the Black students were more than two years behind grade level, and that students were absent an average of 25 percent of the school year.

After 1875, Black schools were supported by these school taxes on resident Black males, along with local contributions from the community and tuition. In 1881 the state appropriated funds to the African-American schools, requiring that they be open three months per year, with the average number of students as twenty.[4] In 1897 legislation required that Black schools receive the same apportionment of state funds as White schools.[5] But state appropriations were very small, and so school districts were still dependent on taxes of Black males. Because local tax money was divided by race and depended on property holdings, there were still major inequalities. The 1897 legislation also legally instituted the dual system of Black and White schools.[6] Despite meager funding, by then the Black schools were open four to five months of the year.[7]

In the 20th century, there was a national shift in responsibility for the education of African-Americans to the broader society. In both Black and White schools, states were taking on greater roles in funding. Factors furthering the cause of education reform included the efforts of Booker T. Washington and in the 1920's the NAACP and Theodore Roosevelt's Commission on Rural Life.

Another major factor was the migration of African-Americans to the North, effectively shifting the population from primarily rural areas to industrial centers and cities in the North. World War I and the subsequent increase in industrialization played a part in the changing demo-

graphics. States began to support the construction of African American schools, and some states abolished segregation. Education philanthropy also became almost "en vogue," and a number of nationally prominent and wealthy individuals funded education programs for the Black community.

DuPont saw Delaware as an experiment which, if successful, had the potential to influence Negro public school education in the United States for many years.

In Delaware, the legislation that led to major change occurred in 1919, after which the state took over the former role of local governments in controlling education funding. An Act of the General Assembly, Chapter 71 of the Revised Code of the State of Delaware, was repealed, and provided a new Chapter 71 entitled "Public Schools." Approved April 14, 1919, Delaware was following the general trend towards greater state support for all schools. No longer were resident Black males taxed alone to support the African-American schools, but all properties were now taxed at the same rate regardless of race. The Black community now shared in the revenue of the entire system, as well as its regulations. Other code changes affected the Black schools: Before 1919 only children within two miles of a school were subject to the little-enforced compulsory attendance law, but after 1919 all children under 14 were required to attend school for 180 days. Students aged 14 to 16 and those not yet completing the eighth grade were required to attend for 100 days. Through sixth grade, children more than two miles from school were provided with transportation.[8]

Part of the legislation of 1919 supported the rebuilding of schools. According to documentation in the Pierre S. duPont papers, there was no provision made to rebuild Black schools.[9] This is where Mr. duPont came into play, donating over a million dollars to rebuild or renovate all the Black schools in Delaware. His funding improved or created 87 African-American schools, as well as White schools, but he made the Black schools his top priority. DuPont achieved national prominence through his philanthropic activities on behalf of African-Americans in Delaware. He not only provided money to reform the African-American school districts, but consulted with and hired professionals in the construction and architectural field as well as providing scholarship funds for new teacher training. In 1919 he resigned as president of the DuPont Company, and became a member of the State Board of Education. He also worked with the Delaware School Auxiliary Association until 1931. DuPont formed a group called the Service Citizens of Delaware, and made the conditions of the state schools, both Black and White, known to the general public through this organization. DuPont's collection of papers, located at the Hagley Museum archives, include pamphlets and brochures distributed by other cities and communities that raised awareness of school conditions. The brochures described the crowded conditions, attendance problems, and unhealthy atmosphere of many schools.[10] Subsequently the Service Citizens of Delaware published a similar pamphlet in 1924 called "What Do You Know About the Public Schools of Delaware?"

In 1830, the Quakers formed the African School Society, which created about seven schools before the Civil War.

Letters from community members and leaders in the duPont collection testify to the support he had for his efforts. Some letters mention that the writer read about him in the *New York Times*, suggesting prominence on a national level. DuPont even graced the cover of *Time* in January of 1927, and the article made comments indicating that despite his major financial contributions

to the cause of schools, there were still those who doubted his motives and felt he wanted control of the educational system. DuPont made it evident, however, that school buildings would be the property and under the control of the state. Perhaps the Service Citizens Organization was an attempt to present school reform to the general public as coming from the citizens themselves instead of a prominent person. At that time the citizenry was not calling for reform.

According to Robert Taggart, who studied duPont's role in reforming the educational system of Delaware, those who supported the new School Code "had to convince a suspicious and often belligerent citizenry that it was to its advantage to approve substantially higher taxes to construct new buildings."[11] Even after duPont had personally financed $6,417,000 of school construction by 1925, the General Assembly in the State of Delaware was reluctant to support a two-million dollar bond issue to build the remaining and much needed schools.[12]

Reform was driven in part by a number of national studies performed in the early part of the 20th century. A federal study of the schools of all states published in 1915 ranked Delaware's overall educational system at an embarrassing 39th place. Only the schools of the Deep South ranked lower.[13] A group from Columbia University conducted a subsequent study funded by duPont of Delaware schools in particular. This group included G. D. Strayer, the president of the National Education Association. This study also revealed below par conditions in schools across the state.

DuPont's reform campaign funded the African-American schools first, before the White schools. In a letter to the Afro-*American Magazine* of 1926, he wrote that he knew public funds for Black schools would not have come forward until money had been spent on the White schools. In addition the entire system of Black schools could be rebuilt in a small state like Delaware in a comparatively short time compared to larger states.

In the 20th century, there was a national shift in responsibility for the education of African-Americans to the broader society.

DuPont saw Delaware as "an experiment"which, if successful, had the potential to influence "Negro public school education in the United States for many years."[14] He said in 1928, "There is great opportunity to use Delaware's success in Negro education as a means of promoting better conditions in other and less progressive states. The eyes of the nation are upon Delaware Negroes and their success in showing the benefits of good education will mean much to the race."[15]

DuPont's reform began with a study of existing conditions. Population centers were studied, and it was determined that the Black population was widely dispersed as well as low in number. It was found that many of the existing school sites were chosen forty to fifty years before, and populations had shifted, leaving many of the schools in the inappropriate locations. The Delaware School Auxiliary mapped the place of residence of every Black child and marked new schools near centers of population.[16] While the consolidated system was promoted for the White schools, it was determined that the scattered population as well as dependence on child labor meant that these schools would more appropriately be single-teacher schools. Integration was not proposed.[17]

Attendance problems were also an issue. A 1923 study determined that over half the Black students were more than two years behind grade level and that students were absent an average of 25 percent of the school year, possibly as a partial result of the stigma of being older than their peers. The report concluded that the prevailing practice of working children might account for much of the absenteeism. Other factors cited included "agriculture work, illness and parental indifference."[18] In both Black and White communities farmers were still dependent on child labor. A compromise was reached,

whereby children between seven and sixteen years of age could be given work permits for long-term absences from school.[19] Consolidation of the White schools took children away from their work by sending them to schools farther away from home, but some opted for the work permit.

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But while consolidation was considered as a solution to improving White schools regardless of the effect of reduced labor, it was not chosen as a solution for the Black schools. While considered initially, ultimately the scattered and sparse population of African Americans led the system to one of single-teacher schools.[20]

Proposed reforms included better schoolhouse construction and upkeep with ample playgrounds, the compulsory attendance law, and making education a priority over economics.[21] Taggart noted in his study that there were difficulties involved in implementing the change in priorities. Most African-Americans earned subsistence-level income, and employment opportunities were severely limited in a segregated society. It should be noted that both White and Black school communities dealt with similar attendance problems.[22]

DuPont's contribution to African-American education was acknowledged with gratitude from the community across the state. The Hagley Museum archives contain hundreds of thank-you letters from students and teachers. A testimonial dinner was given for him, at which time he was presented with a portrait of himself. A song of tribute was written to him, which former pupils remember singing. Schools held a duPont Day, with an assembly, games, an orchestra, and a social. The culmination was the article and cover portrait on *Time* magazine. In the article it was noted that for eight years when a question about public education arose in Delaware, Delaware said, "Let Pierre duPont do it." [23]

The transitional period is exemplified in the history of the Iron Hill School #112C. DuPont schools were placed near population centers, and towards the last quarter of the 19th century, the historic record indicates there was a large African-American community in Pencader Hundred, site of the Iron Hill School.[24] The current school building, now housing the Iron Hill Museum, is one of a handful of the original 87 duPont African American schools in Delaware that still retain architectural integrity. Designed by nationally known school architect James Oscar Betelle, the building is a rectangular, gable-end entrance plan with a colonial-revival portico. The design incorporated nationally recognized standards such as banked windows providing a natural lighting source to the left of the pupils, as well as consideration of ventilation, sanitation, and playground apparatus.[25] Wonderfully, extensive documentation remains in the Hagley Museum archives and State of Delaware Hall of Records. Primary resources—correspondence between duPont and others involved in the project, hundreds of thank-you letters written by students and their teachers, plans for the schools, before and after shots of the African-American schools, and a host of other source material combine to tell the story of duPont's philanthropy.

DuPont achieved national prominence through his philanthropic activities on behalf of African-Americans in Delaware.

The thank-you letters written by the students and teachers are perhaps the most poignant of all

the historical records on the Iron Hill School as well as others built through duPont funding. Mrs. Nannie C. Goode, a teacher at Iron Hill in 1926, wrote, "The children are loud in their praises of Mr. duPont, and they are proud of their school building. I beg to be allowed to thank you too." A second grader thanked Mr. duPont for the school, saying, "We hope you will never be sorry you gave it to us." A sixth grader responded to Mr. duPont with comments in keeping with his goals for the new buildings: "We all want to assure you that we are going to do our very best to make good men and women out of ourselves, for we love our State and want to do all we can for it."[26]

A quote in *Time* magazine sums up duPont's efforts:

> Descendant and namesake of Pierre Samuel duPont deNemours, who fled from France to escape the guillotine and who had a habit of thinking in terms of empires and republics, the Pierre duPont of today seems to have all the qualities of his illustrious ancestor and some that are distinctively his own. He is tall and heavy domed, with calm eyes and unagitable lips—a massive, impassive, impressive man. He can make money perhaps more easily than anyone in the U.S. but lets many a chance pass. Instead, he tries to make citizens.[27]

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[1] Pauline A. Young, "The Negro in Delaware, Past and Present," in *Delaware: A History of the First State*, ed. H. Clay Reed (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1947) 2:856.

[2] Minutes of the Delaware Association for the Moral Improvement and Education of the Colored People, Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware.

[3] Delaware, *Laws* XV, 1875, Chapter 48.

[4] Delaware, *Laws* XVI, 1881, Chapter 362.

[5] Delaware, *Constitution of 1897*, Article 10.

[6] Robert J. Taggart, *Private Philanthropy and Public Education, Pierre S. duPont and the Delaware Schools, 1890-1940* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1988), 77.

[7] Richard Watson Cooper and Hermann Cooper, *Negro School Attendance in Delaware, A Report to the State Board of Education of Delaware* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1923), 8.

[8] Cooper and Cooper, 17 – 18

[9] "Rebuilding Program for the State of Delaware, " circa 1919, Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712-17, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[10] Susan Brizzolara, National Register of Historic Places Registration, Iron Hill School Number 112C, New Castle County, Delaware, 1995, 8:4.

[11] Taggart, 84.

[12] Pierre S. duPont to Honorable Richard T. Cann, Charles B. Hardesty, John G. Highfield, William S. Jester, Charles duPont Ridgely, and Jacob Prettyman, April 14, 1925, Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[13] N.L. Englehardt and E.S. Evenden, "Comparative Statistics on the Support of Public Education in Delaware and the Other States of the Union," September 1919, Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712-21, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[14] Pierre S. duPont to Carl Murphy, March 1, 1926, Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[15] Pierre S. duPont to I.W. Howard, November 10, 1928, Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712-17, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[16] "Sites Acquired for Colored Schools," Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712-17, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[17] General Education Board to the State Board of Education, Memorandum, December 31, 1919, Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712-17, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[18] Cooper and Cooper, 92, 43.

[19] Taggart, 94.

[20] Taggart, 96.

[21] Cooper and Cooper, 368 – 373.

[22] Taggart, 112.

[23] Time, January 31, 1927, 22. In Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[24] Wade P. Catts and Jay F. Custer, *Tenant Farmers, Stone Masons, and Black Laborers: Final Archaeological Investigations of the Thomas Williams Site, Glasgow, New Castle County, Delaware*, DelDOT Archaeological Series Number 82 (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Department of Anthropology, 1990), 64-69.

[25] James Betelle, "New School Buildings, State of Delaware, Part II," *American Architect* 117 (June 23, 1920): 788.

[26] Letters of Thanks, Pierre S. duPont Papers, Longwood Manuscripts, Group 10, Series A, File 712-56, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

[27] *Time*, 22.

The Legacy of America's One-Room Schools

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This article is the keynote address delivered by Paul Theobald for the One-Room Schooling Conference held at Northern Illinois University, June 21-23, 2001. Theobald's research interests in the history and foundations of education is reflected in this presentation. He calls for public reconsideration of the purpose of schooling, bridging the past with the present as he uses the one-room school as a standard for reform.

The one-room school has become a cultural icon of sorts, one that generally serves as a catalyst to positive sentiments. Of course the one-room school experience was not always a positive one, at least not for all of America's youth; but that matters little at this point, for it can scarcely be denied that there was much that was good in that experience. I want to focus on just two lessons gleaned from the one-room experience in this country. The first has to do with the depth of commitment the schools represent. And the second has to do with the purpose of schooling.

When the twentieth century started we had come close to putting a schoolhouse within walking distance of every child in the country. Were it not for the vastness and isolation of some of our western states, we would have accomplished that goal. Our grandparents and great-grandparents put their energy and meager resources into building as many schools as were needed to accommodate the educational needs of children. By contrast, our energies today are directed toward trying to get by with as few schools as possible. Legislators in most states are relentless in their efforts to close schools in an attempt to make larger ones.

I want to focus on just two lessons gleaned from the one-room experience in this country. The first has to do with the depth of commitment the schools represent. And the second has to do with the purpose of schooling.

Anyone who stops to think about the implications of this can't help but recognize that there is a kind of cultural poverty in this circumstance. Our decisions about schooling no longer hinge on high principle. In fact, they no longer reflect much concern for children at all. At a time when there is more wealth floating around our nation than at any other point in our history, instead of building schools and refurbishing older ones, we have chosen the cant and pettifogging of "standards" and their concomitant standardized tests and left it at that. To put the matter simply, those who built and paid for the one-room schools across this country had the kind of class and character one rarely finds in policymakers today.

The second lesson will take a little longer to work through. It can be stated simply enough, but it is not a matter easily understood. The one-room schools of the nation were not predicated on the provision of economic utility. It is culturally difficult for us to comprehend this today, for the purpose of schooling has shifted to getting and keeping jobs. In a larger sense, there's a predictability to this shift, for it is in keeping with the values that undergird all of our political and economic arrangements. We shouldn't wonder why these same values eventually overtook the educational agenda of the nation.

The supreme values of our founding fathers were freedom and the sanctity of private property. One might say that there is a predictability to the elevation of these values given the birth of the nation in our separation from England. There's even a compatibility between them, as anyone can see that it takes freedom to acquire personal property. But there are ways in which these values conflict, too. If the masses were free to create the law of the land, what is to stop them from re-distributing the private property of the wealthy?

This nation-building business, then, was a tricky affair. One of the fundamental choices seemed to be whether we should maximize freedom and risk minimizing the accumulation of property—or minimize freedom in order to maximize the acquisition of property. Aristotle never hesitated on this question. Maximize the acquisition of property and you give democracy a chance to work. Go the other way, according to the Greek philosopher, and democracy cannot last.

In a curious way, the debacle known as Shays Rebellion illustrates the quandary our founding fathers faced. Daniel Shays and other western Massachusetts farmers wanted the money supply inflated, while the state's commercial interests rejected this policy. Although the rebellion was short-lived and not particularly violent, it was the largest single catalyst to the constitutional convention in the summer of 1787. James Madison, the chief architect of our constitution, rejected the Aristotelian position and came down in favor of a political system that would minimize freedom, thus protecting material acquisition. We may have fought a revolution to acquire freedom, but we created a constitution to curb it. Madison, it turns out, was a fearful individual. If you want to know what motivated him, you have to turn to the huge corpus of private letters that are available in any academic library.

We may have fought a revolution to acquire freedom, but we created a constitution to curb it.

What he wrote in *The Federalist Papers* was for public consumption. In private, Madison reveals himself to be part Hobbes, part Calvin, and part Malthus—even before Malthus wrote his famous treatise. James Madison created a political system that placed the protection of property above all else, and in so doing he laid the blueprint for our current educational agenda: send kids to school so that they can get all that they can out of this economy. In order to protect property from Malthusian pressures, Madison felt he needed to limit the political participation of the people to a trip to the polls once every two years. There, they were to select men of superior ability and then get back to their private lives.

But devoid of a political dimension to these lives, how do people give expression to their freedom? The sad fact is that this must then be done in the economic arena. Guided by Madison, Hamilton, and the others of a like mind, we gave birth to a culture that places our horizons relating to fulfillment squarely in the realm of material possessions.

Embracing a political system that left politics to a select few and reduced political participation for the many to coming out to vote once every two years, is it any wonder that we developed a culture that sets people up to measure their worth by how they fare in the economic market? And as acquisition has become synonymous with the American dream, the educational system has increasingly focused on the development of economic utility—economic wherewithal. In other words, schools must get kids ready for the jobs that will in turn enable their material acquisition. Better jobs through better schools. Pretty simple stuff.

But not simple in its ramifications—for it turns traditional conceptions of an educated person on their head. The educated in our society no longer care much about truth, goodness, beauty, and justice—the classical hallmarks of an education. And why should they? These are concepts with applicability in the political realm; they are baggage

in the economic market. And politics, of course, is that world which belongs to the few—by design.

The trouble with this—and, once again, if you read the letters of James Madison, you'll see that this very thing troubled him as well—the trouble with this is that a people unconcerned with questions of justice cannot survive as a democracy. The French Enlightenment philosopher Montesquieu describes this beautifully in the Persian Letters.

Embracing a political system that left politics to a select few and reduced political participation for the many to coming out to vote once every two years, is it any wonder that we developed a culture that sets people up to measure their worth by how they fare in the economic market?

There's more to be said here about Montesquieu, but I'll get back to that. For now I need to return to the question of why we should re-engage the purposes of education that animated the nation's one-room schools rather than this good-education-means-a-good-job philosophy. Have you ever asked yourself why, in the midst of all of this prosperity, this hottest economy ever, both political parties have made education the political issue? Isn't it strange that when economic times are tough, when we find ourselves losing an edge in the international market—schools are at fault? We saw this during the 1980s as the Japanese and the Germans began to out-engineer us. The schools were decried as mediocre. One Reagan-commissioned report claimed that if a foreign power had inflicted this widespread mediocrity on the nation's schools, we would have considered it an act of war. Today, as we clearly dominate the global economy, as we are clearly out-engineering every country on earth, do the schools receive thanks for their wonderful efforts? No. They just receive the same kind of bashing couched in different rhetoric. The schools must have standards, we now hear. And we must test for these standards, and test the teachers, and test, test, test.

Why, all of a sudden, has education risen to the top of the political issues list? Why are legislators in some states voting on what kind of methods should be used to teach reading? Just ten years ago such an idea would have been considered absurd. But not today. Why? There has always been a desire to do schooling better, but it has never come close to being the biggest blip on the political radar screen. Not like it is now.

A few months ago I met with a representative of the governor's office (in Nebraska) and I asked why education is currently the talk of the town. She told me in no uncertain terms that the people are worried about the future and that every politician worth his/her salt knows this. I think that she was right. We inherited a high degree of occupational volatility when we grew tired of the profit limits imposed by a national economy. We convinced ourselves that we needed a global economy and that we had to remove whatever obstacles might be in place to inhibit such a thing.

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So we orchestrated policies like GATT and NAFTA and started exporting our jobs to cheap labor. Mobile capital, they call it. Take a drive along the south side of the Rio Grande if you'd like to see what mobile capital looks like. You'll find the corporate logos there very familiar.

The truth of the matter is that corporations that have long

operated with little regard for American communities are now operating with little regard for America. Many have turned their backs on pensions to retired employees and they have received court support for doing so. The downsizing of mid-management in this country sent shock waves through the whole population. We have slowly rediscovered that employment is not a basic human right in this country.

The truth of the matter is that corporations that have long operated with little regard for American communities are now operating with little regard for America.

It's something you might get, but you might not. You might find dignified, fulfilling work, but you might not. You might get work that pays the bills, but you might not.

And what kind of work circumstances will our children inherit? Will it be even worse? If you're a parent, you know what that anxiety feels like. You have a sense for the misery that must come with an inability to pay for adequate housing, food, clothing, health and dental care. Right now the negative manifestations of this anxiety, this uncertainty, is being directed at public schools. Politicians are telling the public that if schools had standards we wouldn't be in this boat. If schools just had teachers who could teach, we wouldn't have so many worries. We could feel better about what the future holds for our children.

In truth, though, the cause of this anxiety has nothing to do with schools. It is tied, rather, to our embrace of a global economy and the subsequent loss of income for 80 percent of the population over the last couple of decades. While there are plenty of jobs in this economy, there isn't nearly enough income for the great majority. The income has been redistributed upward through all manner of corporate-friendly policy. General Electric (GE) corporation provides a good example. Prior to 1980 and the arrival of Ronald Reagan's so-called tax reform, GE paid about $300,000 per year in corporate income tax. Clearly, this was a drop in the bucket and an outrage in and of itself. But over the course of the next six years, GE not only paid no corporate income tax, the corporation actually received several million dollars from the federal government tax rebates for "so-called" energy research and development efforts—something others have called corporate welfare. In fact, if you look at the federal income generated from corporate income tax, you'll find that in the mid-fifties it represented about a third of everything we took in. Today it represents a mere 4 percent. Shifting the tax burden to the backs of wage-earners—in other words, the upward income redistribution—is something directly attributable to decisions made (or not made, depending on your perspective) in the arena of economic policy. But the nation's corporate elite, including the big city newspapers they own, the news magazines and TV news shows they own, do not want the public's attention focused on economic policy—and for good reason. Our current economic policy is destructive of the environment, it is destructive of communities, and it is, ultimately, destructive of the nation's social fabric—the nation's ability to "get along," to equitably distribute social and economic justice across all individuals and groups.

Unlike other professions where shortages drive up wages, teacher shortages produce alternative certification programs.

From corporate leaders who have driven down American income by exporting American jobs to foreign countries—countries with very poor systems of public instruction, I might add—we hear that schools must have standards. Our schools have to improve significantly, but cost less. If teacher shortages

appear, then the critics' responses are to disparage teacher education as an essentially useless activity and then call loudly for alternative routes to teacher certification. Unlike other professions where shortages drive up wages, teacher shortages produce alternative certification programs.

I think it would be fun if, for the heck of it, Northern Illinois University started an alternative program for a medical license. You could easily demonstrate that there are not enough doctors in rural Illinois. So why not? Teach them a little biochemistry—the university is probably teaching that anyway—and maybe some human physiology.

I think public debate about education is essential. But I despise the crisis rhetoric wielded by corporate America that inhibits honest debate and puts teachers on the defensive before the conversation begins.

They don't really need all those courses on surgical methods. And you could spare them all of that time in residencies and internships by just hooking them up with a practicing doctor for a few months. They'll be ready.

The medical profession and the public, for that matter, would not stand for this. But when it comes to something many times more impactful on children, the teachers who shape their child's intellectual lives, you might ask: Is professional preparation really necessary? It's ridiculous and it's shallow, but it's sold to Americans as completely acceptable on the nightly news. Don't misread me. I think public debate about education is essential. But I despise the crisis rhetoric wielded by corporate America that inhibits honest debate and puts teachers on the defensive before the conversation begins. And so I am not optimistic about all of the public attention heaped on education these days. It is imminently predictable that it will end in administrators and teachers being cajoled to do more of what they have been doing—and doing it with fewer resources. In other words, all the political attention given to education won't produce what needs to happen. We won't be asked to think through matters of purpose—the purposes that drove the one-room schools of the nation—and, as a consequence, we'll continue to embrace education for economic utility.

I'm reminded of a political analyst who commented on the Clinton/Lewinsky affair shortly after it broke. He said, "Republicans don't want to remove the President, they want to talk about it for as long as possible." For a while I wondered if he was right about this, but I think he was. Everyone knows that you can't remove a president for having an affair—especially after the two previous presidents waged an illegal war in Central America and didn't receive so much as a slap on the hand. I would say the same about the nation's corporate elite and all of their harping about education. They don't really want school change—they just want to talk about it for as long as they can because they know this will enable them to deflect public recognition from where the real problem lies.

Thomas Jefferson repeatedly called for the establishment of "ward republics" to insert a political dimension into as many lives as possible. He also called for free schools to prepare youth for future political participation.

It is not educational policy or practice that is failing the children of this country; rather, it is economic policy that has rendered children the largest segment of the population living in poverty.

I'd like to share a little anecdote that I think makes the point quite well. I recall a banker serving on a local school's strategic planning committee. I served on it as well. He got on his soapbox about how much he

spends training entry-level employees to do simple things, about how hard it is to find good workers, etc. When he finished, I asked him what he paid his entry-level employees. I could tell by the look he gave me that this must have been an impertinent question. After a long, nonverbally-loaded stare and pause, he asked me quite angrily what difference that made. I told him I wanted to know whether he was having difficulty finding good entry-level employees or whether he was having difficulty finding good entry-level employees for what he was willing to pay. He informed me that he wasn't serving on the committee to have his business practices questioned. I told him that it might be the same for the professional educators on the committee. And we went on, of course, to become the best of friends.

There must be a political dimension in the lives of people if democracy is going to work.

When it is all said and done, as we all well know, we can't do much about economic policy. But if we can change the way we think about education's purpose and embrace the agenda of the one-room schools, we might educate the next generation of leaders to do a far better job—including placing things like environmental well-being and social justice into the list of criteria that drives policy creation. I think that right now teachers can play a kind of gadfly role. Since those who create and influence economic policy have no qualms about making recommendations for education policy, teachers may as well do them the same favor in return.

I would like to argue that there were (and are) alternatives to Madison's version of political theory and thus alternatives to the way we do economics and education. For instance, there were the anti-federalists—those who, with Thomas Jefferson, opposed the blueprint that came out of the 1787 Philadelphia Convention. They espoused a very different kind of political theory. Their ideas were more in line with the French Montesquieu-Tocqueville tradition than with England's John Locke-Adam Smith heritage. Montesquieu disagreed with the idea that life was somehow "prepolitical" and primarily about economics as Locke had persuasively argued. Partially out of respect and admiration for classical thought, Montesquieu argued that human fulfillment was tied to political participation. He saw this happening through what he called "intermediate bodies"—all manner of civic associations through which, as Montesquieu put it, "power flows." The notion of decentralizing the decisions that affect the lives of people seemed to best operationalize—for Montesquieu at least—the ideals of the Enlightenment project. Thomas Jefferson repeatedly called for the establishment of "ward republics" to insert a political dimension into as many lives as possible. He also called for free schools to prepare youth for future political participation. These declarations speak loudly of the fact that Madison's embrace of the Locke-Smith heritage did not ascend to complete ideological hegemony at the time of the founding, nor does it have to now.

We are discovering that democracies are not an aggregate of self-interested individuals as Madison thought; they are, rather, as Aristotle argued, an assemblage of community members who understand what they hold in common and, sometimes at least, stand ready to raise it above their own self-interest.

About four or five years ago a student of Italian political economy made a big splash with a book he entitled *Making Democracy Work*. Robert Putnam spent many years piecing

together an argument for why northern Italy has prospered while southern Italy has languished with a sluggish economy and widespread poverty. In the book, Putnam cites the presence of all kinds of civic associations in the north and the corresponding lack of such associations in the South. The essence of his argument is that there must be a political dimension in the lives of people if democracy is going to work. Putnam's work essentially echoes Montesquieu's arguments about republics in *The Spirit of the Laws*. It also directly refutes Madison's political theory and consequently denies the wisdom of constitutional arrangements that systematically minimizes any political dimension in the lives of the people.

Putnam's book also seems to have renewed America's interest in Montesquieu to some degree, but especially Tocqueville and Jefferson. Additionally, it seems to have fueled the success of Amatai Etzioni, William Galston, and others in the creation of the Communitarian Network. It seems to have spurred an incredible amount of scholarship on the recreation of face-to-face politics, or what many are calling deliberative democracy. This may be too much to put on one book, and there may be a kind of chicken or egg argument here about what came first, but this doesn't change the fact that there is a new wind blowing through the academy and among the citizenry.

It has been my experience that when educators, teachers mainly, try to give voice to the new intellectual current they're feeling, they inevitably turn to the term "community." We hear a lot about community today. Look around at the titles given to professional conferences. It seems that every other one makes reference to community. We are rediscovering a classical understanding that we have profoundly forgotten. We are discovering that democracies are not an aggregate of self-interested individuals as Madison thought; they are, rather, as Aristotle argued, an assemblage of community members who understand what they hold in common and, sometimes at least, stand ready to raise it above their own self-interest.

It's obvious that we have some cultural shortcomings to correct, and according to more and more scholars in this country and elsewhere, community is the key to correcting them.

This rediscovery represents a huge, sweeping, intellectual trend that has gripped almost every academic discipline in this country. And it centers on recognition of community as an organizing principle. We can see this even in the physical sciences, a realm almost always defined by its focus on reducing things to ever-smaller parts. Today, some of the greatest physicists in the world are now of the opinion that community is the central characteristic of the physical world. In addition to this, political, moral development, education, social, and even economic theorists are writing about the role of community in the human condition. This is pretty new. To demonstrate its recency, we can take education as an example. For most of this century we were convinced that the way to improve schools was to make them bigger. As a result, we took over 100,000 school districts and consolidated them into just 15,000. And we did this with little or no concern about what happened to the human community when it lost its school.

The main street excitement on homecoming weekend, the social gathering that centered around the school, all of this was labeled sentiment or nostalgia in the push to create bigger and consequently (or so we thought) better schools. We've all been there. We were all taught that school consolidation was synonymous with school improvement. It turns out that we were wrong in a lot of different ways. First, there is no evidence to show that consolidation improves school achievement, and, more damning, there is no evidence to show that consolidation saves money. The court system has finally acknowledged these facts and has recently stopped an

unpopular consolidation effort in West Virginia. But it turns out that we were wrong about that nostalgia thing, too. What was happening on main street was not something only romantics pine for; it was the manifestation of lives led with an orientation to their community—a phenomenon that has been steadily declining throughout this century. It's been replaced by trips to the mall, TVs, VCRs—as people turn their backs on local merchants. This consumer orientation, of course, has been deliberately courted. I'm reminded of the Wal-Mart in Iowa (actually I'm told that things like this occur in virtually all Wal-Mart stores) where the workers were forced to chant every morning, before the doors would open: "Sell deep, sell cheap, make those downtown merchants weep." Or the directive of a corporate sales representative quoted in a recent issue of *Educational Leadership*: "School is . . . the ideal time to influence attitudes, build long-term loyalties, introduce new products, test markets, promote sampling and trial usage and—above all—to generate immediate sales." We've left a community orientation to life so far behind. We've become so committed to a consumer lifestyle that we are quick to invoke shame on anyone who doesn't buy often or according to the latest fashions. You're cheap if you drive the same car or wear the same suit for ten years.

There was a time, though, when one-room schools dotted the countryside, that frugality was seen as a virtue—a measure of character—the mark of an individual who felt no compulsion to feed his or her ego. There was a time when such individuals were admired. We've moved so far from this in our culture. We've become so self-absorbed that we reserve disdain for frugal individuals and we do it to legitimate our own shallow habits. We reserve envy for those who are able to spend more frivolously than we do.

The role of community in democracy is that it gives us a forum for raising our common interest above our self-interest.

It's obvious that we have some cultural shortcomings to correct, and according to more and more scholars in this country and elsewhere, community is the key to correcting them. There was a time when we referred to the public school endeavor as common schools. The idea was that there are some things that the people hold in common and that students must be prepared to shoulder the obligation of preserving and protecting what is held in common. We have to get back to that if we want to preserve our social fabric, if we want to see policy created with a premium on social justice, if we'd like to have an environment capable of sustaining our children, grandchildren, and beyond. The role of community in a democracy is that it gives us a forum for raising our common interest above our self-interest. When a people lose the wherewithal or the inclination to do this, democracy cannot last. On this point even John Locke, the world champion possessive individualist, agreed with Montesquieu.

The education reform movements of substance are geared toward making this happen in public schools. They seek to emulate the one-room schools of old by building schools that enculturate youth into the habit and practice of upholding common interests. Thomas Hobbes was right about one thing: pursuing self-interest comes easily, although it can be intensified by a culture that promotes it, such as our consumer culture. Recognizing, deliberating, and acting upon the common interest is the heart of democracy. Participatory process is difficult and requires an education—the kind of education one-room schools provided.