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Jeroen Staring is an anthropologist who teaches mathematics at secondary schools in The Netherlands. His 2005 Medical Sciences dissertation describes the life, work and technique of F. Matthias Alexander (1869-1955). In 2007, he earned a professional master's degree in Special Educational Needs. A year later, he earned a professional master's degree in Pedagogy.

This dissertation constitutes a contribution to the history of education. It describes grassroots educational reform initiatives that took place in the United States, especially in New York City, during the Progressive Era. It also reviews the efforts of the Progressive Education Association — founded in 1919 — to professionalize educational reformers and to protoprofessionalize.

Central to this dissertation is the early history of the New York City Bureau of Educational Experiments (1916-1919). The Bureau was an educational clearinghouse, and it stimulated, subsidized and conducted educational experiments. The Bureau had a previously unacknowledged influence on the founding of the Progressive Education Association. The dissertation sketches the careers of two members of the Bureau: Marietta Johnson (1864-1938) and Caroline Pratt (1867-1954). Both women would become essential links in the establishment of the Progressive Education Association and the formulation of its mission.

A number of findings described in the dissertation directly pertain to recommendations made by the Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms in their 2008 report *Tijd voor Onderwijs*.

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Midwives of Progressive Education  
Jeroen Staring

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# **Midwives of Progressive Education**

Jeroen F. Staring

2013

Integraal (Werkgroep Integrerende Wetenschapsbeoefening)  
Nijmegen

## COLOPHON

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# **Midwives of Progressive Education**

**The Bureau of Educational Experiments**

**1916 – 1919**

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor  
aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam  
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus  
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ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties  
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# FOREWORD

"You see," said the stick, "there were as pretty little children once as you could wish to see, and might have been so still if they had been only left to grow up like human beings, and then handed over to me; but their foolish fathers and mothers, instead of letting them pick flowers, and make dirt-pies, and get birds' nests, and dance around the gooseberry bush, just as little children should, kept them always at lessons, working, working, working, learning week-day lessons all week-days, and Sunday lessons all Sunday, and weekly examinations every Saturday, and monthly examinations every month, and yearly examinations every year, everything seven times over, as if once was not enough and enough as good as a feast — till their brains grew big, and their bodies grew small, and they were all changed into turnips, with little but water inside; and still their foolish parents actually pick the leaves off them as fast as they grow, lest they should have anything green about them."

Charles Kingsley. *The Water-Babies*, 1864, pp. 283-284.

This dissertation explores the role the Bureau of Educational Experiments and its members played in the history of experiential learning during the final years of World War I. The above epigram describes an old longing for experiential learning. It is from the closing chapter of *The Water-Babies* by English clergyman, historian, and writer Charles Kingsley (1864) who has Tom, the boy chimney sweep, visiting an island where the children had turned into turnips, radishes, beets and mangold-wurzels. They had become incapable of play because their legs had turned to barren roots, planted firmly in the ground, but "burst and decayed, with toad-stools growing out of them" (p. 280). A pillar with an inscription stood on the shore, "Playthings not allowed here" (*ibid.*). An old stick explained to Tom what had happened to the children. They had become physically disabled, powerless to run about and play, merely mentally preparing for a growing number of examinations.

Kingsley's call for learning methods reform dates from 1862-1863, when his novel appeared as a serial for *Macmillan's Magazine*. Later a variety of English and American educational reformers advocated learning by doing — that is, learning from activity and experience instead of rote learning — and reached the same conclusion as did Kingsley before them. They too found that the prevailing approach to education turned children into lifeless, motionless, beings without a sense of self. Another approach to education was desperately needed.

## **My Professional Interest in Experiential Learning**

In 2001, after twenty years of fulltime housekeeping and raising a son, I began a career teaching physics, chemistry, and mathematics in Dutch pre-vocational secondary education schools. During these years my interest in experiential learning methods grew substantially. I expanded my interest by teaching physics and chemistry through active learning methods (for instance, my students spend half of their lessons in laboratory circumstances doing experiments), but also through stimulating, organizing and coordinating learning by projects during project weeks involving the whole student population of the school at the same time. In 2008, I had my students, who were in the final months of their study, organize a one-day symposium about learning by

competences. This as a preparation for their future vocational opportunities, and to encourage continuing self-education that is inherent in these learning methods. Efforts included planning and organizing the entire process of inviting symposium key-note speakers, parking of cars of symposium attendants, other security and fire prevention measures, catering, musical intermezzos, cleaning afterwards, as well as creating and regularly updating portfolios, *etc.* In addition, between 2005 and 2008, I made a study of contemporary Dutch educational reform initiatives, and consequently also of those of the past, in particularly in the United States: nineteenth-century *New Education* and twentieth-century *Progressive Education* approaches. During these years, I paid visits to experimental schools in The Netherlands and in the United States. These activities enabled me to gain experience in *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) practice in The Netherlands and earn a professional master's degree in Pedagogy in 2008.

### **The Origin of the Dissertation**

In 2005, at Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands, I publicly defended my doctoral dissertation on Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869-1955). That dissertation comprises an extended biography discussing the life, work and influence of the self-educated actor who became the founding father of a method of changing habits related to stance, pose, respiration and gait. The Alexander Technique is primarily a breathing and posture education method that Alexander evolved from nineteenth-century singing guidance informed by gymnastics tuition. In essence it concerns instructions for observing sensory-motor habits that are usually sub-conscious and implementing strategies for bringing them under more conscious control, to the extent that that is possible, and changing them when that is deemed appropriate (Staring, 2005). According to Alexander himself (1923) his 'technique' relates to the very heart of learning and learning procedures. Influential New York City Columbia University philosopher John Dewey (1918b-d, 1922, 1923, 1931) shared Alexander's opinion.

Researching the historic roots of New Learning in the context of an assignment for the professional master's degree in (New Learning) Pedagogy mentioned above, I wrote an explorative survey of educational literature concerning the Alexander Technique. In addition, I conducted small-scale short-term action research to test educational efficacy of incorporating certain of Alexander's concepts at the pre-vocational secondary education school in Maarssen, The Netherlands, where I taught math. The research outcomes show that the students particularly valued practicing Alexander technique-inspired guided procedures as preparation to their math tests and examinations (Staring, 2007b). As a consequence, from that time onwards, I let these students prepare themselves psycho-physically by practicing and experimenting with habit-changing methods akin to Alexander's.

Not long before, Dalton's (2002) *Becoming John Dewey* had made me aware that Alexander, between 1916 and 1919, had been involved with the NYC Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE), established in 1916, to act as an education reform clearinghouse and to research educational reforms. Alexander had also been involved with Caroline Pratt's NYC experimental elementary education Play School. Both facts shed a new light on his influence on educational reform, as it did too on his dealing with education innovators at Columbia University — including economist and BEE member Wesley Mitchell, who kept diaries of his and his family members' lessons with Alexander. It appeared that Alexander played some role in the American early twentieth-century educational reform closely related to *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) reforms in the early twenty-first-century Netherlands.<sup>1</sup>

## Foreword

Understandably, I sought to investigate the Bureau's history (Staring, 2007a). During yearly visits to New York City since 2006 I consulted available BEE and BEE-related archival sources. These were mainly divided over four archives: *City and Country School* archives, *Bank Street College of Education* archives, *Rutgers University Libraries* archives, and *Columbia University Butler Library* archives. From studying the contents of the archives and from additional literature research I learned that the majority of BEE charter members knew each other for many years before they joined the Bureau, and had worked together in diverse social reform pressure groups. Most interestingly, all these BEE members, all women, had played major roles in diverse New York City educational reform activities in, for instance, settlement houses and civic organizations. The professional expertise they brought with them to the BEE in 1916 meant that the BEE quickly gained an important place within educational reform, not only in New York City, but also nationwide.

Mid-2011, through becoming familiar with secondary sources, consulting educational experts in the U.S., and through research of library, internet and other electronic archival resources, I realized I had gathered considerable new primary material, material that had not yet been analyzed and described by recent historians of education. I felt compelled to illustrate the importance and relevance of the Bureau of Educational Experiments by writing a dissertation about my findings.

Jeroen Staring, Nijmegen.



# INTRODUCTION

Pratt's vision was of educating through industrial life in the classroom. Children were to learn by experimentation and experience. Through play, children reconstructed the work relationships and processes of the real world that were once available to them to learn from in the course of their daily lives...Blocks for younger children, school jobs for older children, and trips into the community provided the work and play, the first-hand experience that helped children to learn about living creative, productive lives within the community. In this active environment, traditional learning was a by-product of real learning.

Joan Cenedella. *The Bureau of Educational Experiments*, 1996, p. 76.

Johnson frustrated and annoyed academic traditionalists, so sharp were her attacks on bookishness and so strong her preference for experience as a way of learning. On the printed page, moreover, her views sometimes came across as simplistic; and yet people who heard her speak, or better still visited the Organic School and watched her work, sensed something that was hard to put into words. Johnson had a gift. Somehow, she managed to lift her school high above the pedagogical jargon that mired the child development literature...and, yes, the students in her school did seem to read easily, naturally, happily.

Joseph W. Newman. *Experimental School, Experimental Community: The Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education in Fairhope, Alabama*, 1999, pp. 77-78.

The aim of this dissertation is twofold.

First, to gain insight into American educational renewal during the Progressive Era. The knowledge is important because the reform efforts and disputes for and against the renewal show strong parallels to Dutch twenty-first-century *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) educational reforms and an accompanying debate.

The *Introduction* begins with a synopsis of the most important arguments in the Dutch New Learning debate, followed by an overview of parallel American education reforms and related arguments. The choice of order of description corresponds with the wish to highlight a narrative, rather than in any way denoting the history of American educational reform efforts as derivative to the Dutch reforms and debate.

Though the passions surrounding the New Learning debate have declined since 2008, the conditions that led to it remain. The most important themes of the debate likely will surface again in the near future. In the *Introduction* I argue that this dissertation may help lead to a more informed exchange of opinions over the kind of classroom reforms typified by *Nieuwe Leren*.

Considerations specified in the first sections of the *Introduction* lead to the central research question of this thesis: What was the role played by the Bureau of Educational Experiments and its members in the history of progressive education between 1916 and 1919?

The second aim of the dissertation is to shed new light — informed by research of (mostly) recently uncovered documents and archival material — on the role played by the NYC Bureau of Educational Experiments in American early twentieth-century educational renewal and in American educational historiography. The penultimate section in this *Introduction* further addresses the second aim of the dissertation.

### ***Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning)**

In January 2005, Dutch educational psychologist Greetje van der Werf asserted that the theoretical basis for *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) educational reforms lacks empirical underpinning. These reforms were recently propagated by, among others, her colleague Robert-Jan Simons. The editor of *Pedagogische Studiën*, in a special issue of the journal, responded that New Learning “helps schools to face the ever increasing problems of reduced motivation in (pre-) vocational education” (Wubbels, 2006). Other contributors to the special *Pedagogische Studiën* issue support the contention that enhancing student motivation is *the* core rationale for adopting New Learning reforms.<sup>2</sup> Simons (2006) emphasized that New Learning outcomes depend on balancing processes of guided, action and experiential learning — and that instruction should be “durable, flexible, functional, meaningful, generalizable and application-oriented” (p. 81). Simons, Van der Linden, and Duffy (2000) had previously contended that New Learning methods replace conventional teaching methods with experiential learning and action learning. Experiential learning includes discovery oriented, contextual, problem-solving, case-based, social, and intrinsically motivated learning. Action learning includes active, cumulative, constructive, goal-directed, diagnostic, and reflective learning. In conventional guided teaching approaches, teachers make the relevant decisions regarding learning goals, learning strategies and measuring learning outcomes and students “can and should follow” (p. 4). In contrast, in experiential learning approaches to education “circumstances, personal motivation, other people, innovations, discoveries, experiments, etc., determine what and how one learns” (*ibid.*). In action learning approaches to education, students themselves “determine the goals of learning according to needs arising in their actions” (p. 5).

### **A New Dutch School War**

In hindsight, Van der Werf’s 2005 article was catalyst to numerous popular media articles regarding the *pros and cons* of New Learning. Discussions of authentic learning, natural learning, problem-based learning, inquiry learning, discovery learning, and experiential learning appeared in Dutch national newspapers *De Volkskrant*, *NRC Handelsblad*, and *Trouw* — and in educational magazines like *JSW*, *Didaktief*, *Het Onderwijsblad*, among others. As well, “*Nieuwe Leren*” began appearing in the titles of many Dutch books, articles, pamphlets and other texts on education reform.

In a *Volkskrant* interview, Simons claimed he invented the phrase *Nieuwe Leren* in 1995 to cover three educational reforms: students should learn to study and learn cooperatively, students should learn to learn by doing, and students should learn how to learn. That is, students should decide for themselves the best ways to study and learn to learn independently (in Reijn, 2007). However, barely half a year later, in a *NRC Handelsblad* interview, he came to regret using the expression, asserting that it had spoiled the atmosphere of educational reform discourse, exclaiming, “Let us not discuss this phrase anymore” (in Hagers, 2007).

While the Dutch New Learning school war began in professional education journals, soon newspaper and magazine reports would be based on onsite visits to New Learning educational institutes.<sup>3</sup> For but one instance, in an article about the new pre-vocational secondary education school Via Nova College, teachers were deemed “expert coaches” and classrooms “learning plazas” (Schrijver, 2005). The principal of Via Nova College represented the school’s mission as a synthesis of old and new education reforms, including the Montessori Method, the Dalton Laboratory Plan, Gardner’s ‘multiple



intelligences,' and Dutch educator Stevens' 'adaptive education.' The Via Nova College principal did not distinguish specific New Learning methods from other educational practices employed at the school (Dorreboom, 2005). While a Via Nova College teacher eloquently documented the school's success in preparing students for the future *kennissamenleving* (knowledge society, learning society), he too failed to bring out whether the school's application of New Learning practices were the determining factors in that success (Dees, 2005).

### **New Learning and Dutch Teachers Study Centres**

The New Learning suppositions are that: traditional educational models fail to motivate students; students are "naturally" motivated to learn; learning to learn is more important than acquiring knowledge; students learn best by independent and cooperative study (such as writing interdisciplinary assignments using the internet); portfolios, papers, and assessments can and should substitute formal examinations (Giesen & Schöttelndreier, 2005).

Since 2005, Dutch teachers eager to update their pedagogic and didactic understanding have had available a number of English books on the latest educational reforms, including the *Courage to Teach*, *Learning Organizations*, *Learning Through Children's Eyes*, *Multiple Intelligences*, *The Big Picture: Education is Everyone's Business* and *Flow*, as well as Dutch books suggestively titled *Learning Less and Less*, *Amongst Teachers*, and *We Demand Education*. In addition to books, there are DVDs, including *Implementing New Learning*.

Thus, Dutch teachers in the early twenty-first-century Dutch school war have an implicit, and sometimes an explicit, opinion on New Learning. One side advocates that Dutch schools of education and national teacher continuing education centres play a leading role in implementing New Learning reforms (Castelijns, Koster, & Vermeulen, 2004). The former director of the Algemeen Pedagogisch Studiecentrum (APS) teacher continuing education centre located in Utrecht was once dubbed the "father of New Learning" (Vink, 2005). He asserts that the suppressed motivation — of students and teachers alike — shows the need for greatly expanding the use of New Learning reforms in Dutch primary and secondary schools. He distinguishes an 'old' *Paradigm A* learning model (in which teachers convey so-called objective knowledge; students read and listen) from a 'new' *Paradigm B* learning model (in which students construct their knowledge from doing and experiencing; teachers stimulate learning processes). And he believes a shift to the new paradigm is long overdue. Similarly, a senior advisor of the Katholiek Pedagogisch Centrum (KPC) Groep teachers continuing education centre located in Den Bosch asserts in the *NRC Handelsblad* that late twentieth-century societal changes inevitably led to changes within the education system. She finds that an educational paradigm shift has already occurred with the acceptance of the understanding that students' "motivation [to learn] leads to better acquiring of knowledge than being compelled [to learn]" (Tabbers, 2007).

### **New Learning Opponents**

Education reform often, perhaps always, begets heated resistance. New Learning opposition surfaced almost immediately with columnists and authors of letters to the editor critical of articles praising Dutch New Learning schools. One suggested, for instance, that the Utrecht APS continuing education centre merely promotes pseudo-scientific theory (Rienks, 2005). Another referred to a robustly negative government

assessment of a New Learning school by the Den Bosch KPC Groep (Hanzen & Opmeer, 2007). Another letter to the editor countered that students are not intrinsically motivated to learn at all, that only extrinsic motivation will get students going (Lemmens, 2007). Yet another letter claimed that the observation of a paradigm shift is not supported by data based research, that New Learning is not new, and that it does not even deal with learning as such (Nelissen, 2007). A well-known Dutch author characterized New Learning educational approaches as merely consisting of plain and simple strategies of “dumbing down students” (Zwagerman, 2007). A historian went so far as to assert that New Learning devotees “infiltrated” the APS and KPC Groep education schools and demonstrated sectarian quarrelling and conduct (Blokker Jr., 2007). A psychologist took another tack, asserting that adolescents’ brains are not ready for New Learning learning strategies (Jolles, 2007). Neuroscientific research shows, he claims, that the prefrontal lobes are still maturing and students experience difficulties learning to plan and take consequences of their actions into account. A *NRC Handelsblad* journalist observes that the Dutch phrase *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) sets off alarm bells in parents, in which they would envisage schools devoid of separate classrooms; students who do no more than whatever gives them pleasure; and teachers who are reduced to coaching students instead of conveying knowledge (Hagers (2005). A Dutch political party politician was adamant in *De Volkskrant* that New Learning educational reforms simply reflect an acute teachers shortage (Lambrechts, 2005). Although not necessarily critical of New Learning reforms, union leaders also found that New Learning requires more, ‘fresh’ teachers (Van der Mee, 2006). Aggravated by New Learning, a philosopher lecturing at the Amsterdam Free University even founded the new advocacy group Vereniging Beter Onderwijs Nederland (Verbrugge & Verbrugge, 2006a-b).

“Competent teachers are needed!” declared a schoolteacher in a letter to the editor in *NRC Handelsblad* (Lamers, 2006). Another teacher explained that she left teaching because of the instruction that teachers are supposed to “guide processes” instead of transmitting knowledge (Kooijman, 2007). A third teacher warned that New Learning strategies at Dutch teachers colleges and schools of education would lead to a primary education disaster that cannot be rectified or remedied (Meijs, 2008).

A *Volkskrant* journalist scrutinized numerous aspects of New Learning *praxis* in primary, secondary and vocational education. Sommer’s sketches of e-learning at the Deltion College in Zwolle, and an APS seminar discussing U.S. educator Parker J. Palmer’s pedagogic views present a particularly gloomy view of analogous New Learning approaches to education (Sommer, 2006).

Lastly, the 2008 Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms report, *Tijd voor Onderwijs* (Time for Education), severely criticized New Learning, emphasizing that Dutch educational reforms focusing more on learning processes than on end results led to a downward trend in test results in reading and arithmetic. The Commission found no scientific basis for New Learning approaches to education. Instead, they strongly recommended a gradual restructuring of *Nieuwe Leren* schools that includes a considerable involvement by (expert) teachers rather than large-scale educational reform from above. They also recommended developing and maintaining a clearinghouse infrastructure (body of knowledge) for educational reforms. In their plan, to acquire the necessary data, small-scale short-term research focusing on specific projects would have a preference, taking into account diversity of schools, diversity of pupils within schools, and differences between urban and rural schools. The Commission also advised investing in both initial training and expertise training of teachers and

recommended that schools, in the context of “good governance,” must be accountable to parents (Commissie Parlementair Onderzoek Onderwijsvernieuwingen, 2008).<sup>4</sup>

Since the publication of the 2008 parliamentary report, the heated New Learning debate cooled down significantly. It would first appear that New Learning will *not* be the frontrunner in the initial new millennium Dutch school war. While New Learning educational reforms are still taught within (pre-) vocational education in the early years of the second decade of the twenty-first century, the first established New Learning schools have already closed down.

### Is New Learning New?

The problem of suppressed motivation to learn is certainly older and more widespread than the Dutch New Learning school war (Wardekker, Boersma, Ten Dam, & Volman, 2012). Perrone (1989) wrote in the early 1970s that he had often been reminded that “large numbers of children are not motivated,” and “hence not successful” (p. 8). In contrast, Furedi (2009) asserts that the “purpose of education is to help young people develop their capacity for thinking, knowing, reflecting, imagining, observing, judging and questioning” (p. 56). This leads him to state that the “imperative of motivation” has corrosive effects on teacher-pupil relations, that it infantilizes education, and that “educationalists tend to be preoccupied with innovating pedagogic techniques that can work to motivate children” (p. 56).

A *NRC Handelsblad* journalist observes that perhaps the earliest form of New Learning in The Netherlands occurred in 1974 when the University of Maastricht taught students with Problem-Based Learning strategies (Duursma, 2006). This statement suggests that the Dutch New Learning reforms began at least 40 years ago. Indeed, several articles suggest that the heart of New Learning has its roots in American progressive education and, among others, Dewey’s philosophy of education. Van Hout-Wolters, Simons, and Volet (2000) distinguish three distinct tidal waves for the active learning elements of the New Learning. The first wave flooded The Netherlands’ educational landscape during the first decades of the twentieth century when the “traditional school reformers...proposed new types of schools [Montessori schools, Dalton schools, *etc.*], all stressing active learning in various forms” (p. 23). They added that Dewey “emphasized the value of self-discovered knowledge” (*ibid.*). A second wave occurred during the 1960s and 1970s, when the “traditional school-reformers attracted new attention and new innovative schools were founded” (p. 24). Lastly there is the present New Learning wave.

In a 2007 report, University of Amsterdam Kohnstamm Institute researchers observe fascinating parallels (“tangent planes”) between New Learning and early twentieth-century reforms of Montessori, Boeke, and Parkhurst (Blok, Oostdam and Peetsma, 2007, p. v). The author of the opening chapter to the report tells how the English New Education Fellowship (NEF) founded in 1921 in Calais, France, inspired Dutch Bilthoven education reform pedagogue Boeke, and asserts that the New Learning learning to learn element has its roots in early twentieth-century theories.<sup>5</sup> He added that with concepts like ‘New Education’ “it would be worthwhile to pay more attention to these tangent planes between the ‘old’ Reform pedagogues and New Learning” (Kok, 2007, p. 7). He claimed, “It is our expectation that other parallels exist as well” (*ibid.*).

Advocates of American self-styled New Education reforms during the 1890s until the 1920s, and of Progressive Education during the 1920s found the structure of the American school curriculum failing, identifying the prevailing “graded class system...with its lock-step of progress and promotion” as the cause of failure common to

all schools (Burk, 1913, p. 6). They demanded radical reform of the lock-step system, including new teaching materials, new teaching techniques, new types of text books, new types of exercise books for students who work at their own pace and who correct their own exercises, individualized instruction, cultivation of the senses and manual skills, flexibility in the amount of lessons per week, Socratic discussions in the classroom, no repetition of grades, and — among many other claims — integration of the arts, social sciences, health science and civics in the curriculum. Note that they introduced and used wording parallel to the vernacular used in current Dutch New Learning suppositions. For instance, “Information is important, but ways to get information are more important. Children should be shown how to investigate, [how] to go to sources” (Smith, 1924, p. 5). Several historians of education argue that early twentieth-century progressive pedagogical phrasing and language became dominant as the ruling reform-minded rhetoric in teacher training schools (e.g., Labaree, 2004a-b; Lagemann, 2000).

So, the Dutch New Learning reform stance and idiom cannot be categorized as new; there are historic and rhetoric parallels dating from at least the early twentieth-century U.S.A. Current Dutch criticism of educational reforms cannot be categorized as new either. Critics of American New Education and Progressive Education (e.g., Lynd, 1953) and current Dutch New Learning opponents seem to target analogous themes — e.g., the reformers’ cult-like manner avoiding criticism, anti-intellectual tendencies, showing disrespect of subject matter, depreciated teaching, and inferior learning — while sharing a mistrust of teacher training institutes.

### **Central Question**

Until recently, during the first decade of the twenty-first century, the school war on methods, aims, usefulness and efficacy of the New Learning raged in The Netherlands. The war reached its peak between 2005 and 2007 and came to a rather abrupt cooling down when in 2008 the Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms in their governmental report *Tijd voor Onderwijs* did *not* favourably portray and evaluate the New Learning.

While literature of the period discussing this first Dutch school war in the twenty-first century summarily referred to the history of the New Learning related education reforms in the United States in the first decades of the twentieth century, there was no in-depth discussion of those reforms. Neither proponents of the New Learning, nor their opponents, exhaustively evaluated early twentieth-century American experimental progressive education.

The omission reinforces both the New Learning supporters and opponents’ stands that the school war only concerns a typical Dutch exchange of views — and that New Learning educational renewal merely constitutes recently devised reforms, implemented in no other place than in The Netherlands during the first decade of the twenty-first century.

American education history shows that, for instance, Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt were key figures in early twentieth-century American experimental, innovative education related to the current New Learning in The Netherlands. The schools they founded still exist today. Johnson’s School of Organic Education, established in 1907, now renamed Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education, however, no longer strictly promotes its founder’s pedagogy, curriculum, and didactic approach. Pratt’s Play School, on the other hand, founded in 1913, now named City and Country School, still has the mission to remain congruent with its founder’s pedagogy, curriculum, and didactic approach.

Both Johnson and Pratt, during part of their lives, joined the Bureau of Educational Experiments, the New York City education clearinghouse and research institution. My research led me to the understanding that the Bureau and its members played a far greater role in the history of progressive education and the professionalization of educational reformers than previously recognized and that all of the female Bureau members had built up extended grassroots educational reform expertise before joining the BEE.

The above considerations led me to the following central research question of this thesis: What was the role played by the Bureau of Educational Experiments and its members in the history of progressive education between 1916 and 1919?

### **The Dutch New Learning Debate**

That the Dutch twenty-first-century *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) has historical and rhetorical parallel in early twentieth-century American New Education and Progressive Education reform is sufficient reason to focus on that era of American education. Another reason *must* be the notable fact that the New Learning school war abruptly cooled as soon as the Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms issued its report. The sudden silence of an extensive and heated educational discussion creates an impression that the differences of opinion are no longer valid, that nothing was learned, nothing of value was cherished, and finally, that the Commission's recommendations do not really matter, can be ignored. As a mathematics teacher in the Dutch school system, I find the suppression of discussion of issues raised by the New Learning debate rather unfortunate. After all, the classroom conditions that were a stimulus for the reform remain very much a reality today.

I examined the history of three organizations promoting educational renewal: the local Public Education Association of the City of New York, the national Progressive Education Association, and the NYC Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE), as well as the professional lives of BEE key members. My research shows that during the first decade of the twentieth century, when these leading American reformers were teachers, settlement house workers, and social activists, the reform-oriented education initiatives they championed included specific concerns for class management, class discipline, class size, playgrounds, the impact of manual training in the curriculum, and suppressed intrinsic student motivation. During the second decade of the century, the majority of the reformers worked as intelligence test administrators and/or visiting teachers for the Public Education Association. Subsequently, beginning in 1916, they formed and/or became members of the Bureau of Educational Experiments. There, the contexts of educational renewal were constituted by ongoing daily discussions concerning top-down imposition of educational reforms, (non-) consultation of parents and community leaders, psychological testing of students and separate classes for children with special educational needs, cooperative forms of learning, challenges of immigrant children, professionalization of teachers, (*pre-*) vocational education, and community functions of urban and inner-city schools. All these reform-oriented themes remain relevant to the current Dutch New Learning debate — which, until 2008, was heavily laden with strong emotions. The following chapters include new information and exploration of sources not previously considered, and may actually serve to better understand the struggles of the Dutch New Learning debate participants. Indeed, if the debate were to continue in light of the matters I explore in some detail, it might have more depth, and, perhaps, be conducted more adequately, and with more wisdom.

## **Historiography of Education**

This dissertation challenges the orthodox historiography of American early twentieth-century educational reform, its revisionist interpretations, as well as an intermediate *post*-revisionist interpretation of histories of that period of educational renewal.

The orthodox historiography embraces studies containing near-hagiographic biographies of the professional lives of pedagogical pioneers and philosophers of educational renewal, such as Horace Mann, John Dewey and William Heard Kilpatrick (e.g., Benedict, 1942) and/or taxonomic-like *tableaux* of educational reform philosophies during various epochs (e.g., Demiashevich, 1935). Though mostly devoid of social context, these authors stress reformers' aims to change social order through education. A later revisionist historiography includes works of authors whose interpretations of histories of educational renewal point to differing underlying factors of reform. They describe the reformers' aims as promoting social control and stabilization of prevailing socio-economic circumstances, rather than reforming socio-economic conditions and social relationships through education (e.g., Greer, 1972), accentuate the constancy of hierarchical teacher-student relationships within schooling structures (e.g., Zilversmit, 1993), emphasize the structural context of teaching where teachers feel forced to maneuver within strategic positions between the rhetoric of child-centered learning activities and the day-to-day on-the-job teacher-centered teaching practice (e.g., Cuban, 1993), and other issues of critique like processes of Americanization, truancy, segregation, social stratification and racism, feminist historiography and gender, special educational needs and religion (Tyack, 1974; Clifford, 1976). Notions that temporary outcomes of a *mélange* of struggles of adherents of distinct educational reform movements determined the curriculum of schools during the first decades of the twentieth century — by reformers either promoting social efficiency, or child-centered education, or social reconstruction through education, and those promoting social meliorism (Kliebard, 1995) — represent a third, *post*-revisionist way of interpreting educational reform histories.

The dissertation first, but not foremost, revises a general view about John Dewey's influence on educational reform during the Progressive Era. Like Cremin (1961) in his highly influential history of American early twentieth-century educational reform, historians of education of the era, even when discussing schools that formed independent of Dewey's direct influence, tend to frame those education reforms as manifestations of "Dewey's vision" (Semel, 1999a, p. 7). In contrast, I find that Dewey's education writings had at most secondary impact on the impetus for education reform taken up by educators focused on here. By way of sketching biographies of Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt's professional lives, the dissertation outlines that female members of the Bureau of Educational Experiments had extensive participation in grassroots reforms beyond education as well as significant classroom experience before interacting with Dewey, or his writing, and before forming or joining the Bureau.

Further: historians of education (e.g., Antler, 1987; Cremin, 1961) certainly acknowledged changes wrought by women leading the Public Education Association of the City of New York, as well as women educators Johnson and Pratt. This dissertation continues their arena of research, in various ways confirming their research. Yet, thus far no historian of education known to me has described an *intertwined* history of the women who formed the core of a vigorous and dynamic *network of women* aspiring political, societal and educational reform. Various aspects of educational renewal introduced by members of this network of women, as teachers, and as settlement house workers during the mid-1900s, Women's Trade Union League members between 1906 and ± 1915, Public Education Association workers between ± 1908 and 1916, Gary School League

members in 1916 and 1917, and Bureau of Educational Experiments members as of 1916 are central to this dissertation. In this sense, the dissertation revises, and therefore solidly challenges, the near-universal historiographic tradition of sketching life histories of *individuals*.

Finally, the dissertation corrects a number of particular, specific, *petites histoires*. For instance, it shows that writings of both Johnson and Pratt not earlier reviewed elsewhere advance a yet unacknowledged social reconstructionist approach. The dissertation also presents a completely new version of the founding of the Progressive Education Association.

### Structural Outline

The structure of the thesis will be as follows.

*Chapter 1* delivers a short review of the diverse educational reform activities between 1890 and 1919, and of professionalization processes between 1919 and 1935 related to educational reform that began with the establishment of the Progressive Education Association (PEA).<sup>6</sup> The first part of the chapter shows that many grassroots educational reform initiatives (Reese, 1986) butted, and flourished, or just withered away. Examples taken from New York City show that mainly groups of predominantly women in changing combinations of cooperation aided most to educational reforms. The second part of the chapter discusses causes of a sudden halt in educational reform in New York City during the final two years of World War I, and professionalization of educational reform *immediately* following the end of the actual war activities. The PEA, the first nationwide organization promoting education renewal, initiated the latter. The synopsis of the chapter points to a gap in the body of knowledge that exists for the period ending World War I.

*Chapter 2* chronicles the major part of the professional career of Marietta Johnson, one of America's early twentieth-century educational reformers. In 1907, she founded a private experimental rural school in Fairhope, Alabama, based on her vision of an organic education. The narrative outlines her initial successes as a teacher, a teacher of teachers, her existential crisis, the consequences of a conversion experience, her painful losses, the birth, awakening and growth of the school she founded, the responsibilities she took maintaining that school of her dreams, her successes, her passion, and her political ideals. The narrative also explores her school's unchanging curriculum with its centrality on creative shop work and field trips, as well as Johnson's many winding steps on the road to her BEE non-resident membership.

*Chapter 3* draws the formative years of the professional career of Caroline Pratt, an American educational reformer who, one hundred years ago, founded an inner-city experimental school in Manhattan, New York. The narrative outlines her endeavours as researcher, social settlement reformer, trade unionist expressing socialist conviction, and endeavours as toy manufacturer. The narrative also explores her critical texts, her role as education theoretician focusing on socializing elementary education, and her role as education practitioner creating specific strategies of learning by experiencing through field trips to the immanent surrounding world of work and life, and recreating field trip experiences afterwards through organized creative and cooperative play. The chapter illustrates Pratt's many steps on the road to her BEE charter membership.

*Chapter 4* focuses on the cooperation of educational reformers working for the Bureau of Educational Experiments between 1916 and 1919. The chapter shows how individuals, mostly women from very different backgrounds, cooperated and reinforced each other in motivating their actions. The biographical facts and story of

interconnections between the lives of a dozen school reformers outlined in the first chapter, and in the form of more-or-less extended professional biographies of Johnson and of Pratt in the next two chapters highlight another interesting pattern emerging at the time. Their participation in settlement house reforms, union organizing, and the NYC Public Education Association had forged the majority of the BEE members into an accidental cadre of professionally skilled, dauntless, and effective educational activists. The Bureau, in turn, became a model for the Progressive Education Association (PEA). BEE members in 1919, and later, were among those shaping professionalization initiatives by the PEA.

An *Epilogue* — discussing the history of Marietta Johnson and her school during the 1920s and 1930s and of Caroline Pratt and her school during the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s — concludes the dissertation.



# CHAPTER 1

## Educational Reform and Professionalization of Educational Reformers in the United States 1890-1935

"How old the new! How new the old! The new is there in the old, embedded in much alien material; the old is here in the new, inspiring many novel applications."

Herman Harrell Horne. *This New Education*, 1931, p. 81.

Historians of education distinguish two periods in the history of American educational reform between the 1890s and the mid-1950s (Graham, 2005). This chapter addresses educational reform initiatives during the first period and subsequent professionalization of educational reformers during the second period until 1935.

Economic and societal renewal and education reform typify a first period, roughly from 1890 to 1919 — dubbed Progressive Era. Reformers argued that education could ameliorate problems related to large-scale immigration, urbanization, and population congestion. Educating and Americanizing thousands upon thousands of immigrants and their children would meet the needs of the nation. During this period, the number of children enrolled in schools increased enormously — as did the number of grades completed. High schools evolved, vocational teaching flourished. School overcrowding ensued. Consequently, most educators embraced a cult of efficiency, exploring ways to combat school congestion through school management efficiencies, and teaching efficacy. It was the time of teaching the three R's, characterized by lockstep method of instruction. It was the time of teaching patriotism. It was the time of assimilation. Throughout this first period, *New Education* describes education reform.<sup>7</sup> The first part of the chapter outlines school restructuring during the 1890s and early 1900s as exemplified by the work of two pioneering reformers, and educational reform efforts by education stakeholders during the 1900s and 1910s. Taking New York City circumstances as an example, I highlight the ever-wider circles of those concerned with education reform — including social settlement workers, parent associations, authors on education, civic groups, and local politicians and their adversaries. Where feasible I introduce persons whom I describe more closely in subsequent chapters.

A second period of education reform began following World War I. In this period, which lasted from 1919 until roughly a decade after the end of World War II, the needs of the children replaced needs of the nation. Reformers widely adopted a new, more child-centered curriculum harmonious with needs, interests, and learning styles of students. We can date the beginning of professionalization of educational reformers to the founding of the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education in Washington, D.C. in 1919 — renamed Progressive Education Association (PEA) in 1920. Throughout this second period, *Progressive Education* describes education reform. The second part of the chapter outlines nationwide professionalization of educational reorganization between 1919 and the time when disputes about social reconstruction through education began to politicize debates within the Association in the early 1930s, in the long run leading to the demise of the PEA in 1954.

The synopsis of the chapter points to a gap in the body of knowledge that exists for the period ending WWI.

### Two Pioneering Educational Reformers: Were They Prominent?

As the Progressive Era began, a Bostonian Supervisor of Public Schools declared that schoolwork in Boston changed radically during the 1880s, brought about by amalgamating Froebel learning didactics (experiential learning by doing method) and the laboratory method of observing and experimenting. The Supervisor attempted to launch New Education as an overall concept of educational reform, signifying innovative connotations, suggestive of a large progressive reform movement in the field of education (Hopkins, 1892). By the end of the Era, not long after the Progressive Education Association (PEA) formed, one of the five PEA co-founders claimed in *The Atlantic Monthly* that an educational reform movement had been in existence for two decades (Cobb, 1921b). The *Washington Times* (1920) specified that the movement for progressive education had begun with John Dewey and Laboratory School, and with Charles Hanford Henderson's manual training experiments and writings.

Are these assertions factual? What was the impact of Dewey and Henderson on fellow educators around 1900? Did they really initiate a countrywide movement for progressive education? The following subsections estimate their influence, based on contemporaneous texts when available.

#### John Dewey

In 1896, Alice Dewey (1858-1927) and her husband John Dewey (1859-1952) founded the University Elementary School at the University of Chicago, often known as the Dewey School, Laboratory School, or just Lab School. John Dewey regularly issued reports in the *University Record* through which we may infer the school's pedagogy, teaching methods, and early history.<sup>8</sup> The reports address four initial problems that Dewey hoped to solve. A chapter in his (1899) *The School and Society* summarizes how the Lab School met the problems in its first years: How may schools better relate to the students' homes and the neighbourhood? How to teach history, science, and art to have significant value in students' lives? How to teach the three R's to spring naturally from studying disciplines such as social and natural science? Lastly, how to conduct individual instruction? Although 7,500 copies of *The School and Society* sold between 1899 and 1904, contemporaneous texts render the definite impression that the Lab School hardly was known outside University of Chicago perimeters. While a number of educational magazines reprinted a variety of Dewey's *University Record* reports,<sup>9</sup> *Primary Education* (1900) summed up the attitude of the majority of U.S. teachers and educators regarding the reports: "But why should I seek to know about this school?...It will not make any difference in my teaching. I have my work all laid out for me."

Dewey's Lab School reports were not viewed as important "save by isolated persons here and there;" it was not anticipated that the Lab School "would last long, or that it would teach any important lessons" (Hinsdale & Whitney, 1900, p. 98). Only after the Deweys moved to New York City in 1904, and John Dewey began teaching philosophy at Columbia University, did their work at the Lab School begin to receive wider recognition (*School Journal*, 1905).

The virtual absence of details of attention on Lab School's activities in contemporaneous texts signifies that the school, in fact, represented an isolated experiment. It certainly was not a basis for a larger movement of educational reform.

Contrary to the observation in the 1920 *Washington Times* (referenced above), a survey of turn-of-the-twentieth-century texts precludes concluding that communication and coordination between Lab School and other U.S. school reform experiments was fruitful, or even existed. Instead, Lab School impact appears insignificant. Moreover, at the time, the school's results had not yet convinced Dewey to take a firm position supporting educational reform. He did write about it, but half-heartedly.<sup>10</sup> His cautious words tell a lot about his stance at the time. In recognizing that a New Education did not exist, yet, Dewey literally placed himself outside discussions about it. In fact, Dewey's thoughts on educational reform only began commanding respect during the second decade of the twentieth century. Only following the second edition of *The School and Society* (1915), publication of several authoritative articles and books on education, and contributions to the *Cyclopedia of Education*, did he become a welcome guest speaker at many meetings about public education in New York City. By 1915, he had become an ever more prominent authority on progressive education (Slosson, 1917). In *Schools of To-Morrow*, written with his daughter Evelyn Dewey (1915), they reported on different education reform initiatives that had independently and simultaneously sprung up throughout the country.<sup>11</sup> The book became an instant success (first lustrum: nine printings); it has been continuously in print since 1915. The Deweys' message in *Schools of To-Morrow* is that experimental schools are no longer rare. They did not portray a national movement (Oelkers, 2005), but found inventive and effective teaching practices in a school-as-social-settlement, and in the schoolwork in various laboratory schools that had sprung up during the previous decade.

### **Caroline Pratt**

Around the turn of the twentieth century few teachers acknowledged Dewey's or Lab School influence. One rare exception was a female manual training teacher. Between 1884 and 1892, Fayetteville-born Caroline Louise Pratt (1867-1954) taught at primary schools in Pompey and Fayetteville. From 1892 to 1894, she studied at the New York City College for the Training of Teachers (later renamed Teachers College), founded in 1887 to provide schooling of teachers of children of the poor. After graduation, she taught woodworking in the Philadelphia Normal School for Girls until 1901. In 1901, she also worked for a social settlement house in Philadelphia. In the fall of that year, she moved to New York City and began teaching carpentry there at a Manhattan settlement house. A year later, Pratt (1902a-b), describing her work in a settlement magazine and in a report of the social settlement, favourably cited Dewey's 1897 *My Pedagogic Creed* as an influence. Still, Pratt's exception proves the rule. Pratt founded her urban one-room Play School in 1913.

### **Charles Hanford Henderson**

During the late 1880s, Charles Hanford Henderson (1861-1941) taught physics and chemistry in Philadelphia. Following his appointment as principal of the Northeast Branch of the Manual Training School in 1893, he introduced a new instructive program. Henderson (1896) claimed, "A progressive education would be one in which the educational process [is] being constantly readjusted to meet...changing conditions" in society (p. 487). He advocated educating students in their physical, intellectual, and moral realms. As children are born investigators and inquisitive experimenters, he asserted, they want "to be employed...with something that interests *them*, not something that interests mamma or papa, or the teacher" (p. 496). His new method based on

manual training and exercising the senses would lead to self-prompted action by the students. During his tenure as Lecturer on Manual Training at Harvard University in 1897 and 1898, he advocated founding manual training schools that would, in today's terminology, be learning laboratories. He advocated implementing such manual training instruction in primary and secondary schools.<sup>12</sup>

Beginning in 1897, Henderson actively promoted his views through public lectures on "*organic education*," first at the Boston Sloyd Training School. In the winter of 1899, following an appointment as director of the New York based Pratt Institute High School, he continued lecturing in Boston, this time at the Industrial School Hall. In the fall of that year, he delivered a series of lectures at the Philadelphia Griffith Hall, illustrating his latest views on organic education (*City and State*, 1899). Although these lectures were well attended and Henderson issued a book on organic education in 1902, the actual impact of his work and writings seems to have been insignificant. Contemporaneous texts suggest that his turn-of-the-twentieth-century proposals of educational reform represent a one-off uncoordinated endeavour, lacking wider focus.<sup>13</sup> And, much in contrast to Dewey, Henderson's thoughts on educational reform *never* became authoritative.<sup>14</sup>

#### *Marietta Johnson*

As with Dewey's views on education, perhaps a handful of teachers at the time wholeheartedly acknowledged a Henderson influence. Caroline Pratt (1948), not at the time, but much later recalled that Henderson "had stirred up [her] own thinking" by the end of the nineteenth century (p. 57). It is telling indeed that during the first decade of the twentieth century, only one reformer — Marietta Johnson of Fairhope, Alabama — dared to found a school, its core curriculum sailing under the flag of Henderson's organic education. After graduating in 1885 from the State Normal School at St. Cloud, Minnesota, Marietta Louise (Pierce) Johnson (1864-1938) taught at rural elementary schools for five years, and then began teaching at Normal Schools. She married in 1897. In 1898 she had a 'conversion experience,' inducing her to embrace Henderson's (1902) *Education and the Larger Life*, advocating implementing Organic Education in kindergartens and schools. Johnson founded her rural one-room School of Organic Education in 1907. In many lectures between 1909 and the early 1930s, she unequivocally embraced Henderson's pedagogy and educational scheme.

#### *No Nationwide Movement*

More initiatives by pioneering educators to transform schools and schooling materialized following the turn of the twentieth century (Connell, 1980; Meyer, 1945). Acknowledging this may seem to indicate that no other impulses to modify educational realities existed. They did. Or, that the opinion of fellow educators was extremely supportive, as is currently denoted in antedating hindsight. Usually it was not. Throughout the Progressive Era, educational reform initiatives were initiated by *individual* groundbreaking educators. They took place on a local level, lacked broad impact. Turn-of-the-twentieth-century experimental schools received little attention — not even Dewey's Lab School was noticed by a broad public. Only over time did Dewey become prominent as a leading educator. Henderson and the others never did. Therefore, I cannot agree with the opinion (e.g., *Washington Times*, 1920) that a national *movement* for progressive education existed, a movement that supposedly began with Dewey's Lab School and Henderson's manual training experiments and writings on organic education. It did not.

## A NYC Settlement House Initiative

Those directly involved with schooling and educational matters, including teachers, principals, university educators, and school supervisors were not the only advocates of school reform. Others taking up the cause included social settlement workers, leaders of parent-teacher associations, and leaders of civic groups. Often their reform initiatives flourished, withered away, and, sometimes, reemerged later in another form. As an example, in this section, we explore an educational reform that began — and ended almost without a trace — in a New York City settlement house.

Social settlements were important agencies of reform. Education reform and the settlement movement often intertwined. As well as education reform, settlement house agendas included campaigns for better housing, outlawing child-labour, and, in some cases, support for union organizing, especially among young women immigrant garment workers. This activism, in turn, would have an impact on the subsequent education reform initiatives of settlement workers who participated in these campaigns.

Classes offered by the settlements often related to practical needs of the neighbourhood populace. One example is that Hartley House maintained a carpentry shop (Davis, 1967, p. 47).<sup>15</sup> Who was the Hartley House carpentry teacher? How were the classes taught? Hartley House archives reveal the teacher was Caroline Pratt. Between 1901 and 1909, *Hartley House News*, a four-page monthly issued by the settlement, regularly reported on Pratt's classes and how she was teaching them.<sup>16</sup> *Hartley House News* articles offered no theoretical justification for the program. Pratt (1902a), however, in the social settlement magazine *The Commons*, reported her classes were an experiment. "The main feature of the [Hartley House carpentry shop class] experiment is that the children are allowed to choose their own models" (p. 11). She professed to be a devotee of Dewey's thesis that school is not "a preparation for life, but life itself" (p. 12).<sup>17</sup> Pratt made it her "primary object to help the children to take their proper place in the life about them" (*ibid.*) — through teaching manual training. Her experimental instruction, she suggested, "might be summed up as that of the laboratory, with the teacher in the background" (p. 14).

She cites six interdependent advantages generated by her teaching: With smaller classes, there is less need for disciplinary measures. Students become interested in the relation of their work to the larger world. Students make their models for a particular purpose, *useful to them*. The standards are lowered in order to let students fully experience consequences of their mistakes, solve their problems themselves, and learn from them. Lastly, students plan their chosen model in advance as to form and as to size; and, they are mentally active when working on their model. She declares that when students feel encouraged to develop their own activities, thinking and deciding, scrutinizing and reflecting, questioning and evaluating, they gain more and more confidence. Not only do they learn from their mistakes, they make it their self-chosen responsibility to learn.

Pratt expressed strong feminist views. She found that manual training in public schools had become a part of a highly inflexible male system. Male teachers were essentially mechanically oriented and respected the systematization of teaching manual training.

In the *Fifth Annual Report of Hartley House*, Pratt (1902b) outlined a view of the motivation of the children to choose a model that is slightly at variance with her article in *The Commons*. Pratt herself suggested the children's very first model. Only when students were full of activity carrying out the suggested first model, were they asked what they would like to do next. Pratt kept records of her students' progress, records of the uses students put their work to, and what, according to the students became of the models

they were making. Record keeping made the students' work purposeful, she stated. By interviewing the children who attended her classes, Pratt found out that the rewarding part of their carpentry hour lay outside the classroom. She listed five advantages of her experiment. Note that the advantages reflected the socialist working ethos — and the Protestant ethic. Shifting responsibility for schoolwork on students trained students in judgment, and made them less satisfied with imitation. Since the students did not use prepared working drawings, they had to develop the habit of thinking carefully before acting. Among the results, she reported, was a noticeable decrease in the need to impose discipline; students engaged only in modest idling.<sup>18</sup>

Pratt's ambition reached beyond carpentry. She felt that she was not only a woodwork teacher, but also a social settlement reformer whose contributions would beneficially change society (Pratt, 1905b, 1906). She wanted her pupils to become, in terms of later psychologies, self-actualizing and contributing members of society as soon as possible. In this sense, having a goal to improve society through her tutoring, she was a social reconstructionist *avant la lettre* (Kliebard, 1995). Interestingly, especially since newspapers and magazines did not often report settlement experiments, the *New York Observer* praised Pratt's experimental lessons: "Many of the lads have fine ideas of what they like to do, but have little opportunities in their homes. In the carpentry class they have a chance to carry out these thoughts, and very few of them fail of realization" (White, 1903).

Subsequent to her November 1908 departure from Hartley House, apparently on friendly terms, Pratt divided her time between political activities — primarily raising funds for striking women garment workers — and designing and manufacturing wooden dolls and toys, an all-together different trade. Questions remain: "Was her teaching prominent? Did her experimental method command respect?" In fact, Pratt's carpentry teaching at Hartley House thrived in practice. The number of children attending her classes grew over the years. Students and the settlement's management held her in high esteem. Four decades later, one student warmly recalled, "Miss Pratt!...Do I remember her? As a little boy I went to Hartley House. She let me make what I *wanted* to make...for the first time" (in Benedict, 1942, p. 247). Yet, theoretical writings from her own pen went into oblivion straight away. These conjectural texts *never* became part of a mainstream reformist literature, certainly not part of a movement for progressive education. On the other hand, Pratt gained an enormous amount of experience. She addressed colleagues at small-scale local conferences of social workers, building a network of like-minded social reformers. By reporting results of her experimental teaching, she had sown seeds for future professional recognition. In 1913, when she founded Play School in Greenwich Village all these aspects of knowledge came into good use. She brought with her extensive professional expertise.

### **A NYC Settlement Work Initiative Backed by a Civic Group**

In sum, those most directly involved with schooling and educational matters were not the only ones advancing educational renewal; social settlement workers also advocated reform. Nevertheless, like Pratt's carpentry classes, most of the educational renewal experiments failed to achieve prominence beyond their local communities. Still, New York City settlement work during the mid-1900s took a national lead in advocating reforms affecting everyday educational praxis (Davis, 1967). Settlement workers, in alliance with employees of a civic group, even gained nationwide success. This section outlines the innovative program established by Mary Marot at Hartley House, and its further advance by the Public Education Association of New York City.

Mary S. Marot (1861-1938) conceived the *visiting teacher* idea in 1905. Marot was a Philadelphia kindergarten and elementary school teacher until the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>19</sup> She moved to New York City during the early 1900s, resided in Hartley House, and was their director of Children's Work. How did she come to conceive the idea of visiting teacher? Well, she shared inspiration and ideas with Harriet Johnson<sup>20</sup> (not to be confused with Marietta Johnson of Fairhope, mentioned above) and her life-long companion Harriet Forbes<sup>21</sup> who both worked for the Hartley House as Visiting District Nurses. Visiting nurses confronted urgent social issues of child labour, unsanitary living conditions, overcrowded housing as well as adjustment of the new immigrants to the American public school curriculum.

Since the 1880s, internal rural to urban migration and immigration, mainly from Europe, led to population congestion and subsequent school overcrowding in New York City — especially in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. While giving the needed nursing care visiting nurses educated patients and their families about preventative healthcare measures, sanitation, and the like.<sup>22</sup> Since Johnson, Forbes and Marot worked alongside each other at Hartley House, thrashing out theoretical implications of the work of a visiting nurse and of a feasible visiting teacher was inevitable — especially since Marot “had done work of this kind, in Philadelphia” (Richman, 1910, p. 163). At some time in 1905, the spark must have launched itself. The work of visiting nurses *vis-à-vis* health matters corresponds to the work of visiting teachers *vis-à-vis* socio-educational issues such as failure in school and truancy. Early in 1906, Marot began working as a visiting teacher.<sup>23</sup>

The new line of work was fully set in motion late in 1906 when the Public Education Association of New York City became interested, following the placement in the field of visiting teachers by four settlements where women were the head workers (Beard, 1915). Society women had founded the Association in 1894 to help solving particular socio-educational needs and problems in the city. Those tribulations originated in an extremely dense metropolitan population of mainly new, mostly European, immigrants arriving since the 1880s. The immigrants and their more often than not foreign-born children were living in unhygienic slum conditions in districts lacking parks and playgrounds, and adequate bathing and toilet facilities. The circumstances led to severe poverty, squalor, filth, hostility, despair, misery, and social disintegration, disruption in class, truancy, and crime. Internal rural to urban migration, in particular the great cities on the East Coast, worsened the pandemonium of rapid urbanization. The Public Education Association was leading campaigns against child labour (H. Marot, 1903), for compulsory education, school lunches, and sex education (Cohen, 1964). The Association also investigated the achievements of African American students (Blascoer, 1915a-b).

In March 1907, a conference of teachers and settlement workers led by Mary Marot under the auspices of the Public Education Association advocated having salaried visiting teachers in each district of the city (*New York Tribune*, 1907). The Association then took the work as a branch of its own (Carlton, 1986).<sup>24</sup> This had an immediate and profound effect on the careers of Marot, Forbes, and Johnson. Marot resigned her work at Hartley House to become Chairman of the Home and School Visiting Committee of the Association.<sup>25</sup> In 1908, she pleaded in the *New York Evening Post* to establish a bureau of “ten to fifteen visitors, a director, and a central office” (M. S. Marot, 1908b). She reported that John Dewey said at a meeting “that it [the visiting teacher program] is the most important and significant reform yet suggested” for New York schools, and “if taken up in a healthy and continuous way, would lead to changes not yet seen.”

Also in 1908, Harriet Johnson became a member of Marot's Home and School Visiting Committee; a year later both Forbes and Johnson joined Marot full-time when they began work as visiting teachers under the Association (*American Journal of Nursing*, 1909).<sup>26</sup> At some time during the early 1910s, Johnson was appointed head of the Association's visiting teacher staff.

Vigorously promoting the new type of social work by the Public Education Association paid off.<sup>27</sup> By 1915, the Association employed ten visiting teachers.<sup>28</sup> The Board of Education began using the services of visiting teachers too (*The Survey*, 1913). In July 1916, the Public Education Association organized the first national conference of visiting teachers, simultaneously launching *The Visiting Teacher in New York City* by Harriet Johnson (1916) — a book for promoting visiting teacher activities.<sup>29</sup> It is obvious that the visiting teacher program, begun in 1905 by Marot, Johnson and Forbes when working together at Hartley House, was flourishing a decade later; although, it was hardly known beyond New York City Boroughs. The road to becoming a nationwide success was a long one.

### **Overcrowding of Schools**

In 1908, settlement house workers began producing exhibits about causes and consequences of overcrowding. In March, they put together the Exhibit of Congestion of Population in the Museum of Natural History. In April, the exhibition moved to the Brooklyn Institute Art Building. Early in May, during the Second Union Label Fair of the Brooklyn Central Labor Union in the Labor Lyceum, members of the Women's Trade Union League — among them Harriet Forbes and Harriet Johnson, visiting nurses at Hartley House — displayed an archetypal tenement sweatshop they had prepared for the Congestion exhibit.<sup>30</sup> By 1910, New York City population congestion had become appalling. Authorities established a special commission to investigate. Their *Report of the New York City Commission on Congestion of Population* lists Helen Marot — younger sister of Mary Marot, founding mother of the visiting teacher program — as one of the individuals who appeared before the 1910 commission to testify in her capacity as Secretary of the city's branch of the Women's Trade Union League (NYC Commission, 1911, p. 272).<sup>31</sup>

Mary Marot's (1910a) "A Partial Remedy For School Congestion" counted 500 elementary schools in 1910, serving 600,000 pupils.<sup>32</sup> According to Marot, schools attempted to force students to fit into a mold for their grade. In grossly overcrowded schools, a minority of insubordinate students would absorb a relatively high proportion of the teacher's attention. Other students would drop out of school as soon as an opportunity presented itself. The educational needs of the majority of students, "who conform to most of the requirements, and therefore do not rise to the teacher's consciousness as needing any special attention," were given short shrift (p. 400). Marot argued that visiting teachers would make a difference; gathering background information on the students' home situations could lend a hand to reduce some consequences of overcrowded schools, and would be welcomed by the teachers. In the socialist organ *The New York Call*, Caroline Pratt (1912a) agreed, "No teacher can handle such [overcrowded] classes. ...They are an absurdity."

In 1911, private as well as municipal activities were instigated to combat school overcrowding. For example, several hundred representatives of schools and religious and civic groups of lower Manhattan districts organized as the School and Civic League of the Ninth District (*Evening Post*, 1911e). Harriet Johnson, then of the Public Education Association, chaired the Programme Committee of the newly established League.<sup>33</sup>



## Founding of a New Teachers' League

Throughout the 1910s, educators in diverse locations independently advocated radical educational reforms. As with Dewey and Henderson, their advocacy did not amount to a focused national education reform movement. Figuratively speaking, their appeals were small blips in the dimly emerging mosaic of early twentieth-century education. Furthermore, neither Dewey nor Henderson's writings called for founding of a society or organization bringing educational reformers together, exerting political influence, organizing lectures and seminars, or issuing a newsletter, magazine, or journal. In one instance, though, a teachers' league was formed that could have led to such an organization, a national educational reform movement. This short section focuses on that league. Interestingly, both Caroline Pratt and Mary Marot, who figure in previous sections in this chapter, were among the twenty signers of the call for founding *The Teachers' League of New York*, appearing in diverse February 1913 newspapers.<sup>34</sup> About two thousand teachers attended a general meeting held on February 28. John Dewey (1913) made an address. The League was to become an "organization of teachers on progressive lines...which shall have for its objects improving working conditions for teachers and better educational results for children" (*New York Call*, 1913a). The League organ, *The American Teacher*, carried articles related to educational reform, such as "Tools vs. Rules" by Caroline Pratt (1913), on teaching experimental manual training in public schools. However, the League had aims beyond educational renewal.<sup>35</sup> Interdependences between educators, parent-teacher associations, school principals, superintendents, the Board of Education, education related organizations, and unions — as implied by the League's main aims — may well contribute to educational reform. While its members promoted education reform, League members undeniably intended to organize a union, perhaps having learned their lessons in union organizing from the immigrant workers they served in the settlement houses. Early in 1916, League members reorganized as Teachers' Union of the City of New York, affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Subsequently, it never grew into a national organization leading a movement for progressive education, promoting educational reform.

## Writings Advancing Educational Reform

Those directly involved with school and education were not the only ones advancing education reform. The visiting teacher program, begun by social settlement workers, was soon backed, promoted, and financed by a civic group. At rare occasions, parents initiated educational reforms.<sup>36</sup> Usually parents sought to influence classroom matters only in schools attended by their children. This they accomplished through parent and parent-teacher associations. As well as directly supporting educational reorganization within schools attended by their children, they indirectly exerted political pressure with publication of informative material. National offices of parent-teacher associations advanced reforms as well (Mrs. Schoff, 1916). In what follows I focus on activities of the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations as emblematic of a growing interest in educational development, by parents and media.

### *Parents and Their Problems*

In 1914, the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations distributed *Parents and Their Problems*, a series of eight books conversing matters of schooling, ways of improving them, child related welfare topics, and new outlooks, such as eugenics and

mental testing. Interestingly, the fourth volume contains “The Real Joy in Toys” by former Hartley House carpentry teacher Caroline Pratt (1914a). Since children learn through playing, Pratt argues, they need elemental wooden dolls and toys when playing. Since modern children are not able to gather play material from their surroundings as children did in pre-industrial times, they lack “the sort of real experiences of which they see the beginning and end and therefore, to some extent, the meaning” (p. 119). Toys, in Pratt’s sense, replace real experiences, and can thus serve as tools of play that provide meaningful experience.

At the time of publication, Pratt had already introduced the basic jointed dolls and other wooden toys into Play School, which she founded in the fall of 1913. The same dolls and toys were in use in several New York City experimental schools. What’s more, Pratt manufactured and marketed them under her trademark Do-With Toys™.<sup>37</sup> At Play School, Pratt structured quasi-experimental conditions to study children playing with the dolls and toys. She found, “Thoughtful consideration of such play will reveal its educational value. In it lies the foundation of all thought processes” (p. 123).

By including Pratt’s “The Real Joy in Toys” in the 1914 *Parents and Their Problems* book series, the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations endorsed use of basic wooden playthings to aid learning and socializing in inner-city schools. Though Do-With Toys™ were in no more than a few laboratory schools, their presence constituted a small-scale quasi-experiment, to which Pratt’s book section brought attention. In this sense, it was yet another way of advocating educational reform, not to mention Pratt’s fledgling capitalistic enterprise.

#### ***Enlightening Books and Articles on Laboratory Schools***

Interest in education renewal grew considerably during the 1910s. A book dealing with pre-World War I educational renewal schemes is Scott Nearing’s (1915) *The New Education*, based on a collection of articles first appearing in the widely circulated *Ladies’ Home Journal*. Note, the book’s sub-title, “A Review of Progressive Educational Movements of the Day,” does not refer to *a* movement, but to “movements,” plural; the author did not wish to convey the notion of *a* unified national progressive educational reform movement.

Educational developments, particularly concerning New York City schools, figured noticeably in regional newspapers with large circulations, such as the local *New York Tribune*. In 1915, educator Henrietta Rodman wrote a column on education and women’s interests in the *Tribune*. Rodman specifically wrote about educational renewal initiatives and experimental schools. Two of her widely read articles were about Johnson’s School of Organic Education and Pratt’s Play School. Regretfully, Rodman never gathered her articles into a book.

During the mid-1910s, there were books, pamphlets, reports, and newspaper articles about a large-scale educational experiment in Gary, Indiana. They fed a need for background information to help understand a heated debate over a proposal to address school congestion by introducing a Gary-type system to New York City: the “Garyizing” of the city’s public schools.<sup>38</sup> The 1915-1917 debate was perhaps the first to be widely reported nationwide in newspapers, magazines, and journals. Most informative for NYC residents were local newspaper articles and those published by the Public Education Association. For example, in 1915 and 1916, Alice Barrows Fernandez<sup>39</sup> upheld the educational reform in Gary schools and the “Garyizing” of the city’s public schools in a twice-weekly *New York Tribune* column “What Is The Gary Plan?”<sup>40</sup> A fair number of the thirty-one bulletins issued by the Public Education Association also address “Garyizing”

of NYC public schools (e.g., McAndrew, 1916; Nudd, 1915, 1916; Wirt, 1916). Interestingly, *Schools of To-Morrow* by the Deweys (1915) and *The New Education* by Nearing (1915) also praise the laboratory schools of Gary. The young philosopher Randolph Bourne, Dewey's former student and close friend of Dewey's daughter Evelyn, joined the ranks bestowing praise in his (1916b) *The Gary Schools*.<sup>41</sup>

Ending this subsection on mid-1910s' literature concerning educational renewal initiatives: the writings addressed here do not cite a need for a national society or organization to bring together educational reformers, exert political influence, organize lectures and seminars, and publish a newsletter, magazine, or journal. Although the publications may at times imply (false) notions of an active national reform movement in the field of education, the texts merely describe isolated local initiatives at most. These initiatives form but a few more specks in the dimly emerging mosaic of early twentieth-century progressive education reform.

### Three Plans to Combat Congestion of NYC Public Schools

Circa 1915, school congestion was *the* major problem in more than just one East Coast city. Here, I concentrate on the state of affairs in New York City, three plans to combat school congestion by reforming the city's public schools, the involvement of the Public Education Association with one of these plans, and the school war that ensued.

#### *School Congestion*

As stated above, in 1911 private as well as municipal activities were instigated to combat school overcrowding. In the fall of that year, the municipal Board of Estimate and Apportionment's Commission on School Inquiry invited a group of experts to investigate school congestion, failure of the schools to hold onto their students, the city's inadequate vocational training, and offer recommendations for improving the situation. They released their report in 1913. In 1914, the newly elected Mayor John Purroy Mitchel, who had studied the report, adopted three plans to reorganize public schools in order to fight congestion of schools: the Schneider Plan, the Ettinger Plan, and the Wirt Plan. Primarily, these plans were to reduce overcrowding. They would do so with novel schemes of building and equipment usage, and curriculum adaptation by *social efficiency educators* who would apply "the standardized techniques of industry to the business of schooling [with] a scientifically constructed curriculum at its core" (Kliebard, 1995, p. 24).

The third plan received the most attention, and full support of the Public Education Association. It ultimately led to an all-out battle known as the Gary School War. In fact, this school war of almost epic proportions, in turn, led to Mayor Mitchel's failure to win reelection in 1917, and to an utter educational fiasco negatively affecting the other school reform plans.

#### *The Schneider Plan*

In 1894, Herman Schneider (1872-1939) received his professional engineering degree at the Engineering Faculty of Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Schneider was appointed Instructor at his *alma mater* in 1899. Immediately, he proposed a plan to concurrently train engineers in practice and in theory during a cooperative system of industrial apprenticeship. The plan combined gaining practical experience during apprenticeships sponsored by manufacturers in commercial shops and stores with

theoretical instruction at *Cooperative Schools* (Park, 1943). It was perceived as radical and not implemented.<sup>42</sup>

In 1903, Schneider began as an Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio. He became Dean of its College of Engineering in 1906; straight away, he introduced his plan. Early in 1909, the Lewis Institute of Chicago implemented a modification, known as the Half-Time Cooperative School Plan: Students would follow courses fifty weeks a year, “twenty-four weeks in the school and twenty-six in the shop. The work alternated week by week between the shop and the school” (Stephens, 1911, p. 30). By September of 1909, the schooling format was also introduced in Cincinnati public schools, as *Continuation Schools*. A Fitchburg, Massachusetts, high school introduced a similar modified plan in 1910.<sup>43</sup> The success of the plan in Cincinnati, Chicago, and Fitchburg led to an invitation of Schneider by the NYC Board of Estimate and Apportionment to join the expert group to pioneer ways to combat school congestion. In 1913, their report included strategies to introduce cooperative and continuation courses in vocational schools.<sup>44</sup> In 1914, the newly elected Mayor Mitchel hired Schneider as consultant to the Board of Estimate for one year for a week every month to introduce the vocational and trade related plan in the city’s overcrowded schools.<sup>45</sup> Still, throughout the middle and late 1910s, Schneider’s plan barely impacted school congestion, and was not introduced in most secondary and tertiary education schools. The introduction of the plan in technical schools was not successful in public schools. It was in some private commercial schools.<sup>46</sup> Today the history of Schneider’s plan is about entirely forgotten; remaining is only a vague educational reform ghost from the past. Interestingly, the socialist magazine *The Coming Nation* announced that Caroline Pratt who was on the Socialist Party standing Committee on Education was making a special study of the Schneider Plan (Simons, 1913). Regretfully, the report is missing. Pratt’s life-long companion Helen Marot, though, reviewed the plan in *The Creative Impulse in Industry* (1918b). Marot’s opinion may well have aligned with Pratt’s.

### *The Ettinger Plan*

In 1902 William Ettinger (1862-1945) developed a plan to fight problems of primary school congestion at Public School 147 of which he was principal (*The Sun*, 1918). The plan (also known as the Ettinger Experiment, or the Ettinger System) advocates that students, in the last two grades of elementary schools, take additional classes in a number of trades in order to get an idea whether a specific trade would suite them. Its pre-vocational preparatory courses in industrial work in co-operation with shops were indicative of a range of trades.<sup>47</sup> Twelve years later, in the spring of 1914, when he was Associate Superintendent of Schools, Ettinger introduced his plan into the seventh and eighth grades of a Manhattan school to combat school congestion (*New York Times*, 1914e). By the end of 1914, Ettinger’s plan extended to only nine elementary schools in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Richmond. The experiment never thrived. It impacted school overcrowding even less than did Schneider’s plan. Today the plan is completely forgotten; it does not even denote a hazy educational reform ghost from the past.

### *The Wirt Plan*

In 1907 William Albert Wirt (1874-1938), a former Dewey student, accepted the post of Superintendent of Schools in Gary, Indiana — a steel industry town founded the previous year. Wirt had developed a plan to combat school congestion, later widely

known as Gary Plan, by efficient use of the whole school.<sup>48</sup> To utilize school equipment and buildings more fully, Wirt split students into two platoons, effectively creating two schools within the one school. While School X students were busy in the school's academic classrooms, School Y students were studying art in a museum, doing homework in the library, taking physical education in the gymnasium or on the playground, or manual training and industrial arts in shops. School X students swapped places with School Y students in the afternoon.<sup>49</sup> Initially, Wirt's plan was implemented in three of Gary's newly built schools.

1912 marks the introduction of Wirt's system to the East Coast. In January, Wirt (1912) delivered an address at the Philadelphia New Century Drawing Room, while he addressed a teachers' conference in New York City in October. The latter presentation apparently inspired Public Education Association workers. In March 1914, Harriet Johnson, head of the Association's visiting teacher staff, visited Gary in the company of a co-worker — Lucy Sprague Mitchell.<sup>50</sup> Johnson's (1914) report, *The Schools of Gary*, further commanded attention of many involved in educational reform.<sup>51</sup> In the fall of 1914, the head of the Association's Vocational Education Survey Alice Barrows Fernandez (1914), a former fellowship Dewey student, announced plans for an experiment with the Gary system in a public school in Manhattan.

In October 1914 the newly elected Mayor Mitchel hired Wirt — as he had hired Schneider — as consultant to the Board of Estimate for a week every month of the school year to combat school congestion. Wirt first introduced his plan not only in one elementary school, as advised by Barrows Fernandez, but also in two utterly overcrowded schools in the Bronx. As a consequence of swift achievements in introducing the plan in both schools, the Board of Education asked him in December 1914 to implement the program in eleven more elementary schools in the Bronx.

In the fall of that same year, Barrows Fernandez made a trip to Gary and became as enthused as Johnson. Next, early in the spring of 1915, she was appointed special Secretary to Wirt in New York City, keeping Wirt's agenda while she promoted his plan.<sup>52</sup> Barrows Fernandez (1916c) genuinely found that Wirt's system represented the "Greatest Step Forward in Education [the] World Has Ever Attempted." John and Evelyn Dewey's (1915) *Schools of To-Morrow* and Bourne's (1916b) *The Gary Schools* nearly parallel her estimation. Dewey must have been proud of his former students Barrows Fernandez, Bourne and Wirt.<sup>53</sup>

### *The Public Education Association and the Wirt Plan*

The Public Education Association officially endorsed the Board of Education's December 1914 proposition to "Garyize" more elementary schools in the Bronx. In May 1915, Harriet Johnson of the Association spoke about her study of the Gary schools at a meeting where merits of the Ettinger and Wirt Plans were compared.<sup>54</sup> Dewey strongly supported the work of his former students Barrows Fernandez and Wirt. He stated in a letter sent to the organizers, "The adoption or rejection of the Wirt plan is the most momentous problem to be solved by the city" (in Bourne, 1915c; Rodman, 1915f).

In June 1915, the Board of Education finally approved the reorganization of additional eleven schools in the Bronx. From that time onwards the Public Education Association put full pressure on public opinion to embrace "Garyizing" congested schools. The Association's director eulogized the plan time and again during meetings organized by the Association. He also put out a series of letters to the editors of various newspapers, intended to educate public opinion leaders to consent the introduction of the plan in the city's public elementary schools. The Association published a bulletin

gathering of six of these letters to the editor (Nudd, 1915). It seems that the baton was then carried to former employee of the Association Barrows Fernandez and her twice-weekly *New York Tribune* column "What Is The Gary Plan?" In fact, the Public Education Association, Barrows Fernandez, Bourne, Dewey, and Wirt aggressively campaigned for acceptance of the "Garyizing" of the city's public elementary schools.

Wirt typically stressed the economic efficiency of reorganizing schools, evidently dealing with overcrowded schools, unproductive use of school buildings, and rising costs. His plan to all intents and purposes was and remained a scheme of saving expense. Hence, in concert with the Schneider and Ettinger Plans, Wirt's plan was a *social efficiency educator's* plan (Kliebard, 1995, p. 24). As well, Barrows Fernandez stressed the child-centered pedagogy in Wirt's system, arguing that "Garyized" schools fit other strands of educational reform too. She addressed the doings of *developmentalists* (stressing a child-centered curriculum) and of *social meliorists* and *social reconstructionists* (both having a common goal to improve society) with the former concerned to promote independent thinking and democratic problem solving abilities, and the latter being more "critically attuned to the defects of the social system and prepared to do something about it" (p. 161).<sup>55</sup> John Dewey, Randolph Bourne and the Public Education Association reformers unconditionally endorsed this fusion of efficacy, child-centeredness, meliorism, and social reconstruction.

#### *The Demise of "Garyizing" NYC Public Schools*

The 1915 Board of Education resolution to "Garyize" more schools marks the beginning and the end of implementing the Wirt Plan in the New York City public school system. From then on, opposition to the plan turned vocal. In particular, after the Mayor, in the fall of 1915, floated the idea of "Garyizing" *all* public elementary schools, a war of words in newspapers and an all-out school war ensued.<sup>56</sup> It is not imperative to sketch in detail that history here. One historian of education already observed, "The Gary School War was an extremely complex and confusing affair" (Cohen, 1964, p. 91).<sup>57</sup> Over the years, other historians of education chronicled the events in ever more detail.<sup>58</sup> I address only the major controversial issues.

At first, parental and community opposition was predominantly among Jewish immigrants. Though reorganization of the first dozen schools would not be ready in 1916, and would certainly not be evaluated before the end of that year, Mayor Mitchel wanted *all* public elementary schools to be "Garyized" as soon as possible. By 1916, the extension of the plan in ever more schools in congested areas of the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan signified trouble ahead. Jews with children who attended "Garyized" schools were not pleased that the reorganization took place, for the most part, in schools attended by Jewish students.<sup>59</sup> The Jewish immigrants had brought a radical union tradition with them.<sup>60</sup> Without delay community leaders formed civic anti-Gary organizations to represent their grievances — for example regarding the academic level of the schoolwork and feared lack of discipline in "Garyized" schools. They argued that "Garyized" school emphasis on manual training would impede their children's academic success, hinder their upward educational and social mobility (Greenberg, 1917; Gregory, 1917a-b). The organizations they set up held meetings repeatedly attended by hundreds of parents.

Barrows Fernandez, as Wirt's spokesperson, relentlessly churned out a flood of articles telling the city's populace about putative progress made in the Bronx. In the late winter of 1916, she co-founded the Gary School League, of which she became the first director. Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Eleanor Johnson<sup>61</sup> of the Public Education Association, and Alice Dewey<sup>62</sup> became League officers; each chaired a standing

committee.<sup>63</sup> The League issued bulletins, prepared exhibits, placed ads in newspapers, and showed a series of movies on the Gary Plan — not only in the city.<sup>64</sup> The League furthered the progress of “Garyizing” public schools, defending the Gary Plan at community and municipal meetings.<sup>65</sup> When anti-Gary organizations presented their case at a public hearing before the NYC Board of Education, Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Eleanor Johnson (not to be confused with either Marietta Johnson of Fairhope, or visiting teacher Harriet Johnson, both mentioned above) represented the Gary School League and spoke in favour of Wirt’s plan (*Evening Post*, 1916a).

When the 1917 NYC municipal elections drew nearer, Barrows Fernandez (1917) in the *New York Tribune* addressed “The Anti-Gary Campaign” of civic anti-Gary organizations, while the Gary School League intensified its work — to no avail. The upcoming mayoral election only amplified objections voiced by parent associations and other community opposition to Mayor Mitchel’s plans. Mid-October 1917, three weeks ahead of the elections, student strikes and violent riots broke out lasting for about a week and a half.<sup>66</sup> Banners reading “Down with the Gary System,” shown during election time, came to mean the same as banners reading “Down with Mitchel” (Elser, 1917; Volk, 2005).

New York City was in serious turmoil. Mayor Mitchel failed to win reelection. Introduction of the Gary Plan in the city’s school system came to an immediate halt (*New York Herald*, 1917). The Board of Education “gave orders to dismantle the shops and “de-Garyize” the schools” (Cohen, 1964, p. 99). What in potential could have grown into a national progressive reform movement in the field of education never blossomed.<sup>67</sup>

### Consequences

Attempts at radical reform can fail — the bigger the attempt, the bigger the failure. The three plans to reform learning methods and reorganize New York City’s public schools represented innovative and substantive educational change. Still, the plans formed no part of a *nationwide* movement for progressive education. The March 1916 launch of the Gary School League to encourage “Garyizing” of New York City public schools at first appeared to be a serious step toward a national reform movement. However, the outcome of the Gary School War in late 1917 thwarted further steps in that direction.<sup>68</sup> Introduction of the Gary Plan in the city’s public schools was reversed (Wright, 1918). School congestion persisted; the Gary School League withered away. Media coverage of NYC school overcrowding had been extensive, not only in *The New York Times* and in *The New York Tribune*, but also nationally — in books, reports, and widely distributed pamphlets. After the broadly publicized failure to institute the Gary plan in New York City, others seemed wary of advocating for like education reform. The Gary Plan conflated school management efficiencies with classroom experiential learning teaching methods. Its demise was a setback for both, as well as for the reformers who were its champions.

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## World War I and Unintended Consequences

This second part of the chapter starts by focusing on another setback for educational reformers. In 1917, as the United States entered World War I, advocacy for reform of schoolwork, schooling, and schools came to a sudden halt. Debates about the war brought out sharp disagreements among former progressives. While some settlement leaders remained pacifists, the majority supported U.S. entry into the war (Davis, 1967). A parallel dichotomy developed among progressive educators. Their political disputes broke out in bitter quarrels and falling out of former allies (Cremin, 1961). This section briefly sketches the most widely explored example of the controversy and impact of government suppression of civil rights on the education reform movement.

During the summer of 1917, a number of Dewey's essays in *The New Republic* favoured United States involvement in the European War. The essays aroused the opposition of Randolph Bourne (1917b) who first responded with an article sharply critical of Dewey and American participation in the war. In May of 1918, growing animosity between them fed a second major disagreement, this time over a *New Republic* book review by Bourne (1918a). Dewey had written an introduction in the book.<sup>69</sup> A fierce exchange of opinion appeared in successive issues of the magazine. Dewey (1918d) openly dismissed his former student's review. Bourne (1918b), in turn, responded in kind. In a 28 May 1918 letter addressed to Dewey, Bourne explained his earlier critiques came down to his rejection of Dewey's instrumentalism.<sup>70</sup> The unpleasant story has no happy ending. In the spring and summer of 1918, Dewey personally intervened to prevent Bourne from joining him, Helen Marot, and others on the editorial board of *The Dial*. In the summer of 1918, Bourne told friends that he felt as if he were living under government surveillance. He insinuated that he, an anti-war radical, was on some kind of enemies list, and that Dewey might be involved.<sup>71</sup> Mid-December 1918, he moved to his new apartment in Helen Marot and Caroline Pratt's townhouse in Greenwich Village, where he would live with his fiancé. On December 22, however, he died there, a victim of the Spanish Flu pandemic.<sup>72</sup>

Was Bourne's fear of government surveillance a paranoid induced conspiracy theory? Whatever the case, his prediction that war involvement would lead to suppression of civil rights — including those of educators he knew personally — would unfortunately prove true. The U.S. Espionage Act of 1917 and Sedition Act of 1918 "threatened suppression of all speech, press, and assembly that could be described as obstructing the war... Teachers opposed to the war were labeled 'disloyal' and suspended from their jobs" (Adickes, 1997, p. 136). Reports of suspension of teachers logically fueled prevalent fears of expressing political views that would enrage opponents and make their blood boil. One instance of suppression came close to involving his friend and (future) landlord, Helen Marot. She served the editorial board of the socialist monthly *The Masses*. In 1917, the government repressed publication of *The Masses* and seventy-four other periodicals and journals for antiwar advocacy (Adickes, 1997). In 1918, the editor-in-chief of *The Masses* and a number of co-defendants (but not including Marot) were charged and tried in April and October with conspiracy to obstruct military recruitment. The trials generated massive publicity and intense media disputes. Another example: Scott Nearing, the pacifist educator who wrote *The New Education* (1915), was also charged with obstructing military recruitment. His March 1918 indictment by a Federal Grand Jury also received national publicity and further heated media discussion.

The demise of the Gary Plan in New York City, the Bourne vs. Dewey controversy, and widely reported trials of persons charged with obstructing military recruitment for simply writing articles opposed to the war, including the educator Scott



Nearing, had an inevitable impact on New York City educators. Prosecutions of leading progressive education reform advocates under the aegis of the 1917-1918 Espionage and Sedition Acts had to make many persons leery of joining any of the activists' reform efforts. Still, the reform leaders had lost none of their characteristic zeal for providing quality education to all segments of U.S. society. They learned from past mistakes. However, no longer would they have the kind of access to influence government decisions about education in New York City that once appeared possible in their alliance with Mayor Mitchel.

### **The Progressive Education Association (PEA)**

The 1919 Treaty of Versailles marks the official end of World War I and it marks the end of the Progressive Era. Suppression of speech and press had postponed educational renewal discussion and attempts to recognize educational reform teachers as professionals. After the war a second period of education reform began: 1919 also marks the founding of a nationwide organized educational reform movement. The subsequent sections in this chapter address the professionalization efforts of educational reformers who organized in the newly founded nationwide association for educational reform, the Progressive Education Association (PEA). Professionalization of mostly wage-dependent primary and secondary education teachers began when the growth of school attendance and the collectivization of education reached a peak and levelled off following several decades of rapid expansion early in the twentieth century (De Swaan, 1988). Professionalization of educators holding a special expertise in teaching in progressive schools, along with *protoprofessionalization* of those having a vested interest in educational reform, commenced on a national level *immediately* after World War I. Five educators co-founded the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education — in 1920 shortened to Progressive Education Association, PEA.<sup>73</sup>

In those early hours, the professionalization processes of progressive education teachers did not yet have characteristics comparable to professionalization processes of doctors, psychologists or lawyers, for instance. The PEA professionalization route included founding a nationwide organization of progressive educators, parents, visiting teachers, and other parties interested in educational renewal. Pent up pre-war reform ambitions among the die-hard reformers finally found means of to again take action. The organization would promote an *esprit de corps* among members, organize seminars, foster knowledge of experimental and progressive education, hold conferences, conventions, and courses facilitating continuing education, issue press releases, bulletins and newsletters to educate the media and the general public about educational reform, promote publication of literature reviews, articles and research findings in journals, newspapers, magazines and books, establish international contacts with affiliated organizations, and publish a journal to report all these and related relevant developments.

*Protoprofessionalization* is defined as “the cognitive impact of professionalization upon lay outsiders” (De Swaan, 1988, p. 242).

[People] increasingly orient themselves in everyday life to the fundamental notions and stances of the professions and they adopt corresponding standards of behavior. They do not themselves become professionals, but rather professionals *in nuce*: protoprofessionals. This protoprofessionalization...is the external effect of the process of professionalization...Well-informed lay persons will articulate their troubles as problems for professional treatment and seek corresponding professional service for the problems so defined. (p. 245).

The early process of PEA protoprofessionalization involved purposeful transmitting a simplified version of teaching methods consistent with the pedagogical and didactic aims of progressive schools to its lay members (*e.g.*, non-teaching school personnel such as administrators) and lay outsiders (*e.g.*, parents). It clearly represents a lesson learned from the Gary Plan debacle. Imposing education reform on a community had been shown to create backlash. Protoprofessionalization was a vital way to ally with parents in providing a kind of quality education dedicated to serving the interests and needs of their children.

### How the PEA Met Basic Professionalization Standards

On April 4, 1919, the founding day of the PEA, nearly one hundred educators and persons supporting progressive education were present. At inception, the Association comprised eighty-six members. A year later, the PEA counted over 500. In 1925, it boasted nearly 1,700. In 1932, it had more than 7,500. By the mid-1930s, PEA members maxed out at just over 8,500. Among others, Marietta Johnson was on the Executive Committee. Members of the Advisory Council included Alice Barrows Fernandez, Charles Hanford Henderson, and Caroline Pratt (Cobb, 1919). A former President of Harvard University became Honorary President — not John Dewey, who was lecturing in Japan and in China in 1919 and 1920 (E. Dewey (Ed.), 1920). In 1919, a working group of primary PEA members, including Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt, issued a draft of ten *preliminary* principles. In 1920, the PEA refined the ten preliminary principles and endorsed seven (Cobb, 1928).<sup>74</sup>

While the first PEA Secretary claimed, in *Good Housekeeping*, the PEA “is primary an association of parents, not of teachers” (Cobb, 1920, p. 204), the assertion was not entirely factual. Parents were eligible to be PEA members, but PEA first strove for professionalization of progressive education teachers — and second for protoprofessionalization of laypersons interested in promoting progressive education (*Washington Herald*, 1919). The PEA leaders formulated a mission of pedagogical and didactic reform in U.S. schools and sought to shape an *esprit de corps* for educational renewal among its members.<sup>75</sup> They welcomed membership of parents and other laypersons, public school administrators, members of boards of education, and private school officials (Ayres, 1921). “Any person may become a member of the Association upon the payment of the yearly dues” (PEA, 1920, p. 45, emphasis added). However, the PEA did envision the role of parents as limited to providing council to and cooperation with teachers.<sup>76</sup>

Early on, the PEA Secretary announced lectures by “prominent educators whose schools are interesting and noteworthy types of the new education” — for instance, lectures by Marietta Johnson. He pleaded for smaller and better-equipped classes, more individual attention to “the physical needs of the child...adequate playgrounds, spacious quarters and directed play” (Cobb, 1919). As a promising model of didactic renewal, he cited the *project method*, finding that it exemplified the educational reform for which the PEA stood.

The Secretary further stressed that the Association would issue informative bulletins. Between January 1920 and October 1923, the PEA issued seventeen bulletins.<sup>77</sup> PEA bulletins included reports of PEA upcoming conventions, business transacted at conventions, transcripts of speeches on progressive schools, reports of the Secretary, and articles examining progressive schools in the United States and in Europe.

Publication of the PEA quarterly journal *Progressive Education* began in 1924. *Progressive Education* had a ‘Recent Books’ section, and ‘News and Comments’ and ‘News of the Schools’ sections as well as a variety of articles that reviewed international

developments, mental testing, educational renewal in schools, *etc.* Each number also had a book review section, and counted at least fifty pages, a considerable growth over the 1919-1923 bulletins, which for the most part counted less than twenty pages. Some numbers were so successful that reprints in book format were asked for.<sup>78</sup>

Three forms of PEA promotional activities — lecturing, publishing essays in newspapers, magazines, and books, and publication of an official organ — spearheaded informing lay members and the public about progressive education theory and practice. Counselling parents about how children learn, building bridges of cooperation with parents about their individual children, and influencing public education toward progressivism worked parallel with the informing promotional activities. These characterize a process of protoprofessionalization clearly aimed for by the PEA. The parents, for instance, knew about the educational aspirations of the progressive school attended by their children, and better understood the theory and terminology of the experiential teaching approach. Besides comprehending the terminology used, feasible problems may be formulated using a common vocabulary and can thus get solved with more ease. These are features of “the external effect of the process of professionalization” (De Swaan, 1988).<sup>79</sup> This corresponds with the flip side of the parental aspect of protoprofessionalization: “Professional helpers [teachers]...will be more inclined to accept the clients [parents] who in their perception clearly present problems for which they feel competent” (pp. 245-246).

The three-fold public relations aim of the PEA — lecturing, generating articles in newspapers and magazines, and publication of an official organ — was part and parcel of a process of professionalization of educators, its ‘professional’ members.

### Initial PEA Education Theory and Teaching Craft

The PEA inventory of “The Essence of Progressive Education” (Cobb, 1921a) asserts: All progressive education schools “seek to afford more freedom and more responsibility to the pupils” (p. 1), trusting that students would subsequently develop self-government and self-control. Education of emotions, hand-in-hand with education of the intellect, comes about through arousing “interest in the acquisition of knowledge” (p. 4), opportunities of physical movement, and “new presentations of the subject of learning” (*ibid.*) — that is, new, innovative experiential teaching methods. “In a progressive school there are no fixed desks. All the furniture is movable” (Cobb, 1921b, p. 228). The first demand of the new-association was more *physical* freedom for the students, including freedom of movement in classrooms. Having the students’ interests aroused before assigning work provokes *mental* freedom. Progressive schools should strive for all-round development of students, addressing their physical, mental, emotional, social, and aesthetic development. Opportunities for learning self-control and self-government ought to be included. Finally, yet perhaps most important, progressives must campaign for smaller classes.<sup>80</sup> These were all elements of a child-centered education. Perhaps PEA co-founder Marietta Johnson (1920) drafted the essence of early PEA educational philosophy best in her speech at the first annual convention in 1920: “The essence of the new education is to find out what is good for the child. Progress in education means better children and better people” (p. 8).

The PEA Secretary explained PEA experiential learning approaches in an article in *Good Housekeeping*, a women’s magazine. Through describing teaching systems used in several so-called *new schools*, he showed that a variety of teachers followed the newly developed project method. “When a boy comes to the school he is studied carefully to see what he is most interested in, and in what direction his talents lie. Then he is asked to

choose some project along the lines of his talents...When he has thus selected a goal for himself, he goes at his work with a good deal of self-direction. The teacher appears to him as a guide rather than a taskmaster" (Cobb, 1920, p. 59).

It is clear; the PEA during its first years of existence promoted a child-centered pedagogical perspective, while actively promoting project method experiential learning.

### **Learning By Projects**

Following the first Honorary President's death in 1927, the PEA invited John Dewey to become the next Honorary President: "More than any other person you represent the philosophic ideals for which our Association stands" (cited in Graham, 1967, p. 41). Unlike Charles Hanford Henderson, Dewey had not accepted a Vice-Presidency in 1921; but he did become Honorary President in 1928. His acceptance address explores conditions of *learning by projects* and *learning by activities* methods as central to the craft of progressive education teaching. He stated, "Bare doing, no matter how active, is not enough. An activity or project must, of course, be within the range of the experience of pupils and connected with their needs" (Dewey, 1928, p. 202). He added, "the test of a good project is whether it is sufficiently full and complex to demand a variety of responses from different children and permit each to go at it and make his contribution in a way which is characteristic of himself" (*ibid.*). This section focuses on *learning by projects* and its history. The next section will focus on *learning by activities* and its history.

William Heard Kilpatrick, author of widely read books on the Montessori Method (1912) and Froebel kindergarten principles (1914), advocated *learning by projects* (1918a). His particular approach proposed putting students to work to solve practical problems. "It is to [the] purposeful act with the emphasis on the word purpose that I myself apply the term 'project'" (Kilpatrick, 1918b, p. 4). "[As] the purposeful act is...the typical unit of the worthy life in a democratic society, so also should it be made the typical unit of school procedure" (p. 6). Kilpatrick (1921b) understood *project* to refer to "any unit of purposeful experience, any instance of purposeful activity where the dominating purpose, as an inner urge, (1) fixes the aim of the action, (2) guides its process, and (3) furnishes its drive, its inner motivation" (p. 283).<sup>81</sup>

Kilpatrick (1918b) acknowledged, "I did not invent the term [project] nor did I start it on its educational career. Indeed I do not know how long it has already been in use" (p. 4).<sup>82</sup> But he was, and still is, accredited far and wide for having introduced the project method in American education in 1918, as well as for having tested it during subsequent years at Horace Mann School at Teachers College, and for promoting it nationally (Kilpatrick, 1919, 1921a-b). Through the 1920s, so many schools implemented teaching by projects, and so many teachers throughout the United States used the project method, stimulated to do so by the PEA, that it unavoidably grew to be synonymous with educational reform.<sup>83</sup> Of course, other educational reforms, such as the Dalton Plan and the Montessori Method, advocated differing approaches. Even teachers of these rather exclusive latter methods would teach by projects in the 1920s.

### **Learning By Activities**

A fair number of teachers misunderstood Kilpatrick's project method.<sup>84</sup> They did "hideous and silly things in its name," compelling Kilpatrick to refrain from sponsoring "such going-on" (Tenenbaum, 1951, p. 248). Kilpatrick commented, "I decided that I would talk...about wholehearted purposeful activity. Later, people began to use the term *activity program*. I didn't create the term, but it now seems best to use 'activity program,' if

we are to use any term at all” (in *ibid.*). The previous section concisely examined the project method. This section focuses on *learning by activities*.

In 1920, Gertrude Hartman launched a plan that advocated social education in community schools. Hartman was an accomplished educator.<sup>85</sup> She sought to bring children more in line with community life through initiating them “directly into an understanding of the social life of which they are to become members” (*New York Times*, 1920b). Schools should, among other things, combine manual training, open-air study, and field trips (*School*, 1920). “Since education is the result of purposeful activity of some sort,” Hartman explained, “the school must be pre-eminently a place adapted to carrying on various activities” (in *ibid.*).

Hartman herself, though, would not test or evaluate the plan suggested by her. She was busy writing a book on the particular subject in response to a request by The Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE).<sup>86</sup> The New York City clearinghouse and research establishment, founded in 1916, commissioned her to write *The Child and His School*, a book on learning by activities. In the book, Hartman (1921) asserts that purposeful activity in children may “be looked upon as the primary human motive force.” She added, “Activity...instead of being a by-product of the educative process, is the process itself, since it is through purposeful activity that learning takes place and that tested knowledge accrues” (p. 62).

Hartman by no means advanced learning by projects for young children.<sup>87</sup> Instead, she emphasized a *learning by activities* learning approach, stressing the importance of playthings. To bolster her argument, she cited “The Real Joy in Toys” by Caroline Pratt (who figures in previous sections of this chapter), who held that children learn through play. Essentially, it was Pratt’s (1914a) view that play is the child’s work, and that toys have “their place as the instruments of play, just as garden tools [have] their place as the instruments of gardening” (p. 117). While playing in groups children learn the value of cooperating rather than competing with each other. Hartman (1921) agreed that the “essential difference between work and play is that work is productive” (p. 72), adding nonetheless her own emphasis that education should represent “a gradual development from the play to the work interest” (p. 108). Schools should therefore select appropriate activities. Hartman emphasized ‘Activity as Work’ for older children, underscoring that “activities should be chosen more and more as a means of organizing [children’s] powers in social directions” (p. 109).

During the mid-1920s, coinciding with an across-the-board curriculum revision development (e.g., Hartman, 1924), the trend away from Kilpatrick’s *learning by projects* method towards Hartman’s *learning by activities* scheme gained momentum.<sup>88</sup> Pratt (1926), who had been Hartman’s mentor when she was researching and writing her book at the BEE, explained different types of activities, such as “Practical Activities” and “Play and Work Activities” (pp. 327-328). She sharply distinguished the school’s activities scheme from project method.<sup>89</sup> She found that the very naming of a project might already promote disintegration of experiencing. Instead she strove for learning from integrating experiences through learning by activities:

I have requests from teachers at times to forward to them a history or a geography project applicable to a certain grade. We do not have history, geography, nor yet shop projects. We do not even think in these obvious school terms. The shop, the laboratory, the library, are places to go to work on something which applies to the general program of the particular group or possibly to something which is going on outside the school. (p. 332).

According to Pratt's approach, learning would therefore best be pursued through activities.<sup>90</sup>

### Social Reconstructionism or Child-Centered Education?

One educator rejected the project method since "Learning from immediate purposes, or incidental learning, is too much a hit-and-miss affair — it dips in here and there, but it gives no satisfactory perspective" (Bode, 1927, p. 151). He continued, "Perhaps children may learn a great deal about numbers from running a play store or bank, but this alone does not give them the insight into the mathematics that they need" (p. 150). In asserting that learning by projects more or less allows pupils to determine their own curriculum, he questions the child-centered intuition offered by teachers at progressive schools, and the child-centered methods promoted by the PEA.

Near the turn of the twentieth century, Dewey (1897b) deemed that the "educational process [had] two sides — one psycho-logical and one sociological and that neither can be subordinated to the other or neglected" (p. 4). Subsequently, historians of education differentiate two main strands in Deweyan educational progressivism: *child-centered* education and schooling to achieve *social reconstruction* (e.g., Sadovnik & Semel, 1998).

Through the 1920s, the child-centered, developmentalist branch of Deweyan thought (Rugg & Shumaker, 1928) flourished within the PEA — overshadowing educators who sought social reconstruction through education (Graham, 1967). Debates within the PEA, with increase of economic hardships during the Great Depression and decrease of discussion about teaching practice by child-centered progressives (who were mostly female primary education teachers), show that society-centered social reconstructionist voices (who were mostly male) grew louder in the 1930s (Cremin, 1959; Nusser, 1996).

In 1932, a social reconstructionist educator threw a bomb-shell by issuing the *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* (Counts, 1932). In an activist style, he disparaged child-centered educators and child-centered learning. "Progressive Education cannot place its trust in a child-centered school" (p. 10). He stressed that the weakness of progressive education "lies in the fact that it has elaborated no theory of social welfare, unless it be that of anarchy or extreme individualism" (p. 7). He insisted that progressive educators should "face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community, develop a realistic and comprehensive theory of welfare, fashion a compelling and challenging vision of human destiny" (p. 9). His analysis exemplifies the (more) society-centered voices heard in educational reform discourse, for instance by Caroline Pratt. The message was that the PEA should promote a more politically minded pedagogy (Bowers, 1967, 1969).

Between 1934 and 1943, the PEA issued *The Social Frontier: A Journal of Educational Criticism and Reconstruction*, propagating socio-political reconstructionist viewpoints (Bowers, 1964). Politicized debate lasted well into the 1950s (Jackson & Miller, 2009). The demise of the PEA in 1954 brought an end to such theoretical exchanges of views (Perrone, 1976).

For a while, during the 1930s and the first part of the 1940s, the PEA shift "to research interests and its increasing professionalization [meant] that it was able to attract substantial foundation grants" (Nusser, 1996, p. 25). Still, the grants merely postponed a slow death of the PEA. Progressive educators, the original core of PEA members, had long become alienated from the PEA and its political clashes (Cremin, 1961; Graham, 1967).

## Conclusion

During the 1920s, the Progressive Education Association spearheaded professionalization of education reform in the United States (Benedict, 1942; Nusser, 1996). The second part of this chapter shows that the combination of promoting child-centered pedagogy and *learning by projects* and *learning by activities* instruction was the key to the initial success of the PEA during the early 1920s, but became its Achilles' heel during the late 1920s and hence forward.

At the beginning of the chapter, I note the contention that “the movement for progressive education began with the experimental work of John Dewey in his school connected with the University of Chicago...and with the experimental work and writings of Hanford Henderson” (*Washington Times*, 1920). The discussion in this chapter casts serious doubt on this view. Few U.S. teachers knew of the Lab School during the years 1896-1904 when the Deweys were in Chicago. Of the few who did take notice, for the most part they were not interested in the results achieved in the experiment. Research shows that Dewey's fame only rose by the mid-1910s, in New York City, after *Schools of To-Morrow* and *Democracy and Education* were published, the revised edition of *The School and Society* reissued, and his former students — Barrows Fernandez, Bourne, and Wirt — wrote articles on school congestion and education reform in New York City which received nationwide attention. However, the contributions, in theory and practice, of educators who also became known at the time, like Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt, who were among the few who had earlier championed Dewey, soon became eclipsed by Dewey's growing reputation. It was Dewey who was increasingly invited to speak at educational meetings, report in local newspapers of rank like *The New York Times* and *The New York Tribune*, and publish educational essays in magazines and journals like *American Teacher*, *The New Republic*, *Teachers College Record*, and *The Dial*. All these theoretical contributions, however, did not lead to a *nationwide movement* for progressive education — not even a citywide movement in New York City, nor in Chicago, nor in any other city. Charles Hanford Henderson's turn-of-the-twentieth-century's writings and lecturing activities in East Coast cities did not either. His work only engaged a handful of educators. Still, many initiatives to renew education existed during the Progressive Era. Evidence in contemporaneous media archives shows that educational reform was not merely initiated and promoted by *individual* education theoreticians, but also by social settlement workers, parent associations, and civic groups. Sections in the first part of the chapter discuss some of those impulses to renewal while focusing on New York City circumstances.

The Teachers' League of New York, founded in 1913, transformed into Teachers' Union of the City of New York in 1916, did not become a nationwide movement for progressive teaching practices. The Gary School League, formed to promote “Garyizing” of New York City public schools, founded in 1916, had potential to inspire such a movement nationwide. However, the outcome of the Gary School War in late 1917 thwarted progress toward a national movement. The politically inept, top-down imposition of the Gary Plan by New York's 1914-1918 Mayor Mitchel inspired opposition among leaders in the immigrant communities where the plan was to be initially implemented. One important lesson was that parents needed voice. Educational reform could not be implemented in schools without the consent of parents and local community leaders.

The first section of the second part of this chapter illustrates that expression of difference over the 1917 entry of the United States in World War I had a negative impact on education reform. Most likely, it suppressed possibilities for a national movement for

progressive education too. Still it did not dampen the spirit of the activist reformers. The first public meeting of the founders of the Progressive Education Association was held in February 1919 (*Washington Herald*, 1919), only two-and-a-half months following the November 1918 armistice and well before the June 1919 signing of the peace treaty of Versailles.

Here, at the end of the chapter, it is interesting that a number of the same persons appear over and over in differing settings. Mary Marot, for instance, was a Hartley House settlement worker, originator of the visiting teacher program, author of an article on school congestion, Public Education Association worker, before she became a Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) researcher in 1918. Marot's career parallels Harriet Forbes, Eleanor Johnson, Harriet Johnson, Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Caroline Pratt's careers before they became BEE members. Individually, each of their contributions to education reform appears greater than that of either Dewey or Henderson combined. (Their winding career paths are concisely summarized in biographical outlines in endnotes to this chapter's body text.)

Before exploring the careers of these women with the BEE, and before showing that the BEE ought to be depicted as a kind of 'midwife' to the Progressive Education Association, in the subsequent two chapters I will more extensively sketch the careers of two women who joined the BEE, Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt.



## CHAPTER 2

### Marietta L. Johnson

### and the Fairhope School of Organic Education

What is to prevent our taking the desks out of the room, allowing only twenty pupils to the teacher, and removing the "intellectual requirements" of the first grades in any city? Instead of desks, have tables at which the children may work. Instead of requirements in reading, writing, numbers, etc., let the children sing and play, make things of paper card board and textiles, taking care that the nervous system is not injured by too close work. Let them have gardens in which they may plant what they choose, and which they may care for in their own way with the sympathetic assistance of the teacher. Let them have stories of geography, history, and literature. Give them an opportunity to learn to speak some other modern language than their own. Let them have watercolors and clay which they may freely use. Allow the teacher to take them out of doors at any hour she may wish, taking them to parks and museums for the pleasure and profit of going and seeing, rather than prepare them to "pass" any particular examination. Let them gain fundamental conceptions of numbers by the use of the rule, handling things, counting, estimating, weighing, measuring, etc. Let them hear beautiful poems recited by the teacher, and allow them to recite them also.

Marietta L. Johnson. "Organic Education," December 23, 1911, *The Public*.

In 1907, Marietta L. Johnson founded the School of Organic Education at Fairhope, Alabama, and remained the school's principal until her death in 1938. In 1919 she also co-founded the Progressive Education Association with four fellow progressive educators. Two years earlier, she joined the Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) in New York City. How did Johnson, born in 1864 in the Midwestern state of Minnesota, founder and principal of a school in the Southern state of Alabama since 1907, come to work with the BEE in 1917?

This chapter will sketch Johnson's story, a chronicle of a meandering educational career, with high ups and low downs. Marietta Johnson (1974) recounts having a true conversion experience at the peak of her authority. The experience began a ten-year struggle to find new pedagogical direction, culminating in founding the school of her dreams in 1907. With a pledge to financially support the school herself, during the entire span of her lengthy career, during a large part of each year, she endured boarding trains and being on the road giving fundraising speeches. And more.

This is an account of when, how, and why Marietta Johnson joined the BEE.

#### **1864-1897: Marietta Pierce, Childhood and Early Career**

We have scant knowledge of Marietta's childhood and early adulthood. We know Marietta (Mattie) Louise Pierce and a twin sister were born in October 1864 in Mendota near St. Paul, Minnesota, daughters of deeply religious Clarence De Sackett Pierce from New York State and Rhoda Mathilda (*née* Morton) Pierce, born in Illinois. Marietta was one of eight children. The 1880 United States Federal Census reveals that her siblings were her older brother Freemont, older sister Florence, older brother Lowell, twin sister Harriet (Hattie), and her younger brothers Everett, Clifford and Ernest. We do not know

much about them.<sup>91</sup> They grew up in the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s' closely-knit and pious family that lived in a safe, protected Midwestern farm home on the edge of the American frontier; Minnesota achieved statehood only six years before her birth. St. Paul, first settled by Europeans in 1837, was originally a fur trading post. At times Marietta even encountered indigenous Dakota Sioux when she was a child (Gaston, 1984).

Marietta's parents were devout members of the Christian Church, a mainstream United States denomination formed on the eve of the Civil War. Also known as Disciples of Christ, the Christian Church was part and parcel of the Second Great Awakening, a religious reform movement known for a theology that granted instantaneous bestowal of grace during conversions at revival meetings. As well, Second Great Awakening preachers were leaders in social reform movements for abolition of slavery, quality universal education, temperance, women's education, and women's rights (McAllister & Tucker, 1975). Clarence and Rhoda Pierce were among the founders of the First Christian Church of St. Paul; Clarence became one of its Deacons and its trustees (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1884, 1887, 1889).

Marietta's mother was a teacher, who directed a one-room school in their home, teaching her, her siblings and neighbourhood children. She was President of the local Ladies' Missionary Society, and worked for the Lady Somerset W. C. T. U., the local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.<sup>92</sup> After primary schooling led by her mother in their home, Marietta attended Humboldt School, a St. Paul public school. She graduated with honours in 1881 (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1881). Her mother must have inspired her. In her autobiography, *Thirty Years With An Idea*, she wrote that when she was about ten years of age she "began dreaming of the time when [she] should be a teacher" (M. L. Johnson, 1974, p. 1). On every possible occasion she would announce: "I am going to be a teacher when I grow up" (*ibid.*). During the 1880s, teaching was one of few professions accessible to women, especially to young single women. Since Marietta attended Third State Normal School at Saint Cloud, Minnesota, only established in 1869, she had opportunity, even at the beginning of her teaching career, to earn professional credentials superior to any that her mother's generation of female teachers could acquire. One historian of education explained that in nineteenth-century France, qualified primary, secondary and tertiary teachers were educated at *écoles normales*, which had explicit goals of training teachers to work according to high standards or norms (Kaestle, 1983). In contrast, the American Normal Schools only educated qualified primary teachers, who were almost exclusively female; communities could pay them less than male teachers. Typically, these young, aspiring female teachers were taught mechanical rote teaching practices.

The St. Cloud Normal School campus had only one building, Stearns House (after Charles Thomas Stearns, a local politician). It was a former hotel with classes on the first floor, the model school on the second, and the dormitory on the third. Most probably, Marietta was a board-paying student, allowing her a moderate freedom of self-government and social movement. She graduated from St. Cloud Normal in 1885, as expected.<sup>93</sup> For five years she taught at Minnesota rural and village elementary schools. Next, she began training prospective teachers, first as a *model teacher* at St. Paul State Normal School (1890-1892), next at the Moorhead State Normal School (1892-1896) as a *training teacher* supervising student teachers' practice teaching (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1894). At the time, she was a keen and passionate teacher of teachers, discretely living the life of a well-brought-up city-dweller — and ambitious too (Newman, 1999). This ambition overtly showed as the *Public-School Journal* (1896) reported that she, at the age of 30, was one of three members of a committee to organize a state society for child-study

in mid-1895.<sup>94</sup> In 1898 and 1899, she became Secretary of the Southern Minnesota Teachers' Association.

Marietta would state that at first she felt thrilled to teach and fully accepted the prevailing educational system of grading, student rewards, dismissing the real needs of students, and pleasing ambitious parents instead of students. "To my mind," she wrote, "the child was being educated if he was acquiring knowledge and skill and learning to behave well — and the teacher an educator if he had the ability to impart the knowledge, to direct and control, and to insist upon 'attainment and achievement'" (M. L. Johnson, 1974, p. 6).

In 1896, Marietta Pierce transferred to Mankato State Normal School, accepting a position as principal of the Primary Practice School, the next step in her impressive, bright career.<sup>95</sup> On June 6, 1897, she married John Franklin Johnson (1860-1919), a carpenter and cabinetmaker from St. Paul. While there are almost no surviving records of Frank's youth and early adulthood there are a few extant small reports suggesting that during this period of her life Marietta was a virtuous, religious woman, devoutly working as a professional teacher of teachers — and was a worthy representative of her profession. Obituaries of President Searing of the Mankato Normal School in the school newspaper, *The Mankatonian*, co-authored by Marietta and five colleagues, and in *School Education*, by Marietta, illustrate thoughtful religious fervour mixed with growing social awareness and self-confidence.<sup>96</sup>

### 1897-1906: Ten Years of Searching for a Sense of Purpose

The first ten years of their marriage, Marietta and Frank Johnson moved often — from one state to another, and back, only to move on to yet another state. Nowhere did they manage to become part of a community; nowhere was the couple able to really establish a home — until in 1907, when they finally settled in Fairhope, Alabama.

How did this turn in the life of Marietta Johnson affect her pedagogy? In her autobiography, Johnson (1974) recalls that one day during her work at the Mankato Normal School, her superintendent thrust a book into her hand, saying: "Unless education takes this direction, there is no incentive for a young man to enter the profession" (p. 6).<sup>97</sup> Reading Oppenheim's *The Development of the Child* came as a great shock to her, made her feel "a child destroyer" (p. 8), impelling re-examination of sense of life, purpose and career. Up to now, she innocently believed that teaching was appealing to both women and men. Here, however, was a male authority saying otherwise; Robert Nathan Oppenheim (1865–1916) was attending physician of the Children's Department of the New York City Red Cross Hospital and New York City's Children Hospital. She began seriously assessing her own teaching past as well as the prevailing instruction methods she taught her students. Pleading guilty to immorality and criminal behaviour, she confessed, "I discovered that nearly everything I had been doing with such pride and success in the primary department was a violation of the order of the development of the nervous system. I realized that my enthusiasm was destructive, and the more efficient I was, the more I injured the pupils!" (*ibid.*). In fundraising speeches and articles presented over the course of her career, she repeatedly referred to her reading of Oppenheim's (1898) book as a conversion experience, one that fully awakened her to experimental education.<sup>98</sup> She learned that the most important work of children was to grow and that teachers must be able to recognize the signs of growth in them. As a consequence Johnson (1974) did not develop novel teaching methods, but rather a completely new point of view: "Instead of being taught facts, children should be helped to understand their experiences" (p. 10). She repudiated her earlier pedagogical stance.

As a teacher who could no longer unequivocally insist upon “attainment and achievement,” imparting knowledge directly, viewing children as mere passive receptacles, and controlling them by stern discipline, she began reading whatever she could find about child development. This included George Thomas White Patrick’s (1899) *Should Children Under Ten Learn To Read And Write?* The argument of philosopher Patrick (1857-1949) struck her as of extreme importance, especially his stance (p. 385) that:

Our increasing knowledge of the child’s mind, his muscular and nervous system, and his special senses, points indubitably to the conclusion that reading and writing are subjects which do not belong to the early years of school life, but to a later period, and that other subjects now studied later are better adapted to this early stage of development. What is thus indicated of reading and writing may be affirmed also of drawing and arithmetic.

During the rest of her career, to buttress her position that children should not begin to read and write in school under the age of ten, she would refer to Patrick’s chaotic mix of learning psychology and brain development physiology. Patrick (1899) never referenced Rousseau. He instead claimed basis for his argument in psychology and neurophysiology. Nevertheless, he echoed the romanticism in Rousseau’s 1762 *Émile*: “Reading is the plague of childhood...At twelve *Émile* will hardly know what a book is...He must know how to read when reading is useful to him; up to then it is only good for boring him” (Rousseau, 1979, p. 116).

In the light of Johnson’s account of an 1898-1899 conversion experience, it is telling that she began sharing her changing educational perspective prior to the turn of the twentieth century. The *Saint Paul Globe* (1899a) drew attention to her presentation during a conference held in St. Paul, reporting that “In discussing drawing Mrs. Johnson thought it a mistake to place an object before the child and have him draw it as it is rather than as he sees it. It had an injurious effect on the nervous system, compelling the child to do that which was unnatural to him.” It is apparent that she had already begun to integrate an understanding of Oppenheim and Patrick into new pedagogic vision. The position, *in statu nascendi*, would certainly have alienated her from her colleagues at Mankato Normal. Johnson (1974) wrote that after the initial shocks she had experienced she went back to her superintendent, saying, “The scales are off. If ever I have a child of my own, whose education I can control, he will not be put at books until he is at least ten years of age” (p. 10).

Marietta and Frank did not become parents until the new century began. The couple moved to a cattle ranch in western North Dakota (Cooper, 1900; *School Education*, 1900), where in April 1901 Marietta gave birth to Clifford Ernest, their first son. Later that year, the family moved to St. Paul, where Marietta resumed teaching at St. Paul State Normal School. She continued to genuinely struggle to find new direction. It must have been agonizing, the more so since she doubtless was the only teacher at St. Paul Normal advocating new pedagogical ideals and didactic methods. Surely she felt out-of-place. Before she felt at the centre of knowledge where “The Curriculum was sacred,” and where “To be an honest teacher meant to insist upon every child meeting the requirements or being considered a failure! No favoritism was ever allowed” (M. L. Johnson, 1974, p. 3).

In 1902, she read a third text that would influence her new pedagogical vision, Charles Hanford Henderson’s (1902) *Education and the Larger Life*. At the time Henderson was the director of the Pratt Institute High School in Brooklyn, New York City. His thesis reinforced Johnson’s new direction. While she found that Henderson fully agreed with Oppenheim and Patrick, he proposed a practical means to implement program. By

Organic Education, Henderson meant paying attention to sense development, good health, and expansion of “personal control” (p. 128). He especially advocated implementing Organic Education in kindergartens and manual training schools, since the latter must show “profound belief in the unity of man” (p. 147). Henderson would eventually inspire Marietta Johnson to found a school based on those principles.

Less than a year after the move to St. Paul, by the end of 1902, the Johnsons moved again, this time to Fairhope, Alabama, a small village on the Gulf Coast. Fairhope, a utopian community inspired by the ideas of self-educated political economist Henry George (1839-1897), was founded in November 1894. George (1879, 1883) believed that the capitalist economic system had proved unsuccessful in decreasing poverty, which led to despair and desolation among millions of Americans. As remedy, George proposed land be held as common property, introducing the concept of “cooperative individualism” that would be practically implemented by a *land value tax*. Rather than taxing the output of labour and capital, he proposed a *single tax on land* to meet costs of running government and community.<sup>99</sup> The economic theory has fallen out of favour, but in its heyday had thousands of devoted followers, going by the eponymous *Georgist*. Georgism became a capitalist reform movement competitor to Marxism.

In January 1903, Marietta Johnson began teaching at the Fairhope public elementary school. She introduced gardening and handicraft training to the curriculum and “invited adults to school to make music and tell stories” to convey the importance of arts education (Newman, 1999, p. 71). She also directed older students in performing a play, and took her students sailing on a catamaran built by her husband Frank. On New Year’s Day, 1904, at the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Fairhope colony founding, she gave an address summarizing what she had accomplished during her first year at the public school. Her message was that “new education” is fully compatible with the colony’s Georgist views (Gaston, 1984, p. 73).

The day, however, turned out to be not only a day of celebration. An article in the *Fairhope Courier* announced that Frank Johnson, and in due time his family, would leave for Barnett, Mississippi. During the winter of 1903-1904, her husband Frank already living on a pecan farm in Barnett, Marietta frequently had lunch with two friends who had been in Fairhope since 1902: Lydia J. Newcomb Comings (1849-1946), a former teacher of physical culture, and her husband Samuel Huntington Comings (1839-1907). They carried on in lengthy, mutually inspiring midday meal conversations about Froebel, manual training, out-of-doors schooling and other new education topics (Gaston, 1984). Especially so, since Samuel Comings’ *Pagan vs. Christian Civilization*, an essay on experimental industrial and vocational education would be published in 1904.

In April 1904, Marietta and her son Clifford joined Frank in Barnett, where they would reside until 1907. Franklin Pierce, Marietta and Frank’s second son, was born in April 1905. In spite of this happy occasion, life was difficult. In 1905 their home burned; they had to rebuild the farmhouse. Happily for Marietta, ties with Fairhope survived through regularly reading the *Fairhope Courier*, through visits, and correspondence with friends. That is how she learned of the publication of Samuel Comings’ (1904) essay.<sup>100</sup>

### 1906-1907: Planning and Founding a School of Organic Education

Invited by Lydia and Samuel Comings, during the summer of 1906, Marietta capably conducted a demonstration kindergarten in Fairhope. It was a test, scrutinizing the practicality of her newly formed ideas and ideals, which she now dubbed *organic training*, and *organic education*.<sup>101</sup> She envisaged employing Froebel kindergarten teaching methods through the entire primary school curriculum, much as Samuel Comings (1904) had.

Clearly she had overcome her agony and worries. She was ready to take new edifying steps, having sworn off her former, pre-1898 teaching “attainment and achievement” life. She did not need to feel appalled anymore at what she had been doing, measuring the work of her students by adult standards. Her recent general conclusion was, “If the child is wholesomely, happily, intelligently employed, he *is* being educated!” (M. L. Johnson, 1974, p. 9).

We may ask whether she had sworn off her former religious ideals as well. The conversion experience that had hit her so suddenly and intensely lasted for a protracted period. In an open 1907 letter to Ernest Berry Gaston (1861-1937), founding father of the Fairhope colony, published in the *Fairhope Courier*, Johnson accused churches of failing to condemn the “unjust and un-Christian system” by which people lived, finding that Fairhope colonists did “a greater Christian work than that of any other organization of which I know” (in Gaston, 1984, p. 76). While claiming she never lost faith, Johnson (1974) recalled the depressing years between 1898 and 1906: “I am sure we may safely seek the “kingdom” that is human fineness and that these other things — that is, knowledge and skill — will be added” (p. 13). She fused Georgist cooperative individualism, Christian Socialism, and educational reform, thus supplanting Christian commitment with secular Georgist and educational ideals. Johnson’s letter to Gaston discloses that she longed to return to Fairhope and that she was “more interested than ever before in the reforms for which Fairhope exists” (in Gaston, 1984, p. 76). She would be “more than happy to be able to spend the rest of [her] life in helping ever so little in so great a cause” (*ibid*).

### **The Fall of 1907: Triumph and Tragedy**

Lydia Comings wrote to ask the Johnsons to return to Fairhope and open a kindergarten, offering \$25 a month for everyday expenditures. The Johnson family moved back in the summer of 1907. Marietta resolved to establish a coeducational school in Fairhope. She wholly settled in Fairhope — her home. The ten years of searching for a sense of purpose were over. The school opened in November 1907.<sup>102</sup> Given that her reading of his 1902 book had so inspired her, it is fitting that she recruited Henderson himself to give an address at the school’s opening in Fairhope.

At the start, Johnson’s new school was comprised of only eight students: her two children plus six “little villagers whose parents allowed them to be played upon” (Rawson, 1920). Soon after the school’s opening, in December 1907, Franklin, Johnson’s second child, died from a fall. The tragedy silenced Marietta in a profound way. She never spoke about Franklin’s death, neither in public, nor in private conversations. Her silence expressed her pain. Then on Christmas Eve of 1907, Johnson’s good friend Samuel Comings died of a stroke. A woman raised in a religious family and only a generation removed from the American frontier would turn to her faith to survive such ordeals.<sup>103</sup> In examining the course of her life following these catastrophic events, it seems that she solemnly pledged an oath to secure financial support for her school — and to make it a success honouring her youngest child.

### **1908-1909: First Mission: Preaching to the Choir**

During the first five years, the school attracted little notice. Nothing pointed towards moving again. Johnson was busy finally settling in Fairhope, introducing organic education, closely following Henderson in matters like not specifying single-year grade groups.<sup>104</sup> Instead the four and five-year-olds formed the kindergarten class; the children

six to thirteen years of age formed the *life class*. From 1911 onwards, six and seven-year-olds formed the *first life class*; eight and nine-year-olds the *second life class*, and so forth until *fourth life class*.

Johnson proved an able recruiter and professional school director. The second year the number of pupils enrolled increased to more than fifty. There were approximately ninety school-age children in the colony. The school had to move to larger quarters a number of times. Fairhoppers did not have to pay tuition. Friends of Johnson, including Lydia Comings, provided the initial financial support to run the school. As of February 1908, the Colony Council appropriated an additional amount of \$25 per month (Newman, 2002). No one seemed to suggest that Georgist single tax policies should generate an adequate source of funds to fully support the kind of quality education the utopian colonists wanted for their children's future. Instead, that same year, when soap magnate, social reformer and philanthropist Joseph Fels visited the school near the anniversary celebrations of the Fairhope colony on New Year's Day, 1909, he initially donated \$5,000. These funds enabled the school to survive and incorporate — as well as move to a ten-acre site provided by the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation (M. L. Johnson, 1974). Over the next five years Fels would donate another \$1,000 a year. Johnson now had sufficient funds to support the school's experimental program, to recruit talented teachers and to construct additional school buildings, including a dormitory for board-paying students (Donelson, 2005).

In the May 1909 *Federation Bulletin*, the Fairhope School for Organic Training advertized "Natural Methods, Brain development through training of the Sense Organs. Kindergarten, ... Manual Training, School Garden, Out-door Gymnasium," topics that would return time and again in newspaper and magazine reports. It suggests Johnson unreservedly fixed for years to come to the initially adopted curriculum. Later that year, the school's prospectus, *Comings Memorial College of Organic Education*, stressed the same topics. According to *The Public* (1909), they offered "an interesting plan for stimulating the development of childhood through self-prompted creative ability."<sup>105</sup>

Early Fairhope school reports show that between 1908 and 1910, the first two full years of the school's existence, both Lydia Comings and Marietta Johnson began touring the country giving presentations at meetings of like-minded political peers. Comings and Johnson had become Fairhope missionaries spreading the single tax gospel, promoting Georgist values with eulogizing stories about Johnson's school. The Utopia of 470 colonists was in need of additional colonists. Their message apparently helped their cause. The population grew from  $\pm 500$  people in 1910 to  $\pm 800$  by 1920.

The earliest story indicating Johnson's success as missionary appears in an article in the 19 April 1909 Syracuse, New York, *Post-Standard*, written by Mrs. Mary Dana Hicks Prang, spouse of the renowned art publisher Louis Prang. Prang (1909) praised Marietta Johnson's lecture for promoting Fairhope and "cooperative individualism," the colony's catchphrase, and stated that organic education "aims for the sound, accomplished, beautiful body — the intelligent, creative mind — the sympathetic, reverent spirit." The slogan-like phrase strongly resonating Henderson's choice of words would oft be repeated in subsequent reportage about Johnson's school.<sup>106</sup>

"Organic Training," a 1909 paper by Johnson's friend Lydia Comings (1909b), in *Federation Bulletin*, explains that organic education is "advanced kindergarten work." It is the training of the sense organs through "self-directed activities, freedom in the school-room and without," and allowing the "brain to develop without forcing and without stunting."<sup>107</sup> "Organic Education," another *Federation Bulletin* article by Comings (1909a), shows that she had widened her original concept of organic training into organic education, illustrating Organic Education as dealing "with the present."<sup>108</sup>

Lastly in 1909, Marietta Johnson's "Education" appeared in *The Public*, the first in a series of three articles, published between 1909 and 1911 that outline the genesis of a "New Education," alternatively "Natural Education." These articles, conveying a strong impression of educational sermons, are the earliest Johnson wrote subsequent to her self-proclaimed conversion experience and the founding of a school signifying her vision. Experimental educator Caroline Pratt (1948) would later, perhaps disparagingly, depict Johnson as a preacher and "disciple of Henderson" (p. 57). A portrayal of Johnson as "a prophet of social change through organic education" (Gaston, 1984, p. 80) affirms this impression. Johnson clearly identified herself as a Georgist social reformer, committed to altering primary and secondary education in order to change human relations and living conditions for the better. In this sense, she was a social reconstructionist *avant la lettre* (Kliebard, 1995).

Johnson (1909) described a gloomy socio-political world, a Dantesque hell and damnation where no salvation is to be found — excepting, perhaps, in education reform. She peppered quasi-religious rendering with rhetorical clichés. Paraphrasing Dewey, she wrote, "There are many earnest teachers who see a new day dawning for education. They see a time when there shall be no more driving of children to their tasks even by so apparently harmless incentives as 'grades,' 'marks' or 'promotions.' A time when the work of the school shall really be the joyous self-expression of the child" (p. 1143). She predicted, "A time will come" when schools will be conscious of their child welfare duty to children; "when education will be considered a process of life — the end attainable in the present, not simply a preparation for some future time" (*ibid.*), and when schools will be "adapted to the needs of the child, not the child made to fit the school!" (*ibid.*)<sup>109</sup> However, she warned, "Until the earth is in possession of the entire race on equal terms, no dream of symmetrical growth or natural development can ever be realized" (*ibid.*). Her gloomy analysis indeed, at the time acerbically, overwhelmed her educational dream. Johnson believed that "Equality of opportunity must be an accomplished fact, ere education may in truth become the development of life to higher life" (*ibid.*). She added that educators needed to realize that the prevailing "economic injustice [was] the 'root of the hydra'" and they needed to study "the fundamental principles of economics quite as diligently as the fundamental principles of education" (p. 1144).

If she meant "equality of opportunity" for all persons regardless of ethnic origin, at least one dream was *not* realized. The School of Organic Education practiced racial segregation, never enrolling students of African-American origin during Johnson's lifetime. On this front, Fairhope administrators fully acquiesced to racial segregation norms practiced in the Deep South.

Nonetheless, it seems Comings and Johnson's mission to advocate the School of Organic Education amongst like-minded political peers promoting a Georgist Utopia was understood by them as an achievement. Both women would board trains again in 1910 to spread the word.

### **1910-1911: Second Mission: Fairhoppers Advocating the Educational Experiment**

Media records support the opinion that Johnson "spent every summer from 1910 onwards on the lecture circuit" (Gaston, 1984, p. 82). Clearly she had widened her horizon, enlarging the mission's circumference by advocating her experiment in education beyond the Alabama borders as well as gaining experience addressing large audiences. Still, other than adding lecturing practice to her educating and school directing experiences the prime mission remained promoting the educational facet of her concoction of Georgist faith and organic education.



Lydia Comings gave sisterly support, launching the 1910 missionary term by delivering two presentations at the Biennial Convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, May 11 to May 18, 1910, Cincinnati, Ohio. Her first lecture presented organic training as the "natural training of the complete child-body, sense and brain, as opposed to the artificial training of the brain only" (Lake, 1910, p. 127). "A New Theory in Education," the second lecture, illustrated the school's curriculum. According to a reporter, "[Comings] told of a unique school in Alabama where children are in kindergartens; and then in out-door schools until 10 years of age. There are no books for these children. They are taught orally and from nature studies; and they have tennis courts, baseball, gardening and manual training. After 10 or 11 years of age they enter upon organized educational work" (Stevens, 1910, p. 482).

In June, it was Johnson's turn to preach. *The Public* (1910) announced that she would address the Chicago Single Tax Club on "Organic Education" at its hall in the Schiller Building on June 17, and published "Moral Education," the second article by Johnson (1910a) in a series of three. To the Moral Education League of London — which urged formal moral and civic instruction, aiming at character formation in education — she argued that since children learn from experience, and children who are always controlled do not develop self-control, "occupations instead of lessons" should be the main work of schools (p. 568). Parents and teachers should not force their interest on children. Instead children should be permitted freedom and self-prompted activities. She found that "only by developing abiding interests may we hope to cultivate high moral ideals" (*ibid.*). However, unjust laws, such as laws that tax industry and put "premiums on idleness and cunning," according to Johnson, "cannot give the youth the right idea of social justice and civic purity" (p. 569).

Comings and Johnson were *not* the only Fairhope colonists to advocate the Fairhope educational experiment outside Alabama borders. The school flourished because it was "initially an integral part of a community experiment" (Newman, 1999, p. 101). Single-taxers felt they should endorse Johnson's experiment, believing the school educated children to become assiduous Georgists. "Children's Paradise," a *Boston Daily Globe* article by Fairhoper Alice Gertrude Herring (1910), glowingly described the school as the "most interesting educational experiment in America." It is a "school without marks, examinations, or promotions...with few books and with no 'lessons' in the ordinary sense of the word...in which the work is made to fit the child, not the child to fit the school." It is a school "in which the utmost freedom of choice and self-prompted activity are allowed." Herring explained "that unless the work of the school makes the child happier and stronger and sweeter in every way" it was not educational. The school's aim was to help children develop a "sound, accomplished, beautiful body, an intelligent, sympathetic mind, an understanding spirit." The "social spirit...emphasized all through the school work, [gives] the children the experience of cooperative, helpful effort."

The school was not organized by grades, age, or subject matter. Instead there were three so-called *departments*. While school work in the school's *first department*, the kindergarten, was comparable to nearly all kindergartens, according to Herring (1910),

More emphasis [is] placed on the health and happiness of the doer than on the beauty or excellence of the thing done. Much time is spent outdoors, no fine, close work is permitted and no work done for "exhibits." Dictation work, domination of the teacher and work of "selected children" are discouraged. Much liberty is allowed for self-prompted occupations, and care is used to prevent over-stimulation of the children.

Self-prompted schoolwork in the school's *second department*, the *life-class*, continued as far as possible in age. No books were used in the younger group. Music was taught by singing. Literature and history were taught by story telling. Considerable time was devoted to artwork. The outdoor gymnasium was much enjoyed by the students, and "Every child has a garden plot in which he may plant what he chooses and which he cares for in his own way." Educational circumstances differed for older life-class students. In mid-1910 they had not yet divided life classes by age; nevertheless, Herring asserted, the older pupils increasingly turned to "books for further explanation of their experiences" and took an interest in numbers, reading and writing as well as in artwork and *Sloyd* (manual training, woodwork). She further claimed that both life-class groups learned poems by hearing them recited by their teacher, with time taken for dramatization. Students would learn English and German grammar usage by conversational (immersion) methods. Herring highlighted an exceptionally motivating feature of Johnson's school: Students went on daily trips into nature for both life-class groups — observing birds, their nests, native animals, trees and vegetation, growth of crops, geological stratification discernible in gullies around Fairhope, *etc.* She dubbed these daily rural Fairhope school field trips "the daily walk."<sup>110</sup>

The first two years of the school's *third department*, grammar school offered pupils "earnest work...in arithmetic, history, geography, etc.," but no grades, marks, or promotions. They assured parents that "after two years of formal, serious, earnest work, the child is old and mature enough to take up the work at the high school." Throughout the final two-year high school, sizeable liberty of choice was still allowed. "Excellence of work is not determined by examination but by interest and power shown, from day to day. The teacher is more concerned with the development of the pupil than with the development of the subject."

Herring's detailed account permits retrospective insight into the contemporaneous life in Johnson's school. She mentions yet another special feature: teachers training. Prospective teachers were expected to study the students' development while giving attention to their needs at various stages of their growth. Herring concludes her article with a Deweyan slogan, "School must be life, not simply a preparation for life."<sup>111</sup>

Finally in 1910, Johnson made a short stay in Minnesota in July 1910. The *Twice-A-Week Spokesman-Review* (1910), located in far away Spokane, Washington, reported that Johnson delivered an address at the Conference on Agricultural Education, at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, July 29 and July 30, 1910. There, Johnson stated that Fairhope was the "only town in the United States run on a single tax plan and that the system was working out nicely there." She said that in spite of the Alabama law requiring the teaching of agriculture in its schools, Alabama teachers "were not provided with any facilities for giving [agricultural] instruction except text books and consequently neither they nor their students had an opportunity to study growing crops."<sup>112</sup> In a *University Missourian* (1910) interview with Johnson, she praised the one-tax village, boasting that her school was "a revolution from the standpoint of education."<sup>113</sup> During this 1910 lecture tour, Johnson championed Fairhope's Georgist ideals as much as she did her school.

The January 1911 *Good Housekeeping* magazine with a nationwide circulation of ± 300,000 copies printed "A Utopian Colony," a letter to the editor by another Fairhoper promoting the colony and its exceptional school. Its author described settling in Fairhope, where "a man and wife having a fixed income of fifty dollars per month can get the most out of their money in comfort and happiness" (Pope, 1911). She wrote that the climate allowed for three crops a year, that boating, bathing and fishing were the best, that Fairhope had its own system of land tenure, "which enables a man to own his own

home,” that Fairhope had the only free library in the state of Alabama, and that the School of Organic Education, “which is free to all children living on colony land, is attracting the attention of educators and drawing pupils from all over the country. Teachers trained in its normal courses are in demand.” It was free advertising.

Edwin S. Potter (1911) from the Arden, Delaware, Georgist colony, reported in the *Syracuse Herald* that Johnson had conducted an extremely successful model class during the 1911 University of Pennsylvania Summer School.<sup>114</sup> During six weeks the students, “a lot of backward and wayward misfits of the primary grades on whom the ordinary schools had failed utterly to make any satisfactory impression,” had the right to move about, talk while working, and gain a valuable learning experience in which the school did not repress their interests. Potter noted that Johnson was planning to illustrate her principles in model schools, first in his hometown Arden, and later in the larger eastern cities. This is remarkable because Arden too housed a single tax colony, its citizens following Georgist political and economic ideas. It seems that Johnson may have been planning to *first* spread her educational experiment among like-minded peers before branching out to other educators.<sup>115</sup>

Finally in 1911, “Organic Education,” an article concluding a series of three by Johnson in *The Public*, drew an analogy between educating children, the work of physicians and growing crops. Johnson (1911) found prevailing schoolwork *uneducational* since it did not “study the needs of the child as evidenced by the symptoms” (p. 1289). Hence, children grow nervous, near-sighted, round-shouldered, and fail. Johnson preached that the prudent “student of nature” (*ibid.*) works in harmony with symptoms of health and disease of growing plants, analogous to the work of doctors with patients.<sup>116</sup> She further held that educational institutions should not ask, “What do you know?” “What have you done?” “Where are your credentials?” but should ask, “What do you need?” and “How may we serve you?” (p. 1289).<sup>117</sup> Note that these 1911 phrases return time and again in later newspaper and magazine publications by her — as well as by reporters apparently echoing the tone and source.

### 1912: Third Mission: The First Summer School

By 1912, the number of students enrolled had progressively increased. Johnson hired and trained teachers through her teacher training class. However, since she had entirely invested Fels’s 1908 \$10,000 donation into buildings and salaries, she had to secure new funds to maintain her school from mid-1912 onward. In part, she did so by writing grant applications for assistance in support of the school. First and foremost, she gave lectures on her methods — simultaneously soliciting for donations. As a consequence, she sought to draw as much media attention to her school as possible during her fund-raising tours. A negative consequence of the publicity activities is that Johnson increasingly became the school’s director *in absentia*.

Marietta Johnson began her 1912 tour during the summer break.<sup>118</sup> In full agreement with apparent plans concerning “model schools” mentioned in Potter’s (1911) *Syracuse Herald* article reviewed above, she conducted the Summer Camp School of Organic Education at Arden, Delaware. Marietta Johnson, Edwin Potter and his wife Cora directed the summer school. The *Current Literature* (1912) gave publicity to the camp by reporting, “Mrs. Marietta Johnson is working out a system of “organic” education at Fairhope, Alabama, and at Arden, Delaware” (p. 311). The *San Francisco Call* (1912) ran an illustrated story on the camp, praising Johnson’s school as a place “where every boy and girl does as he or she likes.” It included photos of a boy standing on his head, a girl demonstrating dancing skills, and children throwing stones at a target. The *San Francisco*

*Call* reporter noted that the children loved the swimming and reading sessions during the camp, described the democratic community of Ardenites, explaining, “single taxers are devout believers in vegetables” (meaning vegetarianism). The report was extremely influential. This specific article was reprinted by at least four East Coast newspapers with a total circulation of 481,000 copies.<sup>119</sup>

### **The Fall of 1912: The First Acknowledgement on a National Scale**

“How Fairhope Solved the School Problem” by Helen Christine Bennett was another particularly influential illustrated article. It appeared in the September 1912 *Pictorial Review* — a women’s magazine with a nationwide circulation of 700,000 copies.<sup>120</sup> Bennett (1912), who had lived in Fairhope for a while, reviewed Johnson’s conversion experience and narrated the school’s early history. Additionally she quoted Johnson’s 1911 radical critique of regular public schools: “Why should education insist upon being uneducational? The insane desire to *teach* is a fatal barrier to development...If children do not thrive under the educational system provided, why not change the system?” (p. 13). Bennett outlined the school’s characteristics: kindergarten and life classes, children singing and dramatizing songs, outdoor nature study, no reading and writing before the age of nine, and children making their own rulers and measuring with them. There was an absence of what is now called formal learning. Moreover, no child was “ever been ‘left back’ or ‘put back’” (*ibid.*). She did note a steady influx of children from public schools who were at first unable to adjust to the school’s liberty and freedom. Bennett’s article portrays the children as affectionate, high spirited, original, self-reliant, knowing as much as public school children of their years, fluently expressing themselves, more intelligent in absorbing new knowledge, and amazingly interested in abstract questions (p. 60). Illustrative photographs show, for instance, two teepees built by the children and children who are busy roofing one of the newly constructed buildings at the school’s campus.<sup>121</sup>

Up to now, nothing at all points towards a possible future teaching profession of Johnson in New York City. She built up professionalism in primary teaching in the Midwestern state of Minnesota, in tertiary teaching of prospecting teachers at Normal Schools in diverse Midwestern states, and in directing a combined kindergarten, primary and secondary school in the Southern state of Alabama. Additionally she amassed an impressive curriculum vita as a school principal lecturing throughout the country — especially in the Eastern States. She had become an accomplished recruiter of students and progressive teachers. She was a capable speaker, able to explain a novel educational approach in terms of a drawn out emotional, personal, and professional struggle. Still, how did she, in 1917, become a non-resident member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments?

### **1913-1914: Firm Local Recognition in the Eastern States**

Early in 1913, Johnson attended the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey Conference of Charities and Correction, held at Plainfield, New Jersey, where she (1913c) made an address about Organic Education, enlightening her audience about the conversion experience that had changed her educational approach. In March, as testament to her phenomenal public relations prowess, akin to a one-woman civic group applying political pressure, the *New York Times* ran a full-page, illustrated, highly favourable interview with Johnson about her educational perspective and the Fairhope School of Organic Education (Edwards, 1913).<sup>122</sup> Johnson related that one of her most successful teaching

techniques was simply letting the children alone, claiming that her students develop so remarkably because the “interest with which they seize on learning, when left to themselves” is greater than in other circumstances “where the teachers force it down their throats.” She stressed, “The child who performs tasks to please a teacher, to avoid punishment, or to get a grade or a reward of any kind, is working under a false motive; often when thus actuated children will do just enough to avoid the punishment or gain the reward and not a fraction more.” Later that year, the *Evening Post* (1913b) claimed that Johnson’s school was known in her neighbourhood as a “Do As You Please School,” and the *New York Press* (1913b) declared that children at Johnson’s school were allowed to “just grow.”

The publicity value of the *New York Times* interview was enormous (Newman, 2002). The history of education literature gives the impression that there had been no other significant promotion prior to the *New York Times* article. The general idea in the literature is that the star of Johnson’s fame only began rising after publication of this particular *New York Times* article. Many researchers share this view (e.g., Stack Jr., 2004). One historian stated that for “all its radical innovation, the Fairhope experiment remained relatively unsung” until 1915 (Cremin, 1961, p. 151), ignoring the *New York Times* interview and many other publications altogether.

Perhaps it is wise to stress the publication-day of the article (a Sunday), because the circulation of the Sunday *New York Times* was 150,000 copies, while daily circulation amounted to 200,000 copies. In contrast, for instance: the 1912 article about Johnson’s summer school camp at the single tax colony at Arden, published by at least five newspapers, had a total circulation of no less than 543,000 copies on East and West Coasts — nearly three times the circulation of the Sunday *New York Times*. In addition, *The Pictorial Review* article by Bennett (1912) had a nationwide circulation of 700,000 copies, almost five times the circulation of the local Sunday *New York Times*. *The Pictorial Review* was a women’s magazine. Women’s magazines were mostly read from cover to cover, and on the whole, read by more than one person, which most probably may not have been the case with the Sunday *New York Times*.

After lecturing in Washington, D.C., Johnson directed the first session of the Fairhope Summer School in July 1913, but, in spite of its name, held in the Havemeyer School building in Greenwich, Connecticut.<sup>123</sup> The majority of teachers and mothers attending were from New York City. A public conference about Johnson’s work was also held. The events created another flood of newspaper articles about the Fairhope Summer School at Greenwich and Johnson’s school at Fairhope.<sup>124</sup> Since the articles have corresponding illustrations and merely retell the account in Johnson’s three 1909-1911 *The Public* articles and in the 1909-1912 pieces by other single-taxers — Bennett, Comings, Herring, Potter — it suggests that Johnson distributed press kits to journalists with the photographs and excerpts of articles written by her and her *aficionados*. We may yet find more reports regarding Johnson’s extremely successful 1912-1913 fund-raising tour. All texts will likely have one thing in common. They will reveal a woman with remarkable ability to bring positive attention to the fate of her school.

On 31 July 1913, at the closing conference during the first Fairhope Summer School, the Fairhope League was founded, with Mrs. Charles D. Lanier (May Lanier) as President and Miss Jean Lee Hunt as Secretary.<sup>125</sup> Johnson (1974) wrote, “The Secretary, Miss Jean L. Hunt, did valiant service for several years, making speaking appointments, arranging for summer schools, and promoting the idea in every possible way” (p. 40). Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, the wife of the President of the United States, joined the League too. The Fairhope League, which in 1920 became the Fairhope Educational Foundation, raised funds, organized lectures (admission fee: one U.S. dollar), and sponsored sessions

of the Fairhope Summer School. For instance, in 1914 and in 1915, the League successfully organized two successive summer school sessions.

By now, Johnson had gained recognition for her methods in the Eastern States several times in succession. The extensive 1912 to 1913 publicity increased the focus of the educational world upon her methods.<sup>126</sup> As well, articles in *The Survey* by Johnson (1913a, 1913b) and by Hunt (1913), the Secretary of the Fairhope League, stressed familiar Fairhope school topics. Young children develop myopia and eyestrains when reading. Children should not sit in rows of desks. Children's interest in their activities will afford sufficient self-restraint. Fear of any kind, strain, and anxiety cause nervousness and destroy children's interest in their activities. Johnson's Alabama school has no requirements, no homework, nor examinations, nor marks. In Fairhope, the children begin reading and writing at the age of nine or ten.

### **1914: "The American Montessori"**

During the summer of 1913, John Dewey was invited by the Fairhope League to investigate Johnson's school. Dewey accepted. Two weeks after the publication of Johnson and Hunt's articles in the 6 December *The Survey*, he made his visit to the Fairhope School of Organic Education in the company of his fourteen-year-old adopted son Sabino. During the early months of 1914, he made his report to the Fairhope League (*New York Herald*, 1914). *The Survey* issued a sizeable excerpt from his animated testimony (Dewey, 1914). Johnson (1974) later remembered, "John Dewey's report of the work has been of inestimable value, not only in establishing it in the minds of educators and others, but it has been a tremendous help in securing funds" (p. 41).

During 1914, several generous newspaper and magazine articles appeared.<sup>127</sup> Unusual, on the other hand, are two phenomena.

Firstly, suddenly various reporters began comparing Johnson to Maria Montessori, dubbing Johnson the "American Montessori," even reporting that Montessori directly influenced Johnson's educational methods.<sup>128</sup> Before we draw premature conclusions, it is good to know that Italian educational reformer Maria Montessori visited the United States in December 1913.<sup>129</sup> It looks, therefore, as if Johnson simply wished to make the most of the publicity generated by Montessori's American sojourn. She did not object to being compared to Montessori when it generated interest in her own educational approach.

There is a second phenomenon. As of mid-1914, newspaper reporters began merely referring to Johnson's work, trusting their readers would be familiar with her approach to education, indicating that Johnson's success story had become almost too well known.<sup>130</sup>

### **1915: Firm Nationwide Recognition: *Schools of To-Morrow***

In January 1915, in a one-page article titled "Organization," Johnson (1915b) wrote that kindergartens demonstrate "the law of growth through self-activity." She argued that when children are inspired by evocative, practical materials, they become completely engrossed by their mission, set to work to construct objects of their imagination with materials that surround them, and express themselves through these materials. This is how they develop discipline, will power, and power of concentration, self-control, and reasonableness. However, comes the age of six or seven, schools abruptly crush these self-prompted activities to make room for occupations thought up, fixed, and evaluated by grown-ups. Johnson rhetorically asks, "Why should this law of self-activity be violated

when school age is reached?" "Does the organism develop under a different law at seven or eight?" Her answer: "To be educational...we must obey the law of growth and provide occupations and activities which will satisfy the needs of the growing body, the inquiring mind, and the delight of the spirit."

1915 saw another flood of articles about Johnson, her school, and her educational approach. It was as if Johnson had "set out to convert the nation" (Gaston, 1984, p. 88).<sup>131</sup> In *The New Republic* Bourne (1915g) concluded that "No school carries out more carefully Professor Dewey's dictum that the child can only be educated by concerning himself with what has meaning to him as a child, and not what is to have meaning to him later as an adult" (p. 64). This was high praise coming from Bourne, the influential critic. In the *New York Tribune*, educator Rodman (1915h) wrote that "Johnson's method [was] in striking contrast to the methods of our New York City training schools for teachers." Rodman had visited Johnson's Summer School at the Arden colony in 1912 and attended Fairhope Summer School at Greenwich in 1915.

In May 1915 came the publication of the massively influential *Schools of To-Morrow* by John Dewey and his daughter. It includes a collection of reports on experimental schools they personally investigated between 1913 and 1915. Evelyn Dewey made the field visits to all the schools referred to in the book, except Johnson's school, which her father and brother Sabino investigated. "An Experiment in Education as Natural Development," the second chapter, deals in its entirety with the Fairhope School of Organic Education. In outlining the school's now familiar themes, the Deweys explained that the underlying principle of Johnson's methods was Rousseau's idea that the "child is best prepared for life as an adult by experiencing in childhood what has meaning to him as a child" (pp. 17-18).<sup>132</sup> They portrayed Johnson as "trying an experiment under conditions which hold in public schools," asserting that her methods were "feasible for any public school system" (p. 23).

The considerable 1912-1916 newspaper, magazine, journal, and book coverage of Johnson's approach to education had constructive consequences. It enabled her to give lectures and secure funds for her Fairhope school.<sup>133</sup> Johnson received fees for her lectures, and solicited contributions during those lectures. This does not mean that the school received no criticism. It did! For example, a New York *Sun* (1915a) article, headed "School Experiment Opposed," reported that the Montclair Superintendent of Schools strongly opposed the intended implementation of Johnson's methods in the Mount Hebron school in Montclair, New Jersey. Nevertheless, positive media coverage predominated.<sup>134</sup>

### 1916: Fading Recognition

The February 1916 *Kindergarten and First Grade* reprinted no less than three pages of quotations from Johnson's articles and speeches (1916). During the rest of the year, few announcements and reports of her lectures appeared in the media.<sup>135</sup> *The Mothercraft Manual* (Read, 1916) shows that Marietta Johnson in 1916 not solely was the director of the Fairhope school; at the same time she led the Little School in the Woods in Greenwich, Connecticut. Johnson (1974) explained that after Dewey's 1913 visit to Fairhope an invitation "to direct Mrs. Lanier's little school in Greenwich...made it possible for me to continue my work in the Fairhope School without compensation" since she received a salary from this "Northern school" (p. 41). The *Evening Telegram*, reporting about the school of thirty-seven pupils in the hills just outside Greenwich town, outlined that Johnson was a "militant revolutionist against the system long in vogue in the public schools" (Goewey, 1916). Paragraph headings like "Joy in Work," "No

Closed Doors” and “Lie Down and Rest” indicate the now familiar approach to education. This means that Johnson merged being the principal of her Fairhope school with directing the Greenwich school, organizing summer schools and lecturing throughout the country.

During the First World War, Johnson seldom spoke of her socio-political goals, other than at occasional village celebrations in Fairhope.<sup>136</sup> The one exception was a lecture at Chautauqua in August 1916 (*Randolph Register*, 1916). After hearing her speech, a reporter wrote in *The Public* how impressed he was with her synthesis of organic education pedagogy and Fairhope principles. “At the basis of the social and political philosophy of Henry George,” he explained, “lies the doctrine that labor shall not seek through legislation, results which it may accomplish for itself, but that the worker only asks such legislation as shall establish equality of opportunity, and give him a larger freedom, to make of his life what he will” (Platt, 1916, p. 847). In like vein, Johnson, he wrote, insisted that teachers should not significantly interfere with the “freedom of opportunity for children to work out their native impulses and natural desires” (*ibid.*). Since the nature of children is activity, schoolrooms and grounds should be spacious. In case of the Fairhope School of Organic Education, 165 children occupied several buildings and more than a few acres. Logically, to the reporter, the manual training room was largest and best equipped. He concluded that the school carried individualism to a beneficial extreme. The reality that the school was financially supported neither by the state of Alabama, nor in actuality by the Fairhope colony, the journalist attributed to the colony maintaining “an autonomy in every way separate from the state” (p. 848). He apparently believed that the Fairhope School of Organic Education suffered no lack of financial support. In this respect, George’s philosophy of “cooperative individualism” (the colony’s slogan) corresponded with an educational approach promoting self-activity and personal initiative of the child “to make of his life what he will” (M. L. Johnson, 1909).

By now, Johnson had stood in the educational limelight for several years. Until mid-1916, she succeeded admirably in ensuring her school’s survival. During the second half of that year, nonetheless, encouraging consequences of media attention faded. At some time early in 1916, the Fairhope League was unable to pay its Secretary and “for a number of years the funds were most uncertain, being largely secured by personal solicitation” (M. L. Johnson, 1974, p. 47). Jean Lee Hunt, the fired Secretary of the Fairhope League, began work as Secretary of the Bureau of Educational Experiments in May 1916. Interestingly, in December of that year, *The Survey* (1916) reported that the Fairhope League would incorporate and conduct a correspondence school in Johnson’s educational principles “for mothers throughout the country.” *The Survey* also reported that Johnson was about to begin a demonstration school in New York City. An author of a *New York Tribune* letter to the editor had already called for a school like Fairhope. “A school of this kind in New York would surely be a godsend to the community” (Pumpelly, 1916). Public School 95 (P.S. 95), Clarkson Street, New York City, was the demonstration school.

### **1916-1917: Making Contact With the Bureau of Educational Experiments**

While the Fairhope School of Organic Education was favourably mentioned in diverse publications, meeting the budget remained Johnson’s constant struggle.<sup>137</sup> In his report to the Fairhope League, Dewey (1914) had advised, “A guarantee fund covering a span of years...would give [Marietta Johnson] opportunity for supervision; for greater attention to the assisting teachers; for her training work, as well as for trips north to make her work



known and to give assistance and supervision to like attempts there.” A *New York Times* (1914d) reporter quoted Dewey saying that a “fund of from \$5,000 to \$7,000 will meet the needs of the work” and that he hoped that “the ideals and the methods of the school will be adopted [in New York City].”

Recalling Dewey’s 1914 recommendations, given the harsh economic consequences after the U.S.A. broke relations with Germany in February 1917, feeding nationwide fears that the U.S.A. would declare war on Germany, Marietta Johnson desperately needed new sponsors willing to subsidize her school. In March 1917, she wrote an application for assistance in the support of her school to the Bureau of Educational Experiments in New York City. She noted that during the ten years of the school’s life, voluntary donations were the only means of support. Each year in May, it was uncertain whether the school could continue after the summer break. Therefore, she sought secure support for ten years in advance. She asked for \$100,000. “Will you not help toward this fund?” She stated, “It is impossible for me to do the educational work which is demanding my efforts when I am obliged to carry this burden of raising funds.”<sup>138</sup>

It appears that Johnson did not secure a gift. Instead, she was offered to supervise the teaching of a class and to supervise teachers at Public School 95 in return for a generous salary. Lucy Sprague Mitchell, founding mother of the Bureau of Educational Experiments, reported that Johnson “was favorably disposed toward the scheme for a class in P.S. 95.”<sup>139</sup> On 12 March 1917, the BEE Committee on the Greenwich House Plans reported to the BEE Working Council that Marietta Johnson and the principals of P.S. 95 and P.S. 64 had met with them. Johnson had been interested.<sup>140</sup> Finally, the recommended BEE budget, dated June 1917, reads, “Mrs. Johnson expenses \$2,500.”<sup>141</sup> In September 1917, Johnson began working at P.S. 95 and P.S. 64.



## CHAPTER 3

### Caroline L. Pratt and The Play School

A school system may be developed only by developing the teachers, and this can be done only, according to our vaunted republican pleas, through the utmost freedom of action. Teaching is an art, and the teacher should be accorded the treatment of her profession until she demonstrates that she is no artist. Then there should be some way of filling her place by some one in whom there lies that possibility. We shall not settle the school problem by cutting down appropriations. By herding in cities we have removed ourselves from the natural educational influences of simple industrial country life — influences which we never recognized as educational until we were deprived of them. The problem of the public school is now as it has ever been to supplement other educational influences. As we have deprived our children of those which are a part of country living, the schools must supply the deficiency and it is for this reason that the scope of the school has been enlarged so as to include “frills and fads.”

Caroline L. Pratt. “Fads and Frills,” April 22, 1905, *The Evening Post*.

In 1913, Caroline L. Pratt founded the Play School, later City and Country School, at New York City, and remained the school’s principal until her retirement in 1945. In 1919 she was a member of the Advisory Council of the Progressive Education Association. Three years earlier, she joined the Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) in New York City as charter member. How did Pratt, born in 1867 in upstate New York, founder and principal of an experimental school in Manhattan since 1913, come to work with the BEE in 1916?

This chapter outlines Pratt’s story, which is characterized by a number of career switches during a decade and a half long meandering search for self-direction. Following her 1896 rejection of the graded exercises method in woodworking that she trained to teach at a Normal School, she set out to find new direction. After travelling to Sweden to attend a course in *Sloyd* woodworking instruction, she came to reject all woodwork pedagogy and didactics. Caroline Pratt (1948) remembers her “seven years of teaching in Philadelphia became [as] a period of intense self-education” (p. *xiii*). Falling in love with a politically active woman led to further search for direction and a series of endeavours as researcher, social settlement reformer, trade unionist, Socialist, author of critical texts, toy manufacturer, and education theoretician. Eventually she would found the school of her political inspired dreams in 1913. This chapter will sketch this development.

It is also an account of when, how, and why Caroline Pratt joined the BEE.

#### **1867-1897: Caroline Pratt, Childhood and Early Career**

On 13 May 1867, Caroline (Carrie) Louise Pratt was born in Fayetteville, near Syracuse, in upstate New York. This small village comprised about 1,500 people, 250 homes, five churches, and a Masonic lodge. It is the homestead of the paternal side of her family. The previously rural community had grown prosperous from the Erie Canal related industry. The Canal is situated just outside the village. Caroline grew up and attended primary education and high school. As well as sprawling Victorian era residences, the village housed stores, hotels, taverns, warehouses, quarries, factories, and water mills.

Relationships were face-to-face, the village newspaper reported personal holidays like weddings and anniversaries, including Caroline's sixth birthday (Carlton, 1986).

Caroline was the third of four children of Henry S. Pratt (1830-1889), and Lydia Celestia Pratt, *née* Rowley (1840-1917). Both parents were descendants of Puritan era Calvinists. Caroline's father, former Captain in the Cavalry of the volunteer Union forces, was businessperson, Fayetteville village clerk and he was elected Overseer of the Poor in 1881. His North American ancestors, dating to Thomas Pratt (d. 1692), were soldiers and homesteaders. Lydia's North American ancestors, dating to John Rowley (d. 1655), were millers and farmers. Caroline's siblings were her older sister Elizabeth Sophia (Lizzie), older brother John Davis, and younger brother Henry Rowley. John became a clerk in Syracuse. Lizzie studied music at the Syracuse University for a year, taught elementary school in their village from 1880. In 1883, John and Lizzie moved west to Ipswich, South Dakota where John eventually became postmaster. His sister Lizzie assisted him until 1886 when she returned home. Only Henry, who began work at a local flourmill in 1889, married, and had two children. In 1892 Henry moved to Kansas City, Kansas, to work as a bookkeeper.

Social life flourished in Fayetteville. The village had many clubs. Independence Day and New Year's Day were cheerful occasions, while family visits strengthened feelings of belonging. Family ties were strong. Until her twelfth, Caroline's life in Fayetteville was uncomplicated. In March 1868 Caroline, Lizzie and John were baptized at the Trinity Episcopal Church of Fayetteville. Their mother was active in the local aid societies. She raised Caroline in a Victorian, religious, traditional and rural yet industrializing community. Caroline learned the manual work of the household when she after school hours became her mother's responsible little helper. Caroline's confirmation by Bishop Huntington in January 1883 marked the end of her Victorian girlhood.

Her older brother and sister out of the house left Caroline alone to help her mother. Her father suffered fits of illness (unidentified), becoming dependent upon morphine, his wife, and Caroline — apparently in that order. Caroline suffered illness as well. One biographer believes that she “was threatened with tuberculosis several times in her life” (Carlton, 1986, p. 124). Can malaise and being a sickly child bookworm also explain her later wish to become a kindergarten teacher?<sup>142</sup> It is not an unheard of explanation. Karsten (1986) finds statistical associations between a history of childhood illness, avid reading, and the choice of schoolteacher as a profession.

In the summer of 1884, a great-uncle encouraged her to apply for the position of teacher for the summer session at a school near Pratt's Falls in the town of Pompey, New York. Pompey, a few miles from Fayetteville, was hometown of the maternal side of her family. Caroline often helped harvest hay on her great-uncle's farm near Pompey. Acceptance of her application led to Caroline's first teaching experience. In *I Learn From Children* (1948), she does not mention her older sister's teaching career, only that she had not aspired for the position of “teacher of a one-room school...It was my great-uncle Homer's idea, possibly born of the neighbors' endorsement, ‘Carrie was always good with children’” (p. xii). She added that she had “none of the benefits of normal school, teacher training, nor even, probably, had ever heard the word *pedagogy*” (p. 7). Instead of formal training or inspiration from curriculum critics to whom Marietta Johnson attributed her conversion to organic education, Pratt wrote of an inner conviction “that a desire to learn was as natural and inevitable in children as the desire to walk in babies” (*ibid.*).

In the fall of 1884, Caroline resumed her studies at the village High School. Two years later, she took the *Regents' Advanced Examination*. This standardized test

administered by the Board of Regents of the University of New York sought to ensure that those who passed through the entire state had competency and knowledge in algebra, geometry, physics, and political economy. Caroline passed the exams; but, for the first year, she continued to help her parents. The following year, due to their father's prolonged illness, Caroline and Lizzie had to contribute to the household finances. Lizzie began work at the local post office. In September 1887, Caroline's results on her 1886 examination secured her an appointment as assistant teacher in the Primary Department of the local Union Free School. As with Marietta Johnson, during the 1880s, teaching was one of few professions accessible to women, especially to young single women.<sup>143</sup> Caroline taught the three R's, manners, and elocution. She loved to end the day's strict teaching program with some frivolity. "[When] the children and I were thoroughly weary of the three R's, I varied the program by teaching the little boys to tip their hats to a woman" (p. *xii*).

Her father committed suicide only a few days before her twenty-second birthday. A burden lifted! After years of tending to her long-suffering father's pain and physical deterioration (and her own possible tuberculosis), Caroline suddenly became socially and physically active. First, she kept teaching. Following Lizzie's move to Three Rivers, Michigan, in 1891 (where Lizzie taught music in a public school), the formerly sickly Caroline even became President of the Lawn Tennis Club. Most of all, she began thinking about a career: "Because I had always been interested in young children, the career of a Kindergarten seemed most appealing to me" (p. 14).

In 1892, she obtained a scholarship through the intervention of a neighbour who had spoken to the Dean of the College for the Training of Teachers in Greenwich Village, New York City.<sup>144</sup> Caroline began her classes in the College two-year professional diploma course in kindergarten methods and manual training.<sup>145</sup> When she began her studies, the College, renamed Teachers College in that same year, schooled teachers of children of the poor. She soon became troubled by doubts: "The more I learned of the newest Kindergarten methods of the day, the more uncertain I became" (*ibid.*). Pratt specialized in manual training, based on graded exercises principles. She complained, "Your curriculum was a series of exercises, graded from easy to difficult. Your pupils had to master one skill after another" (pp. 15-16). The curriculum was "all in the abstract...but never by the slightest taint practical!" (p. 16).

Immediately after receiving her diploma in 1894, Pratt moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where she taught woodworking in the Philadelphia Normal School for Girls until 1901.<sup>146</sup> She was successful, but not happily. "Naturally, I used the system I had been taught — I knew no other — but I taught with the depressing conviction that I was helping to perpetuate a system which had no real educational value" (*ibid.*). From a *School Journal* (1895) article describing Pratt's actual teaching practice, we learn that she indeed taught graded exercises.<sup>147</sup> The class in woodworking — accommodated in a well-lit room, with three rows of workbenches for two students each, in the basement of the school with capacity for forty girls — had been established in 1892. The prospecting female teachers would become special educators, "able to correlate and co-ordinate the woodworking with the language, arithmetic, and other work of the school" (p. 475).

### 1896-1901: Finding Direction in Life

As time advanced, Pratt concluded the established graded exercises method to be unsound. This led her to search for alternatives, "for something I could do to make my work in the Normal School worthwhile for my students" (Pratt, 1948, p. 17). In 1896, she crossed the Atlantic Ocean for a six weeks summer course in the *Sloyd* woodworking

instruction at Nääs, Sweden.<sup>148</sup> However, five years later, in March 1901, Pratt (1901) in a report about her trip to Sweden in *Education*, after describing the natural surroundings and atmosphere of Nääs,<sup>149</sup> declared: "I consider the Swedish system of sloyd dangerous, because it does not admit of play of individuality to great enough extent upon the part of the teacher" (p. 418). She was of opinion that *Sloyd* teachers, because of the extreme systematisation of the method, would obtain nothing out from their work. They would be little less than machines, identical to their students. "The danger for sloyd lies in the fact that as a system it is considered permanent, and no system was ever that" (p. 420).<sup>150</sup> She would later characterize her trip to Sweden as disappointing. "I had only a lame answer to my question" (Pratt, 1948, p. 17).

In 1897, Pratt began attending special courses for teachers at the University of Pennsylvania and in 1899 she met Charles Hanford Henderson, director of the Pratt Institute High School in Brooklyn, New York City.<sup>151</sup> Henderson's October-December 1899 lectures about Organic Education at the Griffith Hall encouraged Pratt, motivating further study of alternative, progressive approaches to education.

In *Chapter 2* we saw how Marietta Johnson attributed her conversion experience to progressive education methods to her reading of Oppenheim (1898), Patrick (1899), and Henderson (1902). Pratt did find supportive agreement with Henderson. However, after Pratt herself, the person who most inspired her, and kept on inspiring her for decades to come, was Helen Marot (1866-1940). Helen was the younger sister of Mary Marot, founding mother of the Visiting Teacher program (see *Chapter 1*). In 1897, Helen, a graduate of the class of 1895 of the Philadelphia Drexel Institute Library School (*Library Journal*, 1895), took a position as librarian at the Philadelphia Free Library of Economics and Political Science, which immediately became a meeting place for liberal and radical minded Philadelphians.<sup>152</sup> Over the years Marot — "The only clear socialist product of Philadelphia Quakerism" (Benjamin, 1976, p. 163)<sup>153</sup> — and Pratt immersed themselves in the literature of labour, social reform, especially about the social settlement movement, social relationships, and education. In Pratt's (1948) own words, "I did some other...learning for my future work, quite outside both the Normal School and my courses at the University. My guide was a young librarian with a Quaker background and a profound concern for human values" (p. 18).

Reading and being together revealed their amorous feelings for each other. Marot and Pratt were in love — in a homophobic world, precluding being open about their sexuality. Throughout their life-long companionship, they became strong-minded feminists, mutually influencing each other in subsequent endeavours as social and educational reformers, trade unionists, Socialists, and political activists.<sup>154</sup>

Pratt's fundamental political self-education reached its first peak from 1899 to 1901. She and Marot jointly engaged in literature and participant observant research for the United States Industrial Commission on Immigration, investigating working and living conditions in the custom tailoring industry in Philadelphia and surrounding countryside. It was "a bitter eye-opener," Pratt (1948) exclaimed in her autobiography (p. 19). "The work was done in the home, with no limit to the hours the people worked, and no check on working conditions — which were also living conditions, and which from both points of view were appalling" (*ibid.*). In 1901, she and Marot wrote a solid report referring to the ready-made clothing industry, unfolding their joint investigation (Marot & Pratt, 1901). Two years later, Marot and Pratt (1903) also issued a report referring to custom-made clothes.<sup>155</sup>

The investigation transformed Marot "into an aggressive, partisan activist" (Adickes, 1997, p. 56); it transformed her "from a studious librarian of pacifist tendency into a belligerent activist" (Cohen, 1971, p. 499). We can draw parallel conclusions

regarding Pratt's political state of mind. What applies to Marot, applies to Pratt, and *vice versa*. They were becoming dauntless and valiant activists, tremendously committed to their causes. First and foremost, they incited compassion for the workers whose living conditions they had researched. For instance, the *Church Standard* (1901a) announced that on April 15, 1901, Marot and Pratt would address the Christian Social Union's meeting at St. Luke's Parish House on the harms of sweatshops. A week later, the *Church Standard* (1901b) report on the Marot-Pratt presentation noted:

[It] was a cool, plain statement of horrible facts, all the more pathetic for not being at all sentimental or gushing. It told of hours of work practically unlimited save by the time fixed for the delivery of goods, and of nauseous and unsanitary conditions which it required brave devotion to a principle to invade day after day. As an example Miss Pratt spoke of the discovery of a vest, ordered for a well-known United States Senator, which was being made in an exceedingly dirty place, the contracts for this sort of work being mostly given out by fashionable establishments that sneer at labor unions as anarchistic or socialistic. (p. 877).

In the winter of 1901, Pratt — who taught part-time at the Normal School for Girls until June 1901 (Willard, 1901) — began working for the College Settlement of Philadelphia, 431 and 433 Christian Street.<sup>156</sup> There are no surviving records or extant reports regarding her work or the nature of her work at Philadelphia's College Settlement.

### From Philadelphia to New York City, and Pratt's Political Stance

The Marot-Pratt couple moved to New York City in the fall of 1901.<sup>157</sup> Helen Marot made a meandering career. In New York City she began working as an investigator of child labour conditions for the Child Labor Committee of the Association of Neighborhood Workers.<sup>158</sup> Marot (1903) publicly accounted the outcome of her work in her report "The Child Labor Movement in New York."<sup>159</sup> Mary Simkhovitch (1904) of the Association of Neighborhood Workers proudly listed the results of the "Enforcement of the Child Labor Laws in New York," instigated by Marot. She wrote, "The child labor law applies now to factories, stores and offices, and to the messenger and delivery service. The requirements for beginning work are threefold: 1. *A minimum age, 14 years.* ... 2. *A minimum amount of education* — about equivalent to what a normal 12-year-old child has received. ... 3. *A previous compliance with the school law*, i. e., statement from principal that child has been attending school regularly" (p. 23). For the Alliance Employment Bureau, Marot investigated charity worker salaries. From 1904 until mid-1905, she served as Secretary to the Pennsylvania Child Labor Committee while residing in Philadelphia.<sup>160</sup> Scott Nearing was her assistant; he replaced her as Secretary in 1905. By the end of 1905, back in New York City, she worked with the School Visiting Committee of the Public Education Association of New York City and also assisted Florence Kelley, Secretary of the National Consumers' League, investigating literature for a court case concerning working hours of female workers (*Muller vs. Oregon*). From 1906 to 1913, she was Secretary to the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) of New York City, founded in 1903.<sup>161</sup> She became an extremely professional, effective organizer, speaker, and negotiator.<sup>162</sup>

After moving to New York City in 1901, Caroline Pratt began teaching an exploratory manual training method in a private school and at Hartley House — reviewed in *Chapter 1*. During these years, from the fall of 1901 until the fall of 1908, Pratt not only educated her students but educated herself too, through taking a correspondence course from the University of Chicago and through taking courses

offered at settlement houses. Without doubt she learned from her colleagues at Hartley House and at the private school. On the other hand she gave talks to colleagues herself.<sup>163</sup> Above and beyond, she expressed her political opinion publicly. For instance, as regards to educational matters, she sent a letter to the editor of the *Evening Post* and had an article published in the 1906 *Charities and The Commons*.

In April 1905, the *Evening Post* (1905) had “Not Only The Three R’s,” a statement by the Principals’ Club, defending and upholding the contemporary course of study in the New York City public schools in preference to a course more strictly devoted to the so-called three R’s. The Principals’ Club’s conclusion was, “We believe that the three R’s are essentials, but if taught alone they make a most impracticable system of instruction, utterly inadequate to the requirements of the life the child is to enter.” Pratt’s (1905a) letter to the editor in the *Evening Post* constitutes her analysis of the situation;<sup>164</sup> an excerpt opens this chapter — see above epigram.<sup>165</sup>

In 1906, in an address before the NYC Association of Neighborhood Workers, Robert Woods of the South End House in Boston lambasted the public schools’ failure to adequately prepare pupils for their future industrial work (*Charities and The Commons*, 1906a-b). Pratt (1906) responded that the labour market, flooded with inadequately schooled clerks, “with the result of long hours and poor pay” (p. 702), represented an educational and an economic problem. She argued that a movement for trade schools would lead to insufficiently trained workers and similar results for clerical occupations.<sup>166</sup> Since students no longer live in simple conditions, but are impacted by all manner of social and economic change, schools “must supply the deficiencies of home and street” (p. 703). Serving as social institutions, schools must educate students on social levels as well. This change in perspective of schooling needs capable teachers, who are militant social reformers as well as educators.

What did Pratt learn from her carpentry lessons? What did she learn from her companion Helen Marot? What did she learn from friends like Mary Marot, Harriet Johnson, Harriet Forbes, and their settlement colleagues? The memorandum is unambiguous. Pratt saw herself not merely as a social settlement teacher, but as a social reformer. She was becoming a capable educator, social reformer, indeed, a fighter for social justice. This stance took a long road to realize.

### 1909-1910: The WTUL, Zealous Unionists and the Uprising of the Twenty Thousand

In her anti-communist screed, *The Red Network*, Dilling (1934) lists Caroline Pratt among members of the Special Committee of the Emergency Committee for Strikers Relief (pp. 146, 314). The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Norman Thomas, Socialist Party candidate for President, organized that committee in 1926 to assist strikers in the textile industry. Dilling appears unaware of Pratt and Marot’s investigation of the Philadelphia custom tailoring industry between 1899 and 1901, and of their WTUL support for the shirtwaist strike of 1909.<sup>167</sup> In contrast, in biographical notes on Pratt in *Teachers College Record*, a historian of education only mentions her union support in passing as “aiming at the amelioration of the sweatshop conditions rife in the ladies’ garment industry” (Beck, 1958. p. 129). Other Pratt biographers, including Carlton (1986), Hauser (2002, 2006), Hirsch (1978), and Semel (1999b), following Pratt (1948), also only briefly touch on her intense, passionate, political, labour, and feminist activism.

Recent feminist and gay histories begin to restore the omission. In a monograph on the WTUL, Dye (1980) calls attention to exceptionally close relationships that WTUL female allies formed with each other from 1903 to 1913.<sup>168</sup> She observes that during the first decade of the league’s existence WTUL allies shared a number of



characteristics: Almost everyone was female; they were, without exception, wealthy, single, and unusually well educated. Prior to their work for the WTUL, many had worked for a charitable organization. Frequently, when social conditions did not respond to social reform, they became disillusioned with traditional charity work, and, often, work at a settlement house led to activism. Marot, for instance, began attending WTUL meetings before 1906 (p. 39). Likely Pratt, who worked at the Hartley House settlement at the time, attended too.

In a 1907 letter to a WTUL founding member, Marot wrote of “looking forward to a revolution in New York among working women” (in Dye, 1980, p. 87). She became the league’s Secretary in the spring of 1906. Her activities between 1906 and the fall of 1909 mainly consisted of providing support for unionizing women workers. Among other WTUL allies, Marot and Pratt led classes for unorganized women in feminism, union principles, and union activities such as leading meetings and strikes. Thus, in their background rolls, they lent assistance to the working women in establishing unions among tobacco workers, laundresses, telegraphers, seamstresses, among other trades (*New York Times*, 1907b).

Marot (1910) wrote of an eleven-year struggle of to organize needle industry shops individually that had failed (p. 119). While it was a single industry, there were numerous small shops; in 1900, the total was 1,224 (Sachar, 1992). During July, August and September 1909, Marot and other WTUL allies held spontaneous street meetings outside the shops, handing out circulars in English, Italian and Yiddish. At the Second Biennial Convention of The National Women’s Trade Union League of America, held in Chicago at the end of September 1909, Marot told that she immensely enjoyed these meetings. “It is helpful in time of strike to hold street meetings...it gives tremendous courage to the union girls to have us talk there” (NWTUL, 1909, p. 20). Then, in November 1909, perhaps the largest strike of women workers in the history of American labour movement began. The New York City shirtwaist makers’ strike originated in response to a firing of workers who attempted to organize a union at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, known for particularly draconian sweatshop conditions, and in response to brutality of hirelings.<sup>169</sup> A 1910 investigation of the New York City and Philadelphia shirtwaist trade shows “long hours, a great deal of overtime work, sharp fluctuations in wages owing to the seasonal character of the work and the shifting price scales, and a complete lack of any standards as to wages or methods of business among the manufacturers” (Goodman & Ueland, 1910, p. 827).

On 22 November, inspired by a speech by the fiery Clara Lemlich at an emergency meeting of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) in the Cooper Union auditorium seating 3,000 predominantly female workers, a resolution for a strike was taken. What began as a walk out at a single shop (not Triangle) soon spread, becoming a general strike among some 500 of the small to large shirtwaist factories in the garment district.<sup>170</sup> As well as higher wages and shorter working hours, strikers fought for the right to organize (Leupp, 1909; Sumner 1910). Reflecting the ethnic characteristics of the workforce, Lemlich’s spontaneous speech was in Yiddish; she was a young woman immigrant from the Ukraine, and a member of the ILGWU.<sup>171</sup>

*The Survey* noted, “Several weeks before this eventful night [November 22; J.S.], the arresting of pickets had begun, and members of the Women’s Trade Union League had begun to take a hand” (Leupp, 1909, p. 385). It is not known who had asked the WTUL for support. Active WTUL allies “walked the picket lines, paid calls on strikebreakers, and occasionally took positions as strikebreakers themselves to agitate inside the shop. Others organized consumer boycotts, street meetings, publicity campaigns, and fund-raising benefits...Wealthy allies posted bail for arrested strikers, and

league attorneys provided counsel. The WTUL also helped organize walkouts” (Dye, 1980, p. 68). In addition, allies made financial contributions to strike support (posting bail, providing strike pay) (*New York Times*, 1909b). Helen Marot (1910) described the crucial change in media perception that occurred when middle and upper class women supporters began to be arrested for strike support activities. *The Survey* reported, “The [strikers] are showing an unusual pluck and unity of spirit. It is a unique spectacle anywhere to see Jews, Italians and Americans working shoulder to shoulder for a common cause” (Leupp, 1909, p. 385). This signifies an important aspect of the shirtwaist makers’ strike and of parallel strikes. The strikes brought together women and men of nearly every ethnic group to fight for a common goal. It formed part and parcel of their process of Americanization.

Factory owners even employed prostitutes to replace strikers in an attempt to break a strike that would last for more than two months, involving about 30,000 garment workers.<sup>172</sup> Helen Marot directed the WTUL strike support;<sup>173</sup> contemporaneous reports found her dedicated work crucial (Mailly, 1910). Contemporaneous (e.g., Dorr, 1910) and recent accounts such as Faderman’s (2000) *To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America* agree that Marot “raised sympathy for the strikers in women’s groups such as the Colony Club [and] succeeded in convincing the Colony Club to pledge both money and influence on behalf of the strikers” (p. 107). “Marot was supported in this endeavor by several Club members who were affluent descendants of American colonists,” some of whom were openly lesbian (*ibid.*).<sup>174</sup> Caroline Pratt served on the league’s WTUL Finance Committee, which raised \$15,000 for the strike fund (*New York Times*, 1910b). Others raised funds as well; French researcher of the uprising Françoise Basch (1990) mentions the Socialist Party, the Knickerbocker Company, the Federation of Manhattan Musicians Union and Vassar College.

Pratt, like Marot, must have worked relentlessly. Marot and Pratt’s social and personal life at the time centered wholly on the strike. For example, on the eve of the uprising and on the actual day of the launch of the strike, the 19 October and 22 November editions of the *New York Call* announced meetings at the rooms of Misses Marot and Pratt at 218 West Fourth Street.<sup>175</sup> Some historians observe that it has “taken over 65 years for historians to reacknowledge what the community knew all along” (Schulman, 1994, p. 136); that is, regarding support activities for the waistmakers’ strike “lesbians were at the centre of radical organizing on the East Side, and that their relationships influenced radical politics and strategy” (*ibid.*). Other historians observe that within “the relative safety of this homosocial world the women endeavoured to instruct the workers in sisterhood, the power of collective action, and the history of labor movement of which they were so vital a part” (Aptheker, 1989, pp. 86-87), or add, uncritically, “These activist middle- and upper-class women saw their role as ‘big sisters’ to laboring women, who were virtually friendless” (Faderman, 2000, p. 105). That they assumed a *big sister* role was not necessarily an act of condescension, as Progressive Era critics have argued.<sup>176</sup> Dye (1980) asserts that the WTUL allies’ construct of sisterhood reveals how the “ideal of sisterhood always coexisted uneasily with the ideal of class solidarity” (p. 59). She argues that for understanding women’s status, gender cuts across lines of class and ethnicity.

So, adding to Pratt scholarship, recent scholarship, often self-identified as *feminist* and *gay* history, permits concluding that a group of WTUL women — some of whom were lesbian — were deeply involved in union activities and led support activities of this major strike of mostly women workers. Included were Helen Marot, Caroline Pratt, Harriet Forbes and her lesbian companion Harriet Johnson. Also included were Mary Marot, Edna Louise Smith,<sup>177</sup> and Evelyn Dewey, who were not identified as lesbian,

suggesting a degree of tolerance for differences within the WTUL — and that sexual preference had less bearing on actions than other social factors. Being openly identified as lesbian was certainly not a bar to leadership position within the WTUL.

Successive annual reports of the WTUL reveal that Forbes, Johnson, Helen Marot, and Mary Marot annually swapped chairs as members of the league's standing committees: Education Committee 1909-1910: Forbes, Johnson and Mary Marot;<sup>178</sup> Education Committee 1910-1911: Forbes, Johnson, Helen Marot and Mary Marot; Italian Committee 1911-1912: Forbes and Helen Marot. As well, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (1910) listed the 1910 WTUL officers included Helen Marot (Secretary); Caroline Pratt (Finance Committee); Harriet Forbes (House Committee) and Mary Marot and Harriet Johnson (Education Committee).

Most women in the larger group of WTUL allies were volunteer pickets in the 1909-1910 shirtwaist strike. This meant withstanding freezing temperatures and police beatings while on the picket line (Foner, 1979). Adversaries called them “uptown scum,” others called them “college girls.” In an open letter to Commissioner Baker of the New York City Police (*The Sun*, 1909a), Helen Marot protested that when on her picket duty in the neighbourhood of Washington Square, a “plain clothes officer” threatened “You uptown scum, keep out of this, or you’ll find yourselves in jail.”<sup>179</sup> The *New York Times* (1909a) ran a page-long story on the “college girl” pickets. “They are college graduates, most of them, suffragists some of them, all of them with independent incomes, some of them with millions.” The article ends with a list of thirty-seven volunteer pickets, including “Miss Carolin [*sic*] Pratt, Miss Harriet Forbes, Miss Harriet Johnson,...Mrs. Rose Pastor Stokes.”<sup>180</sup>

Close friendships formed among WTUL allies. “In their friendships and living arrangements many WTUL women lived their ideal of sorority by establishing their closest emotional ties with other women” (Dye, 1980, p. 56). For a majority of WTUL allies, the league became a “full-time commitment, a way of life” (p. 57) in which league members formed a feminist compassionate friendship network, encouraging each other in their union and personal life. A number of the relationships endured, specifically “Helen Marot lived all her adult life with Caroline Pratt” (*ibid.*). Dye appears aware of only part of their domestic unit. The 1910 United States Federal Census reveals that Harriet Forbes, Harriet Johnson, Caroline Pratt, Helen Marot, and a fifth woman, Emma James, were household members at 218 West Fourth Street. Forbes was head of the household; Johnson, Marot and Pratt were her partners, while James was servant in the house. The first four women had been passionate WTUL allies. Seigfried (1996) observes, “We can only guess what images ‘homelike’ evoked for [open; J.S.] lesbians like Harriet Johnson and Harriet Forbes [and barely closeted lesbians like Helen Marot and Caroline Pratt; J.S.], who set up housekeeping in a homophobic world” (p. 103). All four had worked at Hartley House; Forbes and Johnson, with Helen Marot’s sister Mary, were visiting teachers with the Public Education Association since 1909.<sup>181</sup>

These strong women organized and orchestrated strike support. While educating working women in sisterhood, they encouraged trade union membership and radical politics. The alliance of progressive suffragettes of the WTUL with militant union organizers in the International Ladies’ Garment Union’ Workers (ILGWU) may have been instrumental in quickly bringing a victorious ending to the shirtwaist strike — the most influential strike of the era, not just of women workers. Forbes, Johnson, Marot, and Pratt stood their ground in the very eye of this labour movement hurricane. The victory belonged to the ILGWU strikers and their families. The middle class volunteers made a difference too. They proved to be valuable organizers and negotiators who effectively used media to promote the workers’ cause. Plus, they took on the

responsibility of financial strike support, which was substantial. Pratt and three of her four housemates truly had emerged as militant, tenacious fighters. The experience must have inspired hope and considerable self-confidence.

### **1911-1913: Following the Uprising of the 20,000: The Usual Feminist Activities**

Only after the February 1910 waistmakers' settlement were Marot and Pratt free to attend to other concerns. Marot returned to her usual WTUL Secretary duties, such as recruiting marchers for the 1910 Labor Day Parade (*New York Times*, 1910c). Together with two co-WTUL-incorporators she worked hard to receive incorporation papers of what became known as the *Women's Strike Council* (*Evening World*, 1910; H. Marot, 1911a). Marot was Guest Editor of "The Economic Position of Women," that is, the very first issue of the *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in the City of New York*. Her own report "A Woman's Strike — An Appreciation of the Shirtwaist Makers of New York" (H. Marot, 1910a) in the *Proceedings* praises the courageous women who withstood the bitter cold, police brutality, factory owners' inflexibility and obstinacy — claiming victory in the end.<sup>182</sup>

Even so, the settlement was of mixed results. It was a victory in that the companies recognized the union (*The Survey*, 1910). However, workers won only incremental improvement in wages and working conditions. The Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire in March 1911, killing 146 garment workers, is a tragic testament to the strikers' failure to win more than marginal gains. True enough, Helen Marot had already warned in a chillingly prophetic way in December 1910: "The conditions in the shops at present make it unsafe for people who work there. Our brothers and sisters may be burned any time a fire breaks out" (in *New York Call*, 1910b).

In 1913, the WTUL began emphasising feminism over trade unionism, according to some adherents. Helen Marot and other unionists found the league's limiting of advocacy for protective legislation for workingwomen and women's suffrage to be alienating and disillusioning. She resigned her position as Secretary of the league in the spring of 1913, not long after the New Jersey Paterson Silk Strike began.<sup>183</sup> A March 1915 *New York Tribune* (1915c) interview illustrates that she had not lost a bit of unionist's zeal, passionately defending her view that working women are indifferent to, even suspicious of, equal suffrage, stating that the "woman movement" is essentially a "middle class woman's movement." Her comments led to a vehement reaction from her former WTUL sisters, who were quoted in a *New York Tribune* article taking exception to Marot's position that the "working woman feels the need of direct action" and "feels her union is nearer to her than suffrage" (Gruening, 1915).<sup>184</sup>

Pratt remained politically active too, although her activism never seemed as intense as Marot's. In 1908 and 1909, she served on the WTUL Finance Committee; in 1910 she was elected Chair of the committee. She remained Chair until 1913, when she, like Marot resigned her WTUL position. Until 1913, she made political and feminist contributions to *New York Call*, the local Socialist newspaper. A *New York Call* letter to the editor lambasts Mrs. Prestonia Mann Martin, author of *Is Mankind Advancing?* (1910). Martin had promoted eugenic and anti-suffragist views during a Hudson Theatre lecture titled "Women's Best Service to the State from the Anti-Suffrage Point of View" (*Evening Post*, 1911c). Pratt (1911b) caustically argued, "Mrs. Martin's position as an anti-suffragist is clear. She has, by virtue of her ability to put wuzziness on a scientific basis, become a great leader. That she will assume the responsibility of that leadership is not to be expected." Pratt evidently maintained feminist advocacy. *Fayetteville Bulletin* (1912), published in her birth-town, reported that "Miss Caroline Pratt gave an interesting talk

on Equal Suffrage before the Philomath Society” during a visit to Fayetteville in June 1912.

### Pratt’s Critique of the Early Twentieth-Century Educational System

“Pratt would have bridled at being called a ‘reformer,’ for she identified herself firmly as a revolutionary Socialist” (Antler, 1987, p. 241). We have already noticed that Pratt (1906) was unambiguous about her political ambition and the failure of public schools to prepare pupils for their future industrial work. Early in her career, she envisioned herself becoming a capable educator, a settlement house reformer, *and* a political warrior. Her ideal was to battle for reforms, an ideal she reached by the time the shirtwaist strike of 1909 came to a favourable conclusion. There exists graphic evidence that she would battle again for reform whenever she thought it necessary. The *New York Herald* (1912), for instance, explicitly mentions her name as a helper of her suffragist sisters in a bitter row at the 1912 Women’s Industrial Exhibition at the New Grand Central Palace.

Her name appears in the 1912 Socialist Party rolls as party member and elected member of its Standing Committee on Education.<sup>185</sup> Participating in the party’s education committee gave opportunity to express her increasingly adamant views on school organization and administration. Reporting for the party’s *New York Call* on the Third Annual Conference on the Problems of the Exceptional Child, she noted that a discussion question — “Why not reduce the numbers in the classes at once and give every child that individual attention which each needs?” — brought approving applause (Pratt, 1912a). Indeed, she reported that a majority of conference papers expressed the child-centered truism that “the school should be made to fit the individual child” recognizing “the impossibility of making the child fit the school.” Pratt argued that education scientists and school managers would need enormous funds to realize those goals. “To no one except a Socialist could the situation present a hopeful aspect...It is a mad fact that in the profit-seeking world we have built, there is no place and no chance for the children, because there is no profit to be made from them...Only a Socialist government will be able to free sufficient funds for a purpose which is not profitable to private enterprise.”

Problems of medical inspection were numerous; they were only able to make available four minutes per child per year. “Idiots and uneducable children,” the “greatest source of sex menace [and] other degenerating influences,” had no means for special education. Regarding overcrowding: “No teacher can handle such classes as we have with any degree of efficiency. They are an absurdity.” Reflecting deeply felt unionist views, she added, “They correspond to the sweatshops of industry.”

Early in 1913 Pratt was among the signers of a call to form the Teachers’ League of New York (see *Chapter 1*). A general meeting of teachers who desired to join was held in February 1913, in Milbank Chapel, Teachers College. Mary Marot and Caroline Pratt were among its co-founders. Later that year, in “Tools vs. Rules” in *The American Teacher* (the organ of the league) Pratt broached a subject she had not touched for years: teaching manual training in public schools (Pratt, 1913). This rendering is a more focused, far more theoretical version of her 1902 critiques “Carpentry at Hartley House” and “Carpentry Classes” and her 1905 “A Neighborhood Shop for Children” (see *Chapter 1*). She continued to argue that the whole school system was in need of change, but now, to present her case, she offered the example of how children play freely with tools in *informal* settings in opposition to the constraints of manual training shop work as taught in the public schools. She began with an illustration (p. 98):

If you were to present your boy with a pocket knife and tell him that he could use it for no other purpose than to whittle pudding-sticks for kitchen use, you should not be surprised that he refused the knife — on these terms...It is quite the same way with tools. The boys look forward to the shopwork in the schools only to find when they get to it that it is not for them after all...It is again their self-respect that rebels against making pudding-sticks when it is so obvious that the tools should be used for the boys' own purposes.

She reminded her readers that when shop work was introduced in the public schools, around 1870, it “was a more or less unconscious recognition of industry as an educational factor” (*ibid.*). Besides “dealing with the symbols of things, the children were to be given the opportunity to deal directly with the things themselves” (*ibid.*). This approach failed, first because public schools had in fact solved any problems before the students could even try to solve them themselves. Second, the public schools had removed shop work's underpinning — usefulness.

Pratt illustrated the first basis of failure by outlining how formal teachers in public schools issued and explained the working drawings of models *before* allowing students to make them. Informal teachers, in contrast, would encourage students to choose their own project; to work it out to their own abilities; to explain it to their teacher, using “every method of expression at his command in order to be understood” (p. 99), and lastly, and most notably, to sketch and refine time and again their own working drawings before beginning to start the chosen projects. She illustrated the second basis of failure by showing that informal shop work, as taught in settlement classes, represents the most important features of industry, that is, “the motive, *immediate usefulness* of the object made; the opportunity to grow mentally through solving problems and inventing; the accumulation of certain definite, appreciated facts to be used in future” (p. 98).

Pratt's new vision: “If it were possible to introduce such work into a public school, the shop might serve as a clearing house for the whole school” (p. 99). She explained that students' apparent poor understanding of their own language and practical arithmetic is not that children are “stupid;” they may seem to be, but are instead “school stupid,” merely “asleep” (p. 100). She proposed startling students out of their school attitude during shop work, to *make them think*, with emotional stimuli. This would encourage them to apply *on-the-spot* knowledge they already possess — through asking relevant questions, letting the children come up with their own thinking and their own answers, not allowing for children's guessing habit. The students would thus better understand the meaning of (English) words and phrases. They would actually use the arithmetic knowledge they already possessed. According to Pratt, this would put the schools in a position “of consciously recognizing that every child has a life of his own; that he has his own interests; that he has his own important social adjustments to make” (*ibid.*).<sup>186</sup>

She defined the aim of education in general as “to put an individual in a position to better adjust his relationships” (*ibid.*). Although schools recognize the aim, she argued that they fail to realize that it is the actual process of adjusting that counts. The “process of adjusting” represents the school's real socializing process. Manual training shop work is essential, but important in most schools. “The children can only become educated by being useful to their several groups *now*, to learn to adjust their relationships by adjusting them. The simplest, most obvious point of attack for the introduction of this fundamental idea is thru the shop work” (p. 101).

The theoretical insights in the September 1913 *American Teacher* article appeared in chorus with the opening of Play School.<sup>187</sup> Before outlining the events that led to founding the school, another aspect of Pratt's life affecting her pedagogy needs our attention.

### 1908-1910: The Birth of Do-With Dolls and Toys

Caroline Pratt explored another career option during her WTUL and political advocacy. At some time in 1908, not long before she resigned teaching carpentry at the Hartley House, she began designing wooden blocks and jointed dolls and toys, developing entrepreneurial plans to manufacture and market them. First, she secured a trademark: Do-With Toys™. She demonstrated the toys and dolls to teachers during a 1909 meeting of the International Kindergarten Union, held at Buffalo, New York.<sup>188</sup> Under a banner headline of her trademarked name, copy for advertisements placed in *The Craftsman* (1909) reads: “There are many toys for Grown-ups. Do-withs are for Children. Don’t mistake Art Models for Toys — Children know the difference.” “Do-withs are playable, durable, makeable, artistic” (p. vi). The ad refers buyers of Do-With Toys™ to art stores, craft shops, and a catalog issued by Pratt. The catalog of her toys has not been located in any searches.

The fledgling capitalist venture of manufacturing and selling dolls and toys got off to an exciting start. Pratt promoted her toys in an assortment of newspaper interviews. An article in the *Evening Post* (1909b), reprinted in the *Washington Herald* (1909), about the toys, for instance, repeats Pratt’s views on types of toys, the first two favoured by adults, the third by children: *Do-Nothings* (toys that do nothing by themselves and are not fun to play with); *Look-Ons* (mechanical toys that do all the playing by themselves after having been wound up), and *Do-Withs* (Pratt’s toys, or “toys for the do-with children;” those that “just seem to be inviting you to come and play with them”). The *New York Tribune* (1910a) asserted that Pratt began her venture after a boy told her that he lost interest in his mechanical toys because they played *for* him, not *with* him.<sup>189</sup> The *Tribune* reporter visited the workshop where Pratt — a “slight little woman with big blue eyes” — kept models of “wooden horses, cows, cartwheels, shafts, and what-nots.”<sup>190</sup> *New York Herald* (1910a) had a three-quarter page, well-illustrated article on “The Birth Of The Do-With Toy.” The *Herald* reporter wrote, “The Toy designer, who is Miss Caroline Pratt, is only starting on her career and profession. The ‘Do-Withs’ are still in their infancy, and at present they are all born in Greenwich Village, where Miss Pratt presides over a small workshop.”<sup>191</sup> The reporter informed readers that Patty S. Hill (1868-1946) of the kindergarten department at Teachers College recommended the toys; that the Ethical Culture School used them in kindergarten work and that in January 1911 Pratt would present a *Toy Shop* or *Playshop* in the Child Welfare Exhibition (see also *New York Herald*, 1910c).

### 1911: Three Demonstrations of Do-With Toys™

Between January 18 and February 12, 1911, Pratt demonstrated her dolls, toys and specially designed blocks — *Unit Blocks* — at the Child Welfare Exhibit in New York City in the 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment Armory.<sup>192</sup> Note that Pratt and Harriet Johnson, her housemate, colleague WTUL Officer, and good friend of the Public Education Association were on the exhibit’s Sub Committee on Home Life, which organized the exhibition.<sup>193</sup> Three months later Pratt would demonstrate her Do-Withs at the Child Welfare Exhibit in the Coliseum in Chicago (May 11 to May 15). And at the end of 1911, she demonstrated them at an exhibition of Christmas gifts at the Teachers College educational museum.

Pratt’s toys were well-received in the press. Public media reported widely on civic exhibits. As well, charitable organizations funded magazines (like *The Survey*) promoted the civic exhibits, which were useful means for publicity campaigns to bring progressive

issues to the public's attention. At their best, they adopted a mission to educate public opinion by initiating democratic debates. Appealing to emotion, and secondarily to reason, the promotional articles made heavy use of graphics — photographs, charts, maps and drawings — as well as human-interest stories and announced lectures, public debates and discussions (Aubert, 2002). Stories about the 1911 New York City and Chicago Child Welfare Exhibits are typical examples. Exactly a month before the opening of the first exhibit, the *New York Herald* (1910b) announced that Pratt would be the exhibit's toy maker supervising the Playshop. Eighteen days prior to the exhibit, the *San Francisco Call* (1911) ran a lengthy article about her toys and dolls. Among other things, the reporter focused on Pratt's view that dolls and toys should possess proper relative proportions. Diverse newspapers and magazines in several states pointed out that the New York City and Chicago exhibits introduced a new manner of toys, toys that simultaneously engaged, delighted, and taught children.<sup>194</sup> An interview with Pratt about her toys in the *Whitesville News* (1911), an upstate New York newspaper, was reprinted in newspapers in Iowa, Nebraska, Ohio, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin.<sup>195</sup> A report in *Life and Labor*, the WTUL magazine, auspiciously describes the dolls as having "nice strong bodies and firm joints and steady bases" (O'Reilly, 1911, p. 197). The reporter added that they "can't come to pieces, they can hardly wear out and the little child can "Do" all sorts of things "With" them" (*ibid.*). Adjacent to the article is a snapshot of the Playshop.<sup>196</sup> A journalist exclaimed in the *Evening World*, "Miss Pratt is a genius in her line" (Patterson, 1911).

Many children visited Pratt's stand to play with the Do-With dolls and toys, while the escorting adults visited the booth to read illustrated political rhymes on the walls. Among the reports in newspapers, there was a rather silly story in the *New York Call* sketching a boy visiting the exhibit, unaccompanied, finding the information given quite disappointing (G. Potter, 1911). The story's author told what the boy bumped into at Pratt's Playshop: "Better for the child to have these crude toys which typify the savage time of development in racial constructiveness. No, little boy, you can't take it away. No, I am sorry. You must leave it for other children to see and their papas and mammas. "I—like—it—so," began the child hoarsely. But it was taken gently from his arms." Pratt (1911a) replied in a letter to the editor, calling Potter's overdone story "a scathing arraignment."

In an article appearing in both *The Survey* and *The Reform Advocate*, Pratt (1911c) promoted her Child Welfare Exhibit Playshop experiences by highlighting two opposing movements,

- away from 'the good ol'-days,' when play material was widely available (stones, bricks, sticks, *etc.*) and when children used these materials as tools to imitate the processes and industries of the grown-ups around them (agricultural work, manufacturing work)
- to modern times, where children have to play with toys instead of play materials, given to them by the grown-ups *not* engaged in processes or industries children can imitate by playing with those toys, "the play instincts of [these children thereby] debauched and neglected to an alarming extent" (p. 893).<sup>197</sup>

Kindergarten teachers and adults who advise parents which toys and kindergarten materials to buy formed the *first movement*. Pratt's "individual effort to market better toys...to satisfy the demands for playability, durability, *makeability* (toys with which children can make things of their choosing), and artistic merit" (*ibid.*) formed the *second movement*.



Due to wide press coverage of the exhibits, Pratt and her Do-With Toys™ achieved a pre-internet kind of instant fame not only in New York City and Chicago; she and her toys became known in many parts of the country. Her exhibit demonstrations made a considerable impression.<sup>198</sup>

Lastly in 1911, from November 24 to December 20, the Teachers College educational museum had a small exhibition of Christmas gifts, organized under the auspices of the Kindergarten-Primary Association of the Horace Mann School in co-operation with the Department of Kindergarten Education of Teachers College.<sup>199</sup> Patty Hill, at the time Assistant Professor of Kindergarten Education, prepared and presided over the exhibit.<sup>200</sup> During opening day remarks, Hill echoed Pratt's idea that "The purpose of the good toy is to inspire the child to work, to exert its imagination, to occupy itself, in some manner however unconscious, which will bear on its later life" (in *Evening Post*, 1911d). The *Evening Post* reporter, possibly unaware of Pratt's contributions, notes that "Miss Hill calls her ideal toys 'do with' toys," adding that everything at the exhibition was "designed to make the youngsters work and think to the limit of their pleasure. In a corner resides the 'do-with family,' the members of which could be adjusted to sit down, to walk, or to drive the horse and cart in the stable."<sup>201</sup> The article concludes by expounding that Hill was "a believer in manual training." Hill clarified, "Through manual training...the child learns to sympathize with those who must work — learns to understand."<sup>202</sup>

### Do-With Toys™: A Generic Name?

Implicit in the name Do-With Toys™ is Pratt's perspective that these toys will motivate children to active, dramatic play. Pratt (1948) wrote in her autobiography that the toys "were so designed that they could be used by the children to portray familiar activities such as barn, house, or street schemes...I named my brain-children Do-Withs — and for a time I had high hopes that I had created something that would revolutionize education" (p. 24).

In spite of the extended press coverage of the three 1911 demonstrations of Do-Withs, the *Guide Book To Childhood* (Forbush, 1913, p. 183) and *Manual of Play* (Forbush, 1914, p. 286) state, without attribution, "Someone has classed toys as 'Do-nothings,' 'Look-Ons' and 'Do-Withs.'" It is obvious that Pratt's name somehow did not attach to her trademark. While between 1909 and 1911, Pratt had been portrayed as Do-Withs inventor, by 1913 her trademark had ellipsed her personage. In a very short time, Do-Withs became generic for a type of toys and dolls —not reference to specific toys made by a Do-With Toys™ company. Before long, a mechanical toys *versus* Do-Withs dichotomy became a generalized description of conflicting kinds of children's toys.<sup>203</sup> Although this can be perceived as a marketing accomplishment, by 1914, the generic identification complicated matters. Manufacturing and selling Do-Withs most certainly had not become the success for which Pratt had hoped.<sup>204</sup> Perhaps this contributed to the establishment of a business partnership, first announced in the June 1914 issue of *Country Life in America*. "Do-With Toys are now made and sold by The Stryvelyne Shop cooperating with Miss Caroline Pratt who announces many new toys and toy schemes." This declaration of intent seemed a promising sign of achievement. Pratt had found a genuine business partner — the Stryvelyne Shop, a spanking new manufacturer of educational toys. In August 1914, the Stryvelyne Shop would lease the twelfth loft in a new building at 7 to 11 West 45<sup>th</sup> Street, New York City (*Bookseller, Newsdealer and Stationer*, 1914). Pratt arranged for the Stryvelyne Shop to sell her toys exclusively in 1914.

### 1911-1914: Some Theorizing about Toys and Child Play

In addition to her 1911 “Toys: A Usurped Educational Field,” issued in *The Survey* and *The Reform Advocate*, Pratt wrote two other texts theorizing about toys and child play.

Around the time Stryvelyne Shop incorporated, spring 1914, the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations included a chapter by Pratt in their 1914 *Parents and Their Problems* book series. Pratt’s (1914a) theses are: Children learn through play; the “essential difference between work and play is that work is productive” (p. 114); and toys “have their place as the instruments of play, just as garden tools have their place as the instruments of gardening” (p. 117). While, perhaps, she was influenced by the language of Deweyan instrumentalists, her rationale has more than a tinge of *longing for a past that never was* cliché. Since modern children no longer have opportunity to gather “so easily play material from the life around them” (p. 119), as they did in a bucolic, pre-industrial age, they no longer have “the sort of real experiences of which they see the beginning and end and therefore, to some extent, the meaning” (*ibid.*).<sup>205</sup> It was not idle romanticism, longing for a return of a more pastoral age. Her contentions reflect her personal transition from matriculating in comforts of a childhood life in rural upstate New York to the urban conditions of turn-of-century Manhattan. In this small aspect, her life story was not entirely different from a Clara Lemlich who grew up in the Ukrainian *Shtetl* Horodok in the Khmelnytskyi Oblast province, or William Wirt who grew up in Markle, Indiana, or John Dewey who grew up in Burlington, Vermont. A historian noted, “Most settlement workers had an ambivalent attitude toward the city: they hated it, were fascinated and appalled by it, and they loved it. Occasionally they denounced the city; but they elected to live in it” (Davis, 1967, p. 23). However, the days of settlement work and organizing strike support were behind Pratt.

Pratt’s (1914b) “The Toys That Children Like,” in *Woman’s Magazine*, warns about giving children “unrelated toys.”<sup>206</sup> “It is too much to expect children to play with unrelated toys. It is as inconsistent as to expect a gardener to garden with a pitchfork, a shovel and a hammer.” Instead, children should play with related toys that “indicate the play that may be carried out with them...[In] order to have play ‘succeed’ it is necessary to treat it quite as seriously as work, and in many respects to apply the self-same principles.” Pratt concluded, “Those first few years when children play with toys are the years when fundamental habits are formed. Such habits as ‘thinking things out’ and ‘keeping at’ things are most easily formed in childhood and may be more readily fostered through play than later on through work.” With such statements, she offered specific means to implement a theory of learning that is fully consistent with American pragmatism in the philosophical tradition of William James.<sup>207</sup>

### 1913: “The Shop Might Serve as a Clearing House for the Whole School”

Since the summer months of 1884, when she had her first teaching experience at a school near Pompey, Caroline Pratt had never ceased being an educator — though she did not teach continuously in formal school settings. Between 1887 and 1892, she was a primary school teacher in Fayetteville; between 1894 and 1901, she was a teacher of teachers in Philadelphia; from 1902 to 1909, she taught carpentry in New York City. She did not engage in classroom teaching between 1909 and 1913, when she re-invented herself as a self-made toy manufacturer, simultaneously living the life of a militant WTUL trade unionist. She certainly remained an uncompromising political activist and she was a member of the Socialist Party, serving on their standing Committee on Education. Pratt had resigned from organizing woodwork classes at the Hartley House in the fall of 1908

in order to carry out WTUL work. Trade union activities consumed much of her time and energy until the spring of 1910. The conclusion of the shirtwaist strike, however, meant that she was able to direct her efforts to less stressful trade union, Socialist, feminist and suffragist causes. Her toy designing and manufacturing venture, which began in 1908, became important in 1910 when she and Harriet Johnson were on a committee to organize a toys and playthings exhibition.

In 1911, Pratt demonstrated Do-Withs at Child Welfare exhibits in New York City and Chicago and at a Teachers College educational museum exhibit. She also began developing theories about school organization issues, toys, and child play. More and more, she was focusing on education again, dearly wishing to return to teaching — if possible, in an experimental school. By now, she had a plan to establish her own school. In order to have a successful start, she would first work out means to socialize schools in general — in a document systematically addressing steps necessary to accomplish her end; next, she would establish a pilot experimental class to test her hypotheses, and third, in case the test outcome confirmed her theoretical stance in practice, she would found an experimental school. What exactly would the school's aim be? Her contemporaneous educational vision, her hypothesis as it were, was embedded in a single line her in 1913 *American Teacher* article: the “shop might serve as a clearing house for the whole school” (Pratt, 1913, p. 99). It is truly fascinating to note that one-and-a-half years prior to the publication of her *American Teacher* article, Pratt published “To Socialize the Schools,” the lead article in the March 1912 issue of *Educational Foundations*, emphasizing how to bring about conditions constructive to individual as well as social learning in schools where shop work is central. To reform the state of the schools, Pratt (1912b) suggested socializing schools, (1) “By means of actual social relationships” (p. 386) — through *active* student occupations, like shop work, instead of through *deskbound* occupations; (2) “By means of knowledge about social relationships” (*ibid.*) — through geography, literature, *etc.*, instead of only educating the so-called 3 R's; that is, through social studies brought into the curriculum; (3) “By relating 1 and 2.” (*ibid.*).

She identified five conditions in the existing schools that were unfavourable to individual and social growth of students: (i) large classes, (ii) antisocial teachers, (iii) lack of teacher freedom, (iv) antiquated teaching methods, and (v) lack of time. As a plan of reform, Pratt proposed shop work, gymnastics, clubs, domestic economy and clubs and classes of others than schoolchildren. She also made proposals to be followed by teachers. Those related to shop work were central to the ones related to the other topics (p. 387):

Instead of being formal and taught only or largely for purely individual development, shop work should be free and taught for the sake of developing a social sense among children. 1. By relating it to other interests, such as home, school and play. At present this could be brought about by having the child choose his own models and put the product to actual use for the purpose intended, at once. 2. By establishing, wherever possible without forcing it, an interest in working together in the making of things. 3. By connecting the work wherever and whenever possible with the regular occupations of the school.

Gymnastic lessons should consist of organized play and organized sport. The aim of clubs “should be to do something that can be done better in a group than by the children as individuals” (*ibid.*). Both shop work and domestic economy should “be open to boys and girls alike” (*ibid.*). The aims of clubs and classes of adults at the settlements should be “to bring about closer connections with the homes of the school children. The settlements offer suggestions as to the nature of such clubs and classes” (*ibid.*). The

teachers should visit the children's homes, live in the school's neighborhood, and make the interest of the parents their own.

Several of the above topics reveal the influence of Pratt's 1901-1908 Hartley House settlement experiences and her 1908-1912 union viewpoints. It is therefore not surprising that she ended her article by advising teachers to "be able to put the people in touch with all the agencies for bettering their conditions" (p. 388). Here intertwine her educational, political, and social reform ideals. Pratt's article is effectively an experimental school *research proposal* — to be used to solicit philanthropic support for a pilot experiment in 'socializing a school.'<sup>208</sup> It may even actually be (at least part of) the very proposal that persuaded Edna Smith, Pratt's exceptionally wealthy friend, colleague, and WTUL ally, to fund a planned experimental class.<sup>209</sup> Pratt's pilot experimental kindergarten class, financed indeed by Edna Smith (the grant was time demarcated), became reality in the spring of 1913 in the main assembly room of the Hartley House. For two months Pratt observed the play of six children who test-played with her wooden toys and jointed dolls and with blocks she had devised. She observed them adjusting to their new environment, to the toys, blocks and tools, to each other, to new ideas, to learning to work together. In fact, she observed six children in her experimental class promoting socializing conditions constructive to individual *as well as* social learning activities. Pratt (1948) made the six test-players the inventors of her field trip method. "My six little teachers soon showed me I could do better than read stories to them about the things they needed to know. I could take them where they could see for themselves" (p. 34). By the start of the summer break, Pratt declared the two-month trial a success.

Next, in September 1913, Pratt and Smith co-founded an experimental school, Play School. Pratt rented an apartment at the corner of Fourth and Twelfth Streets in Greenwich Village, welcoming eleven four- and five-year old children from the locality largely populated by children and their parents like those who had participated in the garment workers' strikes. Their parents were "hard working members of the humbler professions, street cleaners and plumbers and white collar folk of modest kevels, the respectable poor" (Pratt, 1948, p. 40). Smith, now on a larger scale, again subsidized the experiment, this time for a year.

Some time in 1914, Helen Marot, Caroline Pratt, and Edna Smith moved into a three-story town house at 206 West Thirteenth Street. The ground floor and part of the second floor were reserved for Play School. Smith and Pratt were the school's sole teachers. A year later, Marot (1915b) described the school in a *New Republic* article, noting the informal shop-work-like activities and ways that the children adjusted to their environment (p. 16):

The school offers each child an opportunity to carry his curiosity about things through experiment to discovery. It is equipped with an apparatus which is not fixed but is constantly extended. This includes work-benches furnished with full-sized tools. Girls as well as boys of four and five years use hammers, saws and planes without dire consequences to tools or fingers... With the help of such tools and by dramatization the children reconstruct the world of adults — that is, the part with which they come in contact — in miniature. Given this opportunity to interpret their environment, an understanding of it becomes for them a very pressing need. It is this condition of the mind that the school sets out to induce.

### **1914-1915: The Play School Flourishes**

Pratt's 1911-1914 articles on toys and child play made a distinct impression in educational circles. Press coverage of her 1908-1912 activities — political, unionist, and

educational — simply enhanced the impression that Pratt had become a major player (no pun intended) within the educational innovation movement.

Not long after its founding, Play School began receiving official visitors. In April 1914, Harriet Johnson — head of the Visiting Teacher Staff of the Public Education Association — *bineted* the children at the school, meaning, she administered intelligence tests to the school's children.<sup>210</sup> There were visits too from other “WTUL allies and settlement workers...interested in educational innovations” (Carlton, 1986, p. 188), like Harriet Forbes of the Public Education Association — Harriet Johnson's life-long companion. Others made an appointment too, like poet Amy Lowell (see Lowell, 1920). In this context, however, a sudden early 1915 media coverage of the school is in fact most remarkable. Media interest appears directly connected to Pratt's toys business scheme. The joint venture with the Stryvelyne Shop to market the wooden jointed dolls and toys that she announced in 1914 (see above), never caught steam. It was even worse. The Stryvelyne Shop, incorporated in 1914, went bankrupt in the winter of 1915, smashing her hopes of a successful outlet.<sup>211</sup> That dream squashed, Pratt had to give up her plans of manufacturing and marketing toys and dolls.

The 1915 downfall of the Do-With Toys™ venture contributed to the success of Play School. After the swift liquidation of Stryvelyne Shop, Pratt immediately gave her attention to a publicity campaign for the school.<sup>212</sup> She invited the media to her school and illustrated its aims to them. As a consequence, we learn a great deal about the school's curriculum from the early 1915 press reports. Famed educator and journalist Henrietta Rodman (1915a) was the first to find her way to the school, reporting in the *New York Tribune* that she was extremely happy to have found a place where children “get knowledge of life and opportunity for creative activity,” which according to her are “the things” children were “not getting in the public schools.”<sup>213</sup> Her article began, “Have you ever gone to the Play School, at 206 West Thirteenth Street? It's as full of toys as Santa Claus's pack, and as full of children as the old woman's shoe, when she didn't know what to do. But Miss Caroline Pratt knows exactly what to do. She gives the toys to the children, and then watches them play.” Rodman described with a keen eye for detail what she saw in the diverse schoolrooms. “I saw a wooden river flowing between banks of blocks.” The portrayal of the school concludes, “If I were the Board of Education, I should say: ‘My dear Miss Pratt, here is a school building; here are children and here are young women to work with you. If you need anything else in order to do your beautiful work and to teach others to do it, please let us know.’”<sup>214</sup>

A few days later, the *New York Tribune* ran a two-third-page long, illustrated interview with Pratt. The article, without any hesitation, proclaimed Play School, “under the direction of Miss Caroline Pratt and Miss Edna Smith [the] School of the Future” (Fleischman, 1915). The children in the school were neither compelled to learn, nor forced to play. They played the games they wanted to play, wherever they wanted to play them, and learned while playing them. For example, while measuring the size of a car they wished to construct, they learned and used arithmetic. If a child “builds a bridge, or makes a grain elevator, it is learning physics, for it has to figure weights, balances and many other principle, all unconsciously.” The article describes children running about and playing on balconies, at the sand box, at a workbench, making a clock, playing with wooden cars, drawing spontaneously. Pratt explained that drawing is a mode of expression, but it serves more purposes; it helps children observe their world, and it helps them express themselves in the sense of expressing their thoughts about their observations. It also aids to the fine motor co-ordination of their fingers.

Pratt found that teaching lower-grades in public schools overly relied on premature acquiring of reading and writing. The same was true for the Montessori

Method, she declared. Play School children, on the other hand, would learn how to read and write when they were a little older. Highlighting Play School's field trips into the city, Pratt argued, "When they see a wagon on the street, they must know where it has come from and where it is going. On the way from the wholesaler to the retailer, and a simple explanation of the fundamentals of commerce, they learn about the policeman who stops the wagon, and traffic regulations. And incidentally they learn about police systems of other nations, and something about what the various governments stand for" (in Fleischman, 1915). Pratt told the reporter that she had not a picked class of children. Play School children were "children of the neighborhood, and their fathers are of the class of skilled mechanics" (*ibid.*).

### 1915: Nationwide Recognition and New Financial Support

Some time late 1914, perhaps early 1915, Evelyn Dewey visited the school, doing onsite observational research for the highly influential *Schools of To-Morrow*, the book, issued in May of 1915, that she co-authored with her father, John Dewey. The Deweys' (1915) uncritical report found that Pratt's school "organizes all the work around the play activities of little children" (p. 116). Every child in the school "has floor space of his own with a rug, and screens to isolate him sufficiently so that his work is really individual" (p. 117). Pratt's role as a teacher was "to teach the pupil processes and control of tools, not in a prearranged scale but as they are needed in construction" (p. 118).

The Deweys, Rodman (1915a), and Fleischman (1915) praised the amount and quality of playthings present in the school. Marot's (1915) description, fascinatingly, points out similar features. Pratt's Play School combined and integrated *skills* (the 3 Rs) with *arts* (drawing, shop work, painting, music, movement, and in Pratt's case, using Do-With Toys™ and *Unit Blocks* she had designed).

These Play School essays — appearing in a leading journal, leading newspapers, and a best selling book in 1915 — paid ample attention to another aspect of the school as well. As a central, organizing core of the curriculum, the children made regular *excursions of discovery*, that is, trips to nearby areas and landmarks. Play School's social studies consisted of field trips in the neighbourhood, to the harbour, to shops, to parks, to factories, etc. On return students were to reconstruct experiences gained, through block-building, drawing, drama. Reflecting Pratt's aims to include a Socialist view of the working class ethos, field trips would target places where people worked and made their living. Students would learn about the world they inhabited. The *New York Tribune* article enticingly describes the children's "numerous expeditions in search of knowledge" (Fleischman, 1915). Later that year, Marot (1915b) quoted from Play School promotional material to note: "We trace the interdependence of traffic and industry. We watch wagons and guess what they contain, where they are going and where they came from. We trace them to the railroads and back to the stores, we follow them to the river, loaded with rocks and dirt which we have already seen taken out of the subway excavations; and then we see these loaded on boats. The life of the city is thus transformed from an itinerant circus to a field of discovery, marvellous in content and intellectual stimulus" (pp. 16-17). The statement Marot cited is missing. Afterwards the children back at school reconstructed their activities, 'worked' their experiences, tying impressions gained during the trips with what can without hesitation be called social studies perspectives.<sup>215</sup>

Descriptions of Jacob Pestalozzi's 1805 experiential school in Yverdon, Switzerland, and Marietta Johnson's 1907 Fairhope School of Organic Education, show that schools had used outings in nature.<sup>216</sup> In those schools, the trips were ancillary.

Pratt's great innovation was to make them central to the curriculum, and do so in a neighbourhood largely populated by working class immigrants. These outings — these children's expeditions of discovering interdependencies of the physical and social aspects of their urban environment — led to the activities later outlined by Sprague Mitchell (1926, 1928b, 1929, and 1950). Indeed, Play School children were young geographers in the true sense of the word (Seeds, 1928). They were more. They felt they were young road workers, young clerks and young underground employees, young nurses and young politicians, and the like, sharing and working their common experiences. Pratt and her colleagues had created learning conditions that John Dewey (1911a) had defined as real education: a "process of the continuous reconstruction of experience with the purpose of widening and deepening its social content, while, at the same time, the individual gains control over the methods involved" (p. 400).

All media attention had a hoped-for aftermath. Marot's story about Play School appeared in *The New Republic*, a new journal of opinion, founded in 1914 with financial support of Willard Straight (1880-1918), a banker, and his wife Dorothy Payne (*née* Whitney) Straight (1887-1965), a social activist and supporter of women's trade unions (Rauchway, 2001). In 1904, Mrs. Straight had come into a major inheritance. According to Cohen (1964), Dorothy Straight was "fabulously wealthy" (p. 66). Previously, she had liberally subsidized the Public Education Associations' Visiting Teacher project — reviewed above. She was pre-eminent among the Public Education Association donors. In 1913, she became a member of the Fairhope League — as did Mrs. Graham Bell and First Lady Mrs. Woodrow Wilson — financially supporting Marietta Johnson's educational experiments (*The Sun*, 1914). She also subsidized the Play School in its founding years. Pratt (1948) remembered a visit by Dorothy Straight, according to her due to the release of *Schools of To-Morrow*. "As a result there were more visitors and some offers of financial assistance. Mrs. Willard Straight came with a friend and spent a whole morning, and the size of the check she sent me later was generous evidence that the morning had been interesting" (p. 55). The survival of the school was secured again now that Edna Smith's generous initial financial support had been spent.

### 6 November 1915: Rejoice and Tragedy

It is imperative to note here that Caroline Pratt did not mention her life-long companion Helen Marot's 1915 *New Republic* article in her autobiography, or in any of her writings on the Play School. A late 1915 tragedy may explain why.

A biography of birth control activist Margaret Sanger (1879-1966) tells that Sanger fled the United States in 1914 after having made "arrangements with Marot and Pratt to take care of her youngest children while she was gone" (Gray, 1979, p. 81). The reason for her exile: a federal government reaction to her monthly newsletter *The Woman Rebel*, launched early in 1914, promoting contraception. In April 1914, post office authorities served notice that the newsletter was "unmailable" (*New York Times*, 1914a). In August 1914, Sanger was indicted for violating U.S. postal obscenity laws for attempting to mail copies to subscribers. She was arrested "on four criminal charges carrying a maximum sentence of forty-five years" (Adickes, 1997, p. 132). In October 1914, she appeared in court charged by the federal government with violating postal codes. Not long after, Sanger left for Canada, fleeing to England under an alias name. She put her youngest children — Grant, aged six, and Peggy, aged four and a half — in the care of Helen Marot and Caroline Pratt.<sup>217</sup> At some time in the spring of 1915, both children left Pratt and Marot to be taken care of by their father. The Sanger children then entered the Stelton Modern School in New Jersey, as boarders together with 27 other students.<sup>218</sup> By

the end of October in 1915, Margaret Sanger returned to the United States.<sup>219</sup> Sanger's (1938) autobiography recounts the tragedy that followed. "A few days after my arrival Peggy was taken ill with pneumonia...Peggy died the morning of November 6, 1915" (pp. 138-139). Sanger "suffered a nervous breakdown" (Avrich, 1980, p. 238).

Marot and Pratt were shattered too. After all, they had cared for Peggy for several months. They were also shocked by the news that Peggy's death took place on November 6, 1915 — the official publication date of Marot's article on Pratt's school in *The New Republic*. This tragedy may certainly explain why Pratt never spoke of Marot's article. It must have been ever so painful for her to think back to this dramatic and confusing day, to think about Marot's gracious article describing the school without remembering the tragic death of Peggy Sanger at the same time.

### **1916: The Play School Moves to 14, MacDougal Alley**

The next chapter in Caroline Pratt's achievement story opens with Lucy Sprague Mitchell visiting her school time and again in 1913, 1914 and in 1915. These visits inescapably led to a very close merging of professional and private life, not only of the Marot-Pratt couple, but of other former WTUL activists and Public Education Association employers too. At some time in late 1913, Harriet Johnson and Sprague Mitchell jointly visited Pratt's school. Sprague Mitchell (1953) wrote, "I kept visiting Caroline Pratt's little school...becoming more and more convinced that it was only through an experimental approach in such a school that I could learn what children were really like. I wanted to be a part of this experiment" (p. 251). By the end of 1915, and during the winter of 1916, a group of staff colleagues of Sprague Mitchell at the Psychological Survey of the Public Education Association, together with her husband Wesley Clair Mitchell (1874-1948), a former student of Dewey, and several of their progressive friends, began discussing an idea to establish and organize an educational clearinghouse. They planned bringing together and publicizing information about progressive educational experiments in the United States. The group included Harriet Forbes and Harriet Johnson, Elisabeth Irwin, and Eleanor Johnson, all working for the Public Education Association.<sup>220</sup> Plus, there was Jean Lee Hunt, a friend who was at the time still working as Secretary of the Fairhope League in support of Marietta Johnson's endeavours. Helen Marot and Caroline Pratt formed part of this group too. In their first meetings, these highly effective progressive organizers, most of whom had cut their teeth during the WTUL support of the shirtwaist strike of 1909, called themselves the Bureau of School Information.

In March 1916, an aunt of Sprague Mitchell's died, leaving her daughter Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge fabulous wealth. Coolidge offered to use part of her inheritance to support the plans for the envisaged clearinghouse. Following a meeting of Coolidge and Sprague Mitchell, the Bureau of School Information planners evaluated their original planning and came up with a new scheme.<sup>221</sup> The evaluated plan integrated the original clearinghouse plans with expanded plans of a laboratory school for handicapped children, "psychological analyses of normal children," sex education lessons, and Pratt's school (Antler, 1987, p. 219). The renewed plans made Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge first commit \$50,000 a year for the period of ten years, but in second instance, she committed the first ten forthcoming annual dividends of her stocks, amounting up to \$50,000 a year, to the organization to be established. In May 1916 the Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) was born. Caroline Pratt became a charter member as well as a member of the original "temporary governing committee; called the Working Council" (p. 220).



Pratt's ties with Sprague Mitchell had become very close within a time-span of only two-and-a-half years. These ties would become even much closer, merging personal and professional life again, comparable to the months of the 1909-1910 shirtwaist makers' strike. In the fall of 1915, a year before the Mitchell family moved from West Tenth Street to 15 Washington Square North, Sprague Mitchell had already offered to house part of the ever more expanding Play School — if needed. In 1916 her promise turned reality when the school moved into an old stable behind the new Mitchell home — with a separate entrance at 14 MacDougal Alley. They converted the stable into a proper school with three classrooms, and turned the back yard into a fitting play-yard. In 1918 the school hired additional space at 30 MacDougal Alley. Nonetheless, until December 1918 two groups of children would remain attending school at 206 West Thirteenth Street — that is, at Marot and Pratt's townhouse. We do not know the exact number of teachers at the time. By September 1919 the school employed ten teachers.<sup>222</sup>

In the fall of 1916, then, to finish this chapter, the school's population would slowly change to primarily middle-class children and children from moderately affluent parents. Sprague Mitchell began teaching the five-year group at the school, releasing Pratt from classroom obligations, making room for supervising prospective Play School teachers and spreading out BEE activities.

This ends the account of when, how, and why Caroline Pratt joined the BEE. In 1916, Pratt had reached the stage of her life where she would simultaneously remain principal of Play School and charter member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments for thirteen years.<sup>223</sup> She had been primary education teacher, student at the Teachers College, teacher of teachers, researcher and social settlement reformer, lecturer, trade unionist, WTUL ally, Socialist, author of critical texts, toy manufacturer and political activist — eventually in 1913 founding the school of her political inspired dreams. The coming chapter will sketch what became of the BEE during the years until 1919.



## CHAPTER 4

### The Bureau of Educational Experiments 1916-1919 The Founding of the Progressive Education Association 1919

The Bureau was a non-hierarchical collective of women who worked together towards common ends and who supported each other's work through mentoring and guidance. This was a network of female relationships in which both personal and professional needs and interests intersected. Though not as encompassing an environment as the settlement, in these respects the Bureau was more like a settlement than an academic institution or a research institute...Moreover, Mitchell, Johnson, Pratt, and others associated with the founding of the Bureau were part of an active network of women volunteers and professionals in New York reform efforts on behalf of poor families, largely immigrants living in slum conditions, particularly children and mothers.

Joan Cenedella. *The Bureau of Educational Experiments*, 1996, pp. 94-95.

In *Chapter I*, I argued that a nationwide movement for progressive education did *not* exist during the Progressive era. Yet, local grassroots education reform initiatives were alive, instigated by social settlement workers, parent associations, and civic groups, among others. Sections in the chapter discuss several of these renewal efforts, focusing on New York City circumstances. It is interesting that a number of the same women — that is, Caroline Pratt and her circle of activist colleagues — appear over and over in differing settings as grassroots reformers. I underscored that local circumstances prevented several educational organizations founded during the era from evolving into a nationwide movement for progressive teaching practices, *e.g.*, the Gary School League. In late 1917, the outcome of the NYC Gary School War over combating school congestion effectively blocked progress toward such a movement. What is more, the conflict ominously demonstrated that parents and community leaders needed voice in education reform efforts and organizations. Another point that I underscored is that government repression of educators (and others) who had opposed the 1917 entry of the United States in World War I had an added paralyzing impact on educational renewal in 1917 and 1918, especially in New York City. Yet, it did not dull the spirit of reformers. Only two-and-a-half months after the November 1918 armistice ending war activities, a nationwide organization striving for professionalization of progressive education teachers was established: the Progressive Education Association (PEA). This Association also functioned as a clearinghouse, as well as offering resources to protoprofessionalize parents and other interested laypersons. The NYC Gary School War lesson that parents need voice in renewal had been grasped well and even led to the PEA Secretary exclaiming the PEA “is primary an association of parents, not of teachers” (Cobb, 1920, p. 204).

In *Chapters 2 and 3*, I sketched parallel developments in the winding careers of Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt, two women who became members of the NYC Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) and would become essential links in the

establishment of the PEA and the formulation of its mission. We saw how both women, after receiving a Protestant religious upbringing in rural settings, became teachers at small rural schools. Also, both women later taught at Normal Schools, instructing prospecting teachers. Johnson then experienced an existential crisis, ten years after its onset resulting in the founding of a rural coeducational experimental school in the utopian Georgist colony in Fairhope, Alabama. Johnson (1909, 1910a, 1911) identified herself as a Georgist social reformer, committed to reforming education in order to change human relations and living conditions for the better. Constantly struggling meeting the school's budget since 1912, she toured the country raising the needed money by delivering lectures, thereby extending her social network while almost developing into a prophet of educational renewal. Pratt, after a professional crisis and a winding career as textile industry researcher, settlement house worker, political activist and manufacturer of toys, founded an experimental coeducational urban school in New York City. She (1905a-b, 1906, 1912a) plainly identified herself as a member of the Socialist Party. She had a goal to improve society through her tutoring.

Both Johnson and Pratt advocated manual training, learning by activities, and the amalgamation of the three R's, social sciences and the arts into one interconnected curriculum. They promoted field trips for the children as part of their school's programmes, Johnson in rural areas, Pratt in inner-city conditions. Eventually they became members of the Bureau of Educational Experiments, Pratt at its inception in 1916, Johnson a year later.

The present chapter tells the founding history of the Progressive Education Association added to a description of the early history of the NYC Bureau of Educational Experiments. I emphasize that between 1916 and 1919, the BEE had no clear initial direction and was limping on two legs. On the one hand, Pratt and her Bureau colleagues offered a clearinghouse — a 'Bureau of School Information' gathering and distributing educational information, preparing exhibitions, issuing bulletins, and maintaining a specialized library for professional and general publics, professionalizing the first, protoprofessionalizing the latter. On the other hand, they subsidized, initiated, and conducted a range of educational experiments, and anticipated great advantages from mental testing in educational research. Before they found their direction, at last in 1919, by enlivening two associated laboratory schools as the vital heart of the organization, Bureau members scored a few successes and their full share of failures. In the spring of 1917, parallel to the U.S.' entry into the war, they evaluated their progress and formulated new priorities. Among other courses of action, this led to hiring Marietta Johnson to supervise a demonstration organic education class at Public School 95, and to become a non-resident BEE member. One outstanding yet unintended success was the Bureau's previously unacknowledged influence on the birth of the Progressive Education Association. In turn, formation of the PEA helped Pratt and her Bureau colleagues focus on small-scale research priorities instead of running in all directions, providing them means to restructure the Bureau organization and to grow into a kind of *forerunner* action research institute.

### **The Formation of a Group of Women Progressives Around Sprague Mitchell**

In the fall of 1911, Lucy Sprague took a four-month sabbatical from her position as Dean of Women at the University of California, Berkeley. During a series of what she characterized as apprenticeships, Sprague worked with prominent women in education and social settlement in New York City. She arrived just when troubles related to the city's population congestion began to peak. Later, in her autobiographical *Two Lives*

(1953), she wrote of the very last apprenticeship, the one in public schools, that “This is the work for me...Public education is the most constructive attack on social problems” (p. 210).

In 1913, following her marriage to economist Wesley Mitchell and their subsequent move from Berkeley to Manhattan, she, now Lucy Sprague Mitchell, offered her services to the Public Education Association. She began as a volunteer under the direction of Harriet Johnson, then head of the Association’s visiting teachers.<sup>224</sup> Problems of overcrowding in New York City corresponded with those described in White’s (1886) *The Problems of a Great City*, a book that analyzed failing inner-London-city conditions, and included chapters on overcrowding, drink, and “Sterilization of the Unfit.” In October of 1913, Sprague Mitchell made her first NYC presentation, on teaching sex education, at a meeting of the Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis; as a former Dean of Women who had given pioneering courses in sex education to female university students, Sprague Mitchell saw a need for meaningful sex education for all ages (Gordon, 1990).<sup>225</sup> At the meeting she met Laura Garrett, a *special teacher* who taught sex hygiene classes and who lectured on sex education — including the topic of eugenics.<sup>226</sup> They became life-long friends.

After a year’s work for the Public Education Association, in mid-1914, Sprague Mitchell accepted the post of Chairman of the Association’s Committee on Hygiene of School Children. She administered mental tests on schoolchildren, made home investigations together with visiting teachers, and gathered physical data of the children by measuring the senses, length, weight, nutrition status, blood pressure, *etc.* She did so to achieve expertise in test administration while seeing to establish new standards for testing of children and gaining insight into their individual scores and in generalized growth norms. The mental examinations, which had been administered by some Public Education Association workers since about 1911, included a wide range of newly developed construction puzzles, memory tests, naming opposites tests, identification of forms tests, motor control and coordination tests, and of course the revised Binet-Simon Age Scale test. Home investigations, establishing family and personal histories, family relationships, living conditions, statements of teachers, and other social data completed the mental tests (E. Dewey, Child, & Ruml, 1920).

At the time, Sprague Mitchell not only worked with visiting teacher and mental test forerunner Harriet Johnson, making home investigations, but also with intelligence test pioneer Frederick Ellis, who, as director of the Department of Social Research of the NYC Neurological Institute, developed and revised psychological tests and tested children.<sup>227</sup> As well, she combined forces with Elisabeth Irwin, another mental test forerunner — who administered Binet-Simon intelligence tests at special schools (Irwin, 1914, 1915a, 1916), in coordination with the New Jersey Training School for Feeble-Minded Girls and Boys at Vineland, New Jersey, under direction of Henry Goddard, author of the notorious eugenic study *The Kallikak Family* (1912), who had introduced the Binet and Simon tests in the U.S.A. in 1908. Goddard (1917) also tested immigrants at Ellis Island in New York Bay before they were permitted entrance in the U.S.A. He maintained that the majority of the immigrants tested were ‘feeble-minded,’ that is developmentally disabled.

This confidence in testing “on every conceivable aspect of learning and human development” (Reese, 2005, p. 158) paralleled the onset of faith in the authority of scientific psychology. This occurred not only in setting education, medicine, and immigration policy, but also in the U.S. Army. A testing team at the Vineland Training School, which included Goddard, developed the U.S. Army Intelligence Tests, introduced during World War I.<sup>228</sup>

In December 1914, at the annual meeting of the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes, held in Manhattan, Sprague Mitchell read a paper envisioning psychological testing of children through a “Psychological Clinic for Normal School Children” (*Daily Standard Union*, 1914). In 1915, following up on her earlier testing experience, Sprague Mitchell wrote a proposal to establish a clinic to administer psychological tests to schoolchildren, which was funded as Psychological Survey in the same year.<sup>229</sup> In the fall of that year, she began, together with her staff, working out of her own Greenwich Village home as newly elected head of the Public Education Association’s Psychological Survey. Staff members were Evelyn Dewey, Harriet Forbes, Eleanor Johnson, and Frederick Ellis. In 1916, Harriet Johnson, then head of the Association’s visiting teacher project, joined her staff. This was a largely spontaneous clustering of exceptionally capable women at the Public Education Association.

They — that is, the staff of the Survey, its majority experienced female pioneer psychological test administrators, together with Sprague Mitchell’s husband Wesley Mitchell, intelligence test pioneer Elisabeth Irwin, sex education teacher Laura Garrett, Jean Lee Hunt (the Secretary of the Fairhope League in support of Marietta Johnson’s endeavours), and long-time socialist friends Helen Marot and Caroline Pratt — had found each other. In the final section of *Chapter 3* we have seen that they came together during winter evenings of 1916, discussing an idea to establish and organize an educational clearinghouse, a ‘Bureau of School Information.’ They formed a close-knit network of like-minded social and educational reformers. In the spring of 1916, then, they united as the Bureau of Educational Experiments.

Before addressing the precise association of Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt with the Bureau, their strength, focus and ability regarding educational renewal, and their involvement with the founding of the Progressive Education Association, the subsequent four sections in this chapter will narrate the founding of the BEE, its functioning as clearinghouse, its early accomplishments as research institute exploring the world of educational reform, and the mid-1917 evaluation of its first year. After that, I first list its 1917 three new priorities, before explaining Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt’s exact association with the Bureau.

### **May 1916: The Founding of the BEE**

In May 1916, Sprague Mitchell, her husband, and Harriet Johnson founded the Bureau of Educational Experiments. A few months later, in October 1916, the BEE already opened offices at 70 Fifth Avenue. The Bureau strove to be a simple, cooperative, flexible and democratic organization. The organizational modus was not unlike that of the Hartley House social settlement, where almost all of the original female charter members had once worked. The Bureau had no specified director. Sprague Mitchell intended her position among active members as that of a *primus inter pares*. “Consecutive cooperative thinking” was the Bureau’s motto (Antler, 1982, p. 564).<sup>230</sup>

When Bureau members began their work in May 1916, archives show that the original aims were both to collect and share information regarding progressive education, and to conduct, promote, and support educational experiments.<sup>231</sup> Seeking formal approval for Bureau education initiatives in the spring of 1916, Jean Lee Hunt successfully petitioned the United States Bureau of Education in Washington, D.C. for governmental printing and franking privileges for the Bureau. Using book and periodical indexes, Bureau members initially gathered numerous articles and reports. This collection formed the basis of an extensive library of books and articles about testing schoolchildren, alternative schools, and progressive education. In the fall of 1916, they

opened a reading room available to professionals and the public. By so doing, within a few months from formation, they had already met one of their initial goals.

BEE members actively extended their social networks. They also gathered a comprehensive collection of data on education research and researchers, libraries, organizations interested in experimental education, and institutions of interest to the Bureau. In corresponding with those organizations, they acquired member lists of educational societies, testing organizations, mailing lists from social settlements, publishers, and contact information from persons attending conventions and conferences. Systematically, they created a master mailing list, which further enabled them to approach individuals and institutions receptive to Bureau initiatives, request information, and send printed promotion material, extending their clearinghouse function.

### *Carry-Over of Gary Plan Propagandizing*

In *Chapter 1*, we have seen that the majority of the women who became BEE charter members in May 1916 had vigorously supported the “Garyizing” of New York City’s public elementary schools. At the time, they worked for the Public Education Association, *the* civic pressure organization that officially and enthusiastically endorsed William Wirt’s plan to address NYC public school congestion with a Gary-type class organizing system, *i.e.*, “Garyizing” the overcrowded public schools. In April 1916, only one month prior to the founding of the Bureau, later BEE members Sprague Mitchell and Eleanor Johnson became officers of the Gary School League that endorsed Wirt’s plan; each chaired a standing committee for one year.<sup>232</sup> In the same month, they already represented the League and spoke in favour of Wirt’s plan at a public hearing before the NYC Board of Education.

Astonishingly, by June 1916 — merely *one* month after its establishment — the Bureau hired a field worker to collect all accessible information on Wirt’s Gary Plan to combat school congestion in New York City. The field worker visited the experimental schools in Gary and “Garyized” schools in other cities.<sup>233</sup> Within a few months time, she put together the most comprehensive collection of Gary schools material available. In addition, the Bureau distributed a *Gary Bibliography*.<sup>234</sup> Internal BEE weekly bulletins listed where and when ‘moving pictures’ of Gary schools would be shown. The Bureau even organized a Gary Plan discussion evening for public school teachers early in March 1917.<sup>235</sup>

As well, the Bureau commissioned a researcher and an artist to put together an exhibit consisting of fifteen screens detailing Gary System characteristics and Wirt’s class organizing principles. The screens were first exhibited at a public meeting promoting the Gary Plan.<sup>236</sup> It will therefore not come as a surprise to know that the Secretary of the Gary School League exclaimed that “there is in New York City no other group of people so keenly in sympathy with the Gary school work, so deeply grounded in educational theory and practise, and so willing to help forward radical experiments in education.”<sup>237</sup>

It is safe to conclude that women who worked for the Public Education Association until mid-1916 and since then served the BEE as active Bureau members, or otherwise, *seamlessly* carried over their Gary Plan propagandizing from the Public Education Association to the Bureau of Educational Experiments. They continued to very energetically support the principles of Wirt’s plan and the Gary School League — professionalizing the specialized public, protoprofessionalizing parents and the lay public. Interestingly in this respect: John Dewey, promoter of “Garyizing” NYC public schools, and William Wirt, who headed the inner-city “Garyizing,” served as the Bureau’s honorary members.<sup>238</sup>

### **1916-1917: The Bureau as Clearinghouse**

In April 1917, following the exhibit of screens explaining how Wirt's plan would work in NYC public schools, the Bureau organized an exhibit on toys and school equipment at the Riverside Branch of the New York Public Library, with special attention given to Caroline Pratt's Do-With Toys™.<sup>239</sup> In June, the Bureau organized yet another exhibit, this one on psychological tests, at the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Corporation Schools in Buffalo, New York.<sup>240</sup>

The April 1917 exhibit led to publication of several Bureau bulletins; the June 1917 exhibit led to publication of two more Bureau bulletins and an additional pamphlet listing available mental tests.<sup>241</sup>

Given that the majority of BEE members had earlier been involved in pioneer mental testing of schoolchildren, the exhibit and bulletins concerning psychological test materials represented their interest in developing standardized testing procedures. Knowing about mental norms, and digressions from these norms, seemed to be an important basis for observing children during their activities. General interest of Bureau members in psychological test materials led to publication of a Bureau sponsored book about testing schoolchildren (E. Dewey, Child, & Ruml, 1920).<sup>242</sup>

BEE Secretary Hunt (1917b) devotedly referenced the exhibit of psychological test materials in *School and Society* and stated, "[A] special library of professional books, periodicals, bulletins and reports is maintained, in addition to the services offered by the Secretary's office." The Bureau's reading room was open daily, without charges, making the collected information available to "teachers, workers in educational, civic and philanthropic organizations, and to the general public."<sup>243</sup> Between 1917 and 1922, the BEE as clearinghouse would issue a dozen bulletins discussing the curriculum of diverse experimental schools, sex education, play equipment, mental tests, and other subjects.<sup>244</sup>

### **1916-1917: The Bureau as Research Institute**

The Bureau's first listings consisted of topics of interest to educators: teaching, health, administrative problems, and, lastly, school and community.<sup>245</sup> Specific headings included Gary school methods, school discipline, the visiting teachers program, Laura Garrett's approach to sex education, and Marietta Johnson's educational principles. Bureau members and a number of interested outsiders were asked to write proposals for research or classes related to the listings. The Bureau received twenty proposals during the fall of 1916 and winter of 1917.<sup>246</sup> Only a few survived scrutiny. Garrett's sex education proposal was approved. She would begin teaching in P.S. 95, and later in Play School as well. Other plans were reconsidered, while requests for financial aid were turned down.

To determine which proposals were practical, the Bureau held several informal conferences during the winter months of 1917. Seminar topics included industrial education, vocational guidance, the use of dramatization in schoolwork, toys and play in education, nature study and social hygiene, rural schools, and summer camps. Through these conferences, through inviting experts to lecture at these conferences, and through reading suggested literature, Bureau members gained a fair overview of subjects for further research, turning themselves in involved professionals — professionalizing themselves.<sup>247</sup>

Three experiments: the Bureau's Camp Liberty experiment, Neurological Institute Laboratory School experiment, and Porter School experiment are illustrated in next three sub-sections.



*Camp Liberty: A True One-Time-Only Achievement*

A number of suggested topics for research explored by Bureau members would eventually form the nucleus of a project — leading to a report, experiment, or book publication. For example, in the winter of 1917 Helen Marot (not a BEE member) suggested investigating viability of organizing a multi-day conference about educational aspects of military training in public schools. Conference discussions should address psychological, medical, sociological, and physical training aspects. Marot also recommended that John Dewey present a summary of relevant educational views. Instead of organizing such a seminar, the Bureau asked Marot to write a proposal to recruit city boys for farm labour in the countryside. Her immediate response to the request led to a BEE administered experiment. The rationale was that implementing the proposal would lessen work force demands due to the cessation of immigration, a chronic exodus of farm workers to the cities and consequent absorption of work force in manufacture. It would also help alleviate food shortage that might ensue due to World War I. Boys and young men would work in the country as farm cadets during the day and board in a labour supply camp by night. Moreover, the work itself would constitute an educational experience for the boys; it was “to test out by actual practice new and meritorious methods of instruction for children and youth” and to demonstrate “social and educational values of a summer’s experience in a carefully supervised labor camp” (Artman, 1918, p. 149). The Bureau financed publication and distribution of Marot’s proposal as a folder: *Farm Labor and Boy Camps*, reprinted in *The New Country Life* (H. Marot, 1917a).

Next, in June 1917, Camp Liberty, the envisaged farm cadet camp was set up in Stanley in upstate New York, at the invitation of several of its farmers. In total twenty-seven young men of different — mostly immigrant — parentage and with different religion (five religions were represented), mainly from comfortable NYC and suburban middle-class families and a minority from lower East Side families, with an average age of eighteen years, were recruited and enlisted through the Farm Service Office at Columbia University and the Farm Cadet Bureau of the State Military Training Commission. On the whole, they were students from high schools and colleges. The camp lasted until intensive farm harvest ended.

Early in 1918, a report by the camp’s leader appeared in *The Survey* (Artman, 1918), and the BEE issued a bulletin analyzing the experiment (Hunt (Ed.), 1918b). While there is no evidence that anyone objected to this Bureau sponsored exploitation of student labour, both accounts raise questions about how well the middle class BEE reformers understood the relationship between labour and learning. What did the young ‘student’ farmers learn from a day of hard farm labour? What did they learn from the camp’s self-government features? “It taught them the dignity of manual work when honestly and thoroughly done,” wrote the camp’s leader (Artman, 1918, p. 154). He exemplified his evaluation by giving several illustrations of first-hand experiences of farm life and farming operations carrying some educational aspects for inner-city young men. Still, though his report and the Bureau bulletin bespeak the camp’s council — asserting that the group formation processes and working in a rural environment was in itself educational, as contrasted to, for instance, spending the summer in recreational camps — they deliver no genuine insights into Camp Liberty’s educational aspects. The great demand for the young men’s labour and ten-hour working days effectively prevented them from attending educationally intended evening gatherings. In spite of both accounts praising the experiment, and “leading employers expressed a strong desire to have a

similar camp established in the following summer” (*ibid.*), no further camp sessions were organized under Bureau aegis.<sup>248</sup>

### ***Demise of the Neurological Institute Laboratory School***

A plan to establish a special ‘Laboratory School for Children with Special Defects’ at or near a neurological hospital in New York City was first discussed in June 1915 by visiting teacher Mary Marot and Frederick Ellis of the NYC Neurological Institute. It had several false starts. The General Education Board, the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Committee on Mental Hygiene and other organizations had various reasons to reject the undertaking (*Ungraded*, 1915). In 1916, at last, the BEE appropriated the money needed to establish the envisaged school (Bailey, 1916).

In October 1916, the Laboratory School opened on the ground floor of an apartment building near the Neurological Institute. On average eight children attended. The criteria for acceptance was that they could neither fit in with regular graded nor ungraded classes. First, all children were administered mental tests and medically examined, including neurological exams. All turned out to be behind for their age physically. Follow-up examinations included physical measurements, teacher’s observations, and psychological assessments. Physical examinations showed that a majority required glasses; several needed removal of their tonsils. All children received dental treatment. During their stay at Laboratory School, they profited from good nourishment and physical exercise. Teachers made records of the children’s progress. The curriculum was not strict, allowing the freedom needed to make progress in accumulating knowledge, experience and skills. Block building and excursions formed part of schoolwork activities, very much as it was the case in Pratt’s Play School. The Laboratory School program also shows that time was reserved for *projects*, well before Kilpatrick first introduced project method, in 1918.<sup>249</sup>

The experiment failed completely. It began too late in the academic year; not all children had been pre-examined physically and mentally. Not all of the children were suited to the program. Some were merely suffering from an infectious disease or undernourishment. These children received proper treatment and were sent home. School staff was too small. Initial planning had been insufficient. The teaching personnel were not trained to instruct such a group of children. Teaching methods were inadequate. This particular BEE experiment was discontinued in May of 1917. As regards to conducting research not under complete BEE control, Bureau members had learned a dear lesson.<sup>250</sup> Failures represented hard lessons to learn before genuine, lived-through professionalism could thrive.

### ***The Porter School Experiment***

Between 1910 and 1912, before she became sole teacher at Porter School, a typical one-room school in the ‘Little Red School House’ tradition, Marie Turner Harvey (1866-1952) directed the Model Rural School at a State Normal School. There she instructed distinctive one-room school didactics, additionally stressing the importance of acknowledging interests of the school’s rural children, thereby serving the needs of country life in the form of teaching laundering, domestic sciences, agricultural principles (like testing milk, seeds, and studying soils), as well as installing good school heating, electricity, rural telephone connections, water supply and flush closets (*American Primary Teacher*, 1911; Harvey, 1912; Scudder, 1912).

In 1912, in Porter School, Harvey began practicing her newly developed school methods. She remodelled the out-of-repair school building in collective labour with parents, put running water into the building, organized school gardens as well as a demonstration experimental farm, community clubs, music clubs and music bands, and social gatherings at the schoolhouse, with the aim of making the school the center of social activities, revitalizing community life. Harvey (1912) described ideal one-room schools as “the real social center of the community” (p. 484), underscoring a “wise co-operation of the home, church and school” (p. 482). While she conducted poultry experiments and kept good relations with the State Agricultural College in order to learn about the latest science finds (Nelson, 1919), sending some of her students at times to its “Short Courses,” her “medium of teaching” was always agriculture, using farming expressions for spelling, “the weight of a given number of hogs before shipping and after the shrinkage which follows shipping” for mathematics, *etc.* (Keyes, 1914, p. 208), stressing “the relation between formal instruction and practical activities, its intimate connection with and reaction on the community” (State of Missouri, 1915, p. 114).

Inspired by these actions, Evelyn Dewey (1919) would write, “[Harvey] has never done things *for* the people of Porter, she has done things *with* them” (p. 71). The task Harvey set her self almost failed; a few years later approximately half the community voted against her experiment and against reelection her as teacher, nearly bankrupting the school.<sup>251</sup> Mid-1916, though, BEE members became interested in Harvey and her community school. In November, they appropriated money to the school for financial support for the duration of one year.<sup>252</sup> Their money saved the school, interfering however with Harvey’s experiment of involving the rural population with their local public school (also meaning: financially).

Evelyn Dewey regularly visited Harvey’s school, in 1919 reporting her findings in *New Schools for Old*, her BEE supported book on the regeneration of Porter School.

### Mid-1917: Evaluation After One Year BEE

By the end of 1916, the very first half year of work already betrayed an essential duality within the Bureau’s aims: would the BEE grow to be a clearinghouse servicing the general and professional public, or would the BEE hire experts to conduct experiments? It turned out that for a while longer the BEE would remain a bureau of (school) information. Its conducted surveys, bulletins, organized exhibits, and literature searches were successful. Thus, the Bureau’s clearinghouse leg stood firmly on the ground.

The BEE did however *not* perform well when conducting experimental research. Disappointing outcomes of diverse activities taken on during the first year taught Bureau members that their overall organization was hardly functioning optimally. They interacted with too many “spot experiments” that they had not chosen to conduct themselves, and over which they had no control.<sup>253</sup> Bureau supported experimental undertakings were only more or less affiliated with the Bureau’s aims, like the Neurological Institute’s Laboratory School and Harvey’s Porter School. The optimistic view was that these activities would provide the Bureau insight into conducting educational experiments. However, supporting the Porter School, for instance, simply supposed donating financial aid for school equipment, repairs and salary, thereby interfering with the school’s original community work experiment. While parents and the wider Porter community were unable to raise needed assets, they were in fact prevented to do so *because* of Bureau financial support; therefore, it was realistic to expect that community involvement would remain limited to only deliver assistance crucial to end the school’s disrepair status. The Neurological Institute Laboratory School, on the other

hand, had been opened far too hastily. Preliminary physical and mental examinations of the children were absent. A number of children had to be excluded from the study, which was already small, since, upon further examination, they did not have relevant neurological conditions. The school's staff was neither trained nor well organized. A number of additional other factors interfered with the gathering of relevant data.

### **Mid-1917: Three New BEE Priorities**

In the previous four sections, I have reviewed the founding of the BEE, its functioning as clearinghouse, its early accomplishments as research institute, and, lastly, its mid-1917 evaluation of its first year. In this section I address its mid-1917 new priorities, as well as Caroline Pratt and Marietta Johnson's association with the Bureau.

The 1916-1917 *Annual Report of the Chairman of the Bureau of Educational Experiments* reiterated the Bureau's mid-1917 stance — speaking of a “sketchy” Bureau organization, a “vision [that] has not been clear enough,” and about “scattered experiments:” “We have come to realize that the danger of scattered experiments is that we shall not know in any reliable way what actual results we are getting. Unless we have some uniform method of measuring our results, we shall not carry very far our real purpose.”<sup>254</sup> Nevertheless, the Bureau's first year's developments positively aided in focusing BEE members on defining their foremost and central aim: studying children and their reactions to differing environments. The 1916-1917 *Annual Report of the Chairman* suggests three new priorities: improvement of office organization to oversee experiments, surveys, publications and other work; hiring qualified scientists; and, opening a laboratory school.

Regarding the first priority, overseeing Bureau activities: Between 1918 and 1922, the Bureau improved its office organization indeed. Precise office management details are not of interest here, but the fact that the Bureau since mid-1919 managed two laboratory schools and held regular meetings with the teachers of both schools to keep everybody involved and informed, underlines its growing professionalism.<sup>255</sup> Over the years, BEE members and Bureau-hired researchers and office workers with various career backgrounds, career goals, and political dreams, were to grow into a more efficient self-directing cooperative body.

Regarding the second priority, hiring qualified scientists: The Bureau especially needed psychologists trained in mental testing and statistics as well as a physician to administer medical examinations. As a result, the BEE in 1917 hired a psychologist,<sup>256</sup> in 1918 a second psychologist,<sup>257</sup> and a physician in 1919.<sup>258</sup> The Bureau also needed a recorder to keep the physical, psychological, and social records of the examined, measured, observed, and tested children up to date. Interestingly, Mary Marot, founding mother of the Public Education Association visiting teacher program became the BEE Recorder in 1918.<sup>259</sup>

Finally, concerning the research priority: After Bureau members in earnest concluded that the Neurological Institute Laboratory School failed, they first intended to hire the principal of Public School 89 to direct a BEE laboratory school. P.S. 89 was *the* Harlem school with the largest population of African Americans in New York City.<sup>260</sup> However, when the Bureau unsuccessfully requested the principal to change P.S. 89 for a school more in line with BEE goals, efforts to cooperate with him ended swiftly.<sup>261</sup>

### **1917-1919: Pratt's Play School Prime BEE Laboratory School Candidate**

Between mid-1917 and 1919, not surprisingly, Pratt's Play School more and more became the prime candidate to function as the Bureau's laboratory school. In 1916, Play

School moved into a refurbished stable behind the Mitchell Washington Square home. The back yard became the play-yard. The school had three classrooms and functioned as an experimental school. Pratt (1917a) assured parents that there would be no experiments *on* children in her school. The children were the experimenters! She observed that the experimental method of trial and error is their true method — for instance, when learning to walk and talk. Another of the school's articles of faith was: "The pursuit of information is never regarded as an object in itself. It is the *process* of *getting* the *information* which is important" (p. 12). Pratt paid ample attention to its most visible example: children learn experientially during and after field trips.<sup>262</sup> And she connected children's creative experimenting to art: "As the children play with drawing materials, with plasticine, with blocks and toys, with words, with dramas, the emotions are freed and in a primitive way art is produced" (p. 13).<sup>263</sup> Still, until mid-1919, Play School had not yet begun to function as the Bureau's laboratory school.

As long as there was no BEE heart in the form of a lab school, improving organization management and hiring research experts did not root well. When NYC Mayor Mitchel's attempt to "Garyize" all public schools appeared to contribute to his failure to win reelection in November 1917, the Bureau's support of the Gary Plan suddenly represented a major obstacle. Since its foundation in May of 1916, the Bureau had championed Gary Plan school management ideals, and its experiential learning procedures. BEE co-founder Sprague Mitchell even was an officer of the Gary School League. She chaired one of its committees. The moral of the outcome of the Gary School War in late 1917 (namely that educational renewal needs the consent of parents and local community leaders) and the consequent official reversal of implementing the Gary Plan in the city's public schools in 1918 were hard lessons to learn for Bureau members.<sup>264</sup> The circumstances represented a genuine setback for most BEE reformers and revealed painful failures of their early policy. 1918, therefore, did not yet mark the beginning of Play School becoming a BEE laboratory school. Additional hard lessons had to be taken to heart first. In fact, each successive Bureau failure taught its members new valuable lessons, strengthening their mid-1917 conclusions to change the initial 1916 BEE course.

#### ***1917-1918: Marietta Johnson and the BEE Demonstration Organic Education Class***

Of course, not every BEE endeavour turned into failure. Two distinct Bureau enterprises led to mixed results. The first, a demonstration class in Organic Education supervised by Marietta Johnson, to be sketched in this sub-section, began well in 1917 but ended abruptly in 1918 — neither a failure, nor a success. The other, a nutrition experiment in P.S. 64, to be sketched in the next sub-section, began in 1918 and was rather successfully brought to an end in 1921. Yet, Bureau members held serious reservations about the scope of tests and measurements conducted by hired scientists. By the end of 1918, the skepticism would give food to a more generally felt insistence to definitely modify Bureau priorities. This coincided with an obvious disappointment following a Bureau-led endeavour of Caroline Pratt and her partner Helen Marot, to be reviewed following the sub-section on nutrition research.

In the final section in *Chapter 2*, I emphasized that — just as Bureau members were contemplating discontinuation of the Neurological Institute Laboratory School in the spring of 1917 — Marietta Johnson wrote an application to the BEE for assistance in the support of her school.<sup>265</sup> By then, Bureau members had already been considering a plan "for cooperation with Mrs. Johnson, P.S. 95 and [the] Greenwich House" settlement.<sup>266</sup> Bureau members found that an organic education experimental class could fit a new 1917 Bureau priority to establish a laboratory school. As outlined in *Chapter 2*,

in return for a generous salary, the Bureau offered Marietta Johnson a supervisory role in teaching an experimental organic education class at P.S. 95 as well as advisory work at P.S. 64.<sup>267</sup> She began that work in September 1917 (*School*, 1917). Half a year later, apparently quite satisfied with her own results, she reported to the BEE Working Council that regarding P.S. 95, she observed “great improvement in the children’s voices, their poise, and their self-direction.”<sup>268</sup> Earlier, in October 1917, Bureau members seemed convinced of Johnson’s expertise, and suggested her to the Membership Committee as a non-resident member.<sup>269</sup> In December, the BEE Working Council unanimously elected her as a non-resident member, meaning that whenever she attended committee meetings, she would have the qualifications and privileges of active Bureau members, but not the right to vote.<sup>270</sup>

At the time, Johnson was not only serving as supervisor and advisor in P.S. 64 and P.S. 95; she continued to lecture on organic education at teachers’ conferences,<sup>271</sup> held regularly at Greenwich House in Manhattan, and elsewhere, outside of New York City.<sup>272</sup> And, at an exhibit in the spring of 1918, at the Boston Normal School, a Bureau representative (possibly Johnson) explained her organic education teaching procedures (*Education*, 1918). The Bureau of Educational Experiments planned to continue Johnson’s experimental class in P.S. 95 for another year (that is, during the 1918-1919 season); it also considered beginning an experiment under her guidance involving two experimental organic education classes in P.S. 64, and it proposed moving Johnson’s summer school to Hopewell Junction near Poughkeepsie, New York, at a farm the Bureau rented in 1918. She was to train teachers during the summer months.<sup>273</sup> In spite of this, in April of 1918, sudden gloomy clouds were on the horizon.<sup>274</sup> Minutes of the Bureau’s Executive Committee April 24, 1918, meeting read: “It was the sense of the meeting that the Executive Committee recommend that the Bureau should discontinue its work in P.S. 95 beyond the present school year.”

Four reasons were given — the last one the weightiest:

The Principal seems to be in an unfortunate attitude toward experiments just now and we cannot at the present time determine that his point of view will change. Unless it does we are very sure that we should not choose that school as our main plant and that we should not be welcome there as experimenters who were aiming at a reorganization of a school system. Unless we can be perfectly frank with the person at the head of the school and unless we can be sure of the co-operation of the head and of his subordinates we cannot make headway in our plans.<sup>275</sup>

Until 1918, both the principal of P.S. 64 and the principal of P.S. 95 promoted the Ettinger Plan (reviewed in *Chapter I*) adopted by Mayor Mitchel to reform the NYC public education system. In actual fact, P.S. 95 implemented Ettinger’s plan in a hybrid form as a modification of Wirt’s Gary Plan (Worthington, 1915). When NYC Mayor Mitchel failed to win reelection in November 1917, newly elected NYC Mayor Hylan announced plans to discontinue introducing the Gary System in public schools. Mayor Hylan even ordered to “de-Garyize” already “Garyized” schools, among them P.S. 95 that had been converted according to a hybrid Ettinger-Wirt-Plan. This circumstance may very well explain P.S. 95’s principal’s substantial reluctance to house and support Marietta Johnson’s experimental class in his school for yet another year.<sup>276</sup>

In May 1918, when the P.S. 95 principal resolutely spoke out against Bureau policy, all plans for Johnson’s participation in BEE activities for the 1918-1919 school year ended *abruptly*.<sup>277</sup> Discontinuation of Marietta Johnson’s work at P.S. 95 represented yet another major setback for the BEE; it was at least partly related to the outcome of the Gary School War. Without a doubt, hard lessons had to be learned.

### **Nutrition Research**

When the U.S. entered World War I in April of 1917, conditions leading to hunger in inner cities seriously worsened to almost endemic malnutrition and related maladies.<sup>278</sup> In 1918, the Bureau hired the services of a Bostonian pediatrician who had conducted nutrition research with underweight and undernourished children to prepare the opening of a nutrition clinic for NYC public school children.<sup>279</sup> This specific Bureau enterprise led to well-documented nutrition experiments conducted at P.S. 64, during the first year supervised by the hired pediatrician.<sup>280</sup> He outlined, in the *American Journal of Diseases of Children*, how he had received an invitation from the Bureau “to conduct a nutrition clinic under its auspices in a public school” in New York City (Emerson, 1919a, p. 251). He found it was “an opportunity to demonstrate whether it is practical during a school regime to secure a sufficient part of the essentials of health to obtain satisfactory results” (*ibid*). An explanation of the research work done during one year and preliminary results of the experiments followed.

This research project became a relative success for the Bureau. It was well thought out, and BEE organizational support efforts were professional. It therefore met the first two 1917 Bureau priorities (hiring qualified scientists, and improvement of office organization). The whole BEE endeavour, which will not be reviewed here, eventually led to publication of a substantive report in book format, *Health Education and the Nutrition Class* (Hunt, Johnson, & Lincoln, 1921). Still, Sprague Mitchell and other Bureau members had deep-felt reservations about scientific research perspectives held by Bureau consulting scientists. They found them ignoring really interesting and even intriguing observations. Sprague Mitchell (1953, p. 460) remembered:

At once, [hired BEE physician Dr. Lincoln] ran into difficulties when she began to measure height — or length — as measurements were taken when the babies were lying down. They wiggled. They seemed to be made of rubber — shorter one day than the day before. In the Child Research Institute at Minneapolis, they put the babies into casts so they *couldn't* wiggle. They got the measurements. And they weren't interested in the wiggle. We were. Nor were they bothered that casts might be an emotional strain to the babies. Again, we were...Wiggling was an interesting behavior in young children. Emotions were a very important part of children. But could wiggles or emotions be measured? If not, they must lie outside the realm of scientific study.

Clearly, Bureau members concluded that prevailing tests and measurements were not capable of generating the data they wished, even when conducted by hired specialist scientists. It is beyond the scope of this thesis, but we can view Sprague Mitchell's critique of the measurement problems as keen insight into the inability of then prevailing education measurement models and psychometric constructs to measure growth rather than an argument in favour of qualitative research over quantitative research.<sup>281</sup> This consideration would eventually lead to favouring small-scale action research throughout the 1920s. Since other factors contributed to the decision to conduct this kind of action research, these factors need underlining in the next sections.

### **1918: The Creative Impulse in Industry**

Caroline Pratt and Helen Marot took the NYC Gary School War lessons to heart. Before renaming Play School to City and Country School in April 1919, they had been exploring a drastically new educational format. Perhaps as a result, the whole of 1918 brought a flood of turbulence, preventing the Bureau from adopting Play School as its

laboratory school.<sup>282</sup> Marot, who was hired by the Bureau in 1917,<sup>283</sup> had been assigned for six months to survey the literature on industry and education.<sup>284</sup> She submitted her report early in January of 1918. Later that month, Bureau members recommended that the report “be offered to a magazine for publication, reserving rights for publication in book form after the completion of the final report.”<sup>285</sup> Fitting with Bureau planning, Marot (1918a) wrote an article based on her report in the April 1918 *Dial*.

Next, in September, in *The Creative Impulse in Industry*, Marot (1918b)<sup>286</sup> argued “for the necessity of reconstructing both industry and education in order to provide the industrial worker with a creative experience” (Leja, 1993, p. 144).<sup>287</sup> Besides criticizing both American and German industrial education, Marot reviewed Schneider and Wirt’s plans to reorganize overcrowded NYC public schools. As well, she praised a plan for an integrated “workshop and [secondary pre-vocational] school concerned with the production of play materials” (Marot, 1918b, p. 117) as previously proposed to her by Pratt.<sup>288</sup> It was a completely new, truly revolutionary idea for an “educative workplace” where “skills were balanced with the humanities and social sciences” (Rowbotham, 1995, p. 63).

Pratt’s social-reconstructionist plan advocates organizing an experimental Toy Shop for manufacturing wooden toys, simple to construct, therefore practical for forty students ranging in age from fourteen to seventeen years who would make up the staff of the shop.<sup>289</sup> Half a dozen adults would do the heavy or unsafe work on machines and would help to guide the students to improve their standards and techniques related to manufacturing toys, keeping accounts and assessing the shop’s costs, working force, economics, service, *etc.* The experimental school and toy shop students would form the shop’s staff, also being the shop’s manufacturers, producers, clerks, and, of course, learners — all at the same time. The course would be limited to two years.

The BEE issued an exceptionally supportive statement in the book’s preface: “The experiment...seems to the Bureau to be of real moment, — one of which both education and industry should take heed. They earnestly hope it may be tried immediately. In that event the bureau hopes to work with Miss Marot in bringing her experiment to completion” (in Marot, 1918b p. *vii*).

### *Eventual Failure of The Creative Impulse in Industry*

The influential American academic leader Granville Stanley Hall (1919) reviewed Marot’s book, asserting, “The very clever scheme of Caroline Pratt is worthy of attention” (p. 88).<sup>290</sup> The Bureau mailed 115 complementary copies of the book and sent out 210 special advertising letters. Additional to 1900 folders distributed by the publisher advertising the work, the Bureau circulated 2000 copies of a publications list naming the book. The *New York Call* review of the plan was a glowing endorsement, “Does Miss Marot advocate the Gary system? No; for her idea is more revolutionary and beneficial, if carried out, than the Gary plan” (Pippa, 1918). Other reviewers were either less encouraging, paid little attention to the plan, or gave incorrect details. Some reviews even unequivocally dismissed it. A second printing was issued in December 1918, only three months after the release of the book. As a consequence, Marot would often lecture on subjects relating to the contents of the book (*e.g.*, *School*, 1919).

Did Marot’s 1918 BEE Industry and Education report and her 1918 book (with many reviews, some passionately in favour of Marot and Pratt’s plan for a school of pre-vocational education annex toy manufacturing shop managed by the students themselves, a plan for a bold and revolutionary educational experiment) lead to



anything? Or was all this no more than purely intellectual endeavour? Merely an exercise in educational discourse?

BEE archives show that Marot, with the Bureau's blessing, kept busy promoting the plan among manufacturers, businesspersons, educators, financiers, and others, *well before* her book was published, in 1918, and during winter months of 1919; to no avail.<sup>291</sup> She failed. The path of this particular venture had reached a dead end. Accordingly, Marot resigned from her Bureau work in the summer of 1919.<sup>292</sup> Pratt and Marot had done all they possibly could to formulate and plan a true alternative to the combined Schneider, Ettinger and Wirt Plans to reorganize the congested NYC public school system and find sponsors for their plan as well.<sup>293</sup> We must conclude that Pratt and Marot were planning to found a specialized experimental school for students aged 14 and 15 years. By the end of 1918 their joint plan failed completely, but, on the other hand, gave way for other Bureau initiatives.

### **Exit BEE Clearinghouse Activities Firmly Related to the Founding of the PEA**

Before the penultimate section in this Chapter sketches what became of the BEE after 1919, and the final section will wrap up a number of the key points in this dissertation, this section sheds new light onto late 1918 - early 1919 circumstances that led to the establishment of the Progressive Education Association tightly related to the Bureau of Educational Experiments' members' involvement.

In September 1917, the Bureau advertised in the *Manual Training Magazine* (1917) that it was "a clearinghouse of educational ideas." It certainly functioned as an institute helping to professionalize educators and protoprofessionalize laypersons. Its purpose was to "collect material...concerned with the scientific study of education, and by publications and exhibits, make it easily available to people who are interested" (p. 23). By the end of 1918, half a year after Marietta Johnson's exit from the Bureau and P.S. 95, just when the impending failure of Marot and Pratt's toy shop experiment plan was becoming perceptible, mid-1917 BEE restructuring plans all of a sudden became tangible. First results of the nutrition experiment at P.S. 64 were encouraging. The Bureau's consulting psychologists had begun testing children at Pratt's Play School too, laying the basis for longitudinal research. Another spark was that Sprague Mitchell wrote in an early December internal communication to every Bureau member, "I propose we seriously consider starting a class of very young children — say from one to two to three."<sup>294</sup> Since March 1918, Sprague Mitchell had served on the administrative council of an organization to open maternity clinics and nursery schools under the aegis of the Henry Street Settlement visiting nurses program (Goewey, 1918). There she felt the widespread need for well-organized nursery schools. More than a year of war tribulations had aggravated inner-city public health and child welfare circumstances. And, Sprague Mitchell's proposal fit flawlessly with the late 1916 BEE proposal to establish a nursery school, written by former Henry Street Settlement visiting nurse and now Bureau member Harriet Johnson.<sup>295</sup>

In 1919, these developments were rapidly gaining momentum. More and more, the initiated nutrition research at P.S. 64 became a centre of research activities around which management and planning was developing efficiently. This met the first two 1917 new Bureau priorities (improvement of office organization, and hiring qualified scientists). Sprague Mitchell's inspirational words of beginning a class of very young children not only energized Harriet Johnson's late 1916 proposal to establish a day nursery, it revitalized their 1917 desire of opening a laboratory school managed by the

Bureau. In fact, it sparked the idea to open two laboratory schools: a nursery school and the accommodated Play School.<sup>296</sup>

The collapse of Marot and Pratt's plan to found a pre-vocational school annex toy-manufacturing shop in a positive way made room for other Bureau initiatives. It would perhaps even lead to the realization of the third 1917 Bureau priority (opening a laboratory school). The developments meant that Bureau members would gradually exit from clearinghouse activities to focus on research ambitions. Parallel to the Bureau's critique of the inability of then existing education measurement models and psychometric constructs to measure growth and emotion, which was one preliminary outcome of their nutrition research reviewed above, and probably of their own testing experiences, the exit from clearinghouse work would possibly lead to embark on a successful kind of action research programme.

But in spite of all these developments, the *real* root of an accelerated restructuring of Play School in the spring and summer of 1919 and the founding of the BEE Nursery School not much later laid hidden *outside* the Bureau's offices — namely, in the unexpectedly rapid establishment of a national organization of progressive educators: the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education, later renamed Progressive Education Association.

#### *Hartman's 1918 BEE Conference Proposal Basis for Establishing the PEA*

For Marietta Johnson, and obliquely for the BEE, a most significant development gained momentum in late 1918 and early in 1919. Ironically, it originated in the Gary School War aftermath. At first, repercussions of Johnson's dismissal looked particularly bad for her. Mid-1918, after her one-year term as organic education teaching supervisor at P.S. 95 and advisory work for P.S. 64, salaried by the BEE, Johnson began another phase in her life. First, she retreated to her *pre*-BEE life of directing two schools, organizing summer school sessions at her Fairhope and Greenwich organic education schools, and giving public lectures. Though she never stopped lecturing during the 1917-1918 BEE term, she now began preparing for a truly nationwide fund-raising lecture tour. Indeed, apart from directing two schools, lecturing, boarding trains more and more often, and being constantly on the road was Johnson's way of life — all over again. Beyond any doubt, this *post*-BEE phase of her life was met with extremely good news from Connecticut, just when she learned that her tenure with the Bureau would soon end. On May 20, 1918, the Connecticut school that she directed received the donation of a grand mansion in the Rock Ridge section of Greenwich, valued at \$300,000. According to *New York Herald* (1918a-b) reports, Johnson was utterly surprised by the generous bequest. It meant survival of her Greenwich organic education school was secure for years. Still, the Fairhope school remained in dire need of finances.

Earlier, however, and *this* is the crucial story in this sub-section, during the 1917-1918 term at P.S. 95 and P.S. 64 in New York City, Marietta Johnson made stopovers in Washington, D.C. She did so whenever travelling to and from Fairhope, Alabama to either the school she directed in Greenwich, Connecticut or to her supervising and advisory work at the NYC public schools. One lecture evening in January 1918 in Baltimore, near Washington, D.C., she had a conversation with Stanwood Cobb.<sup>297</sup> His memory of the conversation is that Johnson first suggested founding a national association to promote her organic education framework (Drost, 1971). However, Johnson's proposal to Cobb also reflected scheduling for a conference planned by the BEE. As non-resident Bureau member, Johnson knew that consulting BEE researcher Gertrude Hartman was planning a conference *along with* planning a national association

of teachers of experimental schools.<sup>298</sup> Minutes of a January 1918 Bureau meeting read: “Miss Hartman is arranging a conference of teachers of experimental schools with a view to forming an association of such teachers working in close cooperation with the Bureau in its surveys, its publications, its library, and its experiments.”<sup>299</sup> Later, BEE members suggested that the intended “Conference of Experimental Schools”<sup>300</sup> be postponed and be held in the summer of 1918, and to already plan a registry for teachers of experimental schools.<sup>301</sup>

Two versions of what happened next exist. One historian of education concludes that a short while after Johnson’s initial suggestion to Cobb, she changed it into “a proposal to establish an educational association devoted to publicizing current experiments in education” (Graham, 1967, p. 18). Cobb found the new proposal more appealing indeed. Another historian believes that after considering Johnson’s initial idea Cobb dropped it “in favor of a broader sort of conference in which various experimental educators and parent groups might gather to exchange ideas” (Cremin, 1961, p. 242) — in fact a carbon copy of the conference suggested by Hartman to her BEE colleagues in January 1918. Either way, Johnson successfully borrowed Hartman’s idea.<sup>302</sup>

As a consequence, after consultation with a number of interested educators, and as soon as it became clear that World War I had effectively ended, seizing the moment, a group of educators regularly met in Washington, D.C. in the fall of 1918 and winter of 1919, among whom were Cobb and Johnson (Cobb, 1929). They were planning establishing a national educational organization under the provisional name Association for the Advancement of Experimental Schools (Kliebard, 1995). Their preparations went smoothly, and swiftly showed results. In February 1919, at the Washington Studio House, they officially presented their proposal for an Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education. In March the Association *in statu nascendi* held its first public meeting in the Washington Public Library — and presented a statement of principles heavily influenced by Johnson.<sup>303</sup> By the end of that month, BEE Working Council minutes reported about an interview with Cobb (date not given), who asked for financial help for the imminent Association and for a “representative from the Bureau to serve on their executive committee.”<sup>304</sup>

On April 4, 1919, then, the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education was founded, renamed Progressive Education Association (PEA) in 1920. Among others, Marietta Johnson, one of the Association’s five co-founders, was on the Executive Committee; however, there was no BEE member on the Executive Committee.<sup>305</sup> Bureau charter member Caroline Pratt, though, was a member of the Association’s Advisory Council, bringing in her extensive expertise with managing organizations (e.g., the WTUL, Socialist Party, Teachers’ League of New York, and BEE). Later that year, together with other primary PEA members, Johnson and Pratt issued a draft of ten *preliminary* principles, refined to the seven official PEA principles in 1920.<sup>306</sup> Pratt’s expertise certainly paid off; it was instrumental in a swift formulation of the PEA’s principles. It must be clear: BEE principles became part of PEA principles.

In fact, both directly and indirectly, the Bureau was *the* organization that had stood at the crib of the PEA and co-formed its initial structure. The Bureau of Educational Experiments, born from the Public Education Association, was midwife to the Progressive Education Association. It is only fair to label the PEA as the brainchild of Gertrude Hartman, a BEE-consulting researcher between 1918 and 1923. Already in the fall of 1923, without delay after she had drawn her BEE surveys to a close and published her book *Home and Community Life* (1923a) and an article on imaginative literature for children (1923b), Hartman became editor of the PEA’s journal *Progressive Education*

(Drost, 1971). She remained sole editor of the exceptionally influential journal until 1930.<sup>307</sup>

### What Became of the Bureau after 1919?

In *Chapter 1*, I showed that the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education, that is, the later Progressive Education Association (PEA), as a nationwide professionalization organization advocating for educational renewal, unmistakably functioned as a clearinghouse of progressive, experimental, education. The PEA, in its professionalization and protoprofessionalization functions, organized seminars, held conferences and conventions, coordinated courses, issued press releases, bulletins and newsletters, promoted publication of literature reviews, articles and research findings in journals, newspapers, magazines and books, and published its journal *Progressive Education*. It must be clear: the PEA could serve far better as a nationwide clearinghouse of educational renewal and (proto)professionalization organization than the BEE ever intended. 1920-1923 PEA bulletins informing readers about progressive and experimental education can be viewed in lieu of earlier BEE bulletins. This understanding helped Bureau members to scale down clearinghouse ambitions, narrow focus, and to concentrate more on small-scale educational research. It aided the BEE in becoming a kind of action research institution centering on its two laboratory schools. And it allowed the PEA to quickly grow into *the* nationwide professionalization and protoprofessionalization organization and clearinghouse of educational reform. Ten years after its naissance, Cobb (1929) indeed declared, the PEA had, “in the first decade of its existence, succeeded in becoming the clearing-house for the new education movement in this country” (p. 72).

Developments sketched in the foregoing sections ended the initial phase of the Bureau, which its members later characterized as the “pre-Bureau” phase (Sprague Mitchell, 1953, p. 457). After the founding of the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education and formulating its preliminary principles, while Marietta Johnson was preparing the 1919 session of her annual Fairhope Summer School in Greenwich, Pratt began restructuring her School into the BEE laboratory elementary school.<sup>308</sup> She and Helen Marot had decided not to progress the revolutionary path of founding a school of *pre-vocational* education toy manufacturing shop managed by the students themselves — as outlined in Marot’s 1918 *The Creative Impulse in Industry*. In April 1919, Pratt changed the name of Play School to City and Country School. In September 1919, the school officially became laboratory school of the Bureau. At the same time, under Harriet Johnson’s lead, the Bureau founded a laboratory nursery school for *pre-school* age children.<sup>309</sup>

Hence, after initially *exploding* in outer-directed activities as a clearinghouse in 1916 and 1917, and after failing to organize truly BEE managed educational experiments in 1917, the Bureau now progressively primarily focused on becoming a research institution centred around two lab schools: the BEE Nursery School and City and Country School.<sup>310</sup> Consequently, between 1919 and 1922, the BEE would issue its final bulletins,<sup>311</sup> while it further aided in publication of several books already in preparation.<sup>312</sup> Yet, the Bureau would no longer mainly involve clearinghouse activities, but would progressively include the gathering of educational, psychological, social and medical data on the children in both lab schools, as well as small-scale experiments.<sup>313</sup> Both laboratory schools became small powerhouses of data collection and action research.<sup>314</sup> Lacking evidence of *post-1922* BEE minutes, it seems small-scale research results (*e.g.* research into eye-hand coordination, causes of fatigue, *etc.*) were mainly used for further internal

study and adjustment<sup>315</sup> — in fact, remarkably in line with current action research (Kincheloe, 1991).

The research was conducted by hired researchers, by Bureau members as well as by teachers of both BEE lab schools: formulating research ideas, recording observations and gathering data, analyzing them to be able to adjust circumstances to fit conclusions, in order to perhaps start a new research cycle. This provided ‘feedback,’ a cognition of educational processes, a preliminary meta-awareness. In fact, it constituted action research before it became an idea. The participative kind of research of children and their reactions to differing environments concerned best practices, was cyclical, constituted a reflective praxis in both schools, and empowered the schools’ teachers (H. M. Johnson, 1928a).<sup>316</sup>

After maintaining relative silence about its existence and activities during the mid- and late 1920s (Cenedella, 1996), in 1930, the BEE terminated its action research program and moved to a four-story building at 69 Bank Street, an old warehouse. In May 1930, eight schools under Bureau lead joined forces to become a student teacher training program, the Cooperative School for Student Teachers, later renamed Cooperative School for Teachers (CST).<sup>317</sup> CST initially developed a one-year nursery, kindergarten, and elementary school teacher education program for their cooperating schools.<sup>318</sup> CST closely cooperated with the New School for Social Research, founded in 1919 by Sprague Mitchell’s husband, Bureau member Frederick Ellis, and others.

In 1950, CST became Bank Street College of Education — a graduate school.<sup>319</sup>

## Conclusion

In this dissertation I stressed that before 1919 a nationwide *movement* for experimental progressive education did not exist. Instead there were many grassroots educational reform initiatives, in many cases driven by women who jointly covered wide areas of expertise, working for organizations that built on everyone’s extensive capacity for innovation. Examples taken from New York City (e.g., Hartley House settlement, Public Education Association, Socialist Party Committee on Education, WTUL) show that groups of predominantly women in changing combinations of cooperation aided enormously to educational reforms — not always successfully.

I sketched the lives of two of these women, Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt. Each, in her own way, after parallel winding careers, independently founded experimental schools. Their first-person declarations in the contemporaneous media about their work *and* their socio-political views characterize them as social reconstructionists *avant la lettre* — in contrast to the prevalent vision in the literature that they merely uninformedly promoted *a*-political child-centered education. Johnson amassed an impressive curriculum vita as primary and tertiary education teacher, as director of two experimental schools, and as public lecturer, while Pratt amassed an impressive curriculum vita as primary and tertiary education teacher, researcher, social settlement worker, political activist, toy manufacturer, and director of an experimental school. Both women, as *forerunners* in educational renewal, in due course became members of the same innovatory NYC educational organization: the Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE).

I shed some new light on a number of long-held views, ‘established facts’ in the history of progressive education. A couple of examples and their relevant connotations will suffice. While the aftermath of an emotionally charged NYC school war and repressive activities by government agencies effectively suppressed educational renewal in New York City during the final years of World War I, the newly founded Bureau of

Educational Experiments was *more significant* than previously acknowledged. I underlined that the majority of BEE members were true *forerunners* of psychological testing in schools. Having tested children in public and special schools before becoming Bureau members, as early as 1911, in order to determine growth norms and patterns more precisely than had previously been done, they next expressed a drive to study children and their reactions to differing environments in a lab school. Although most Bureau members hoped a science of mental testing would be of great help to children's learning, they had to conclude rather quickly that prevailing test assessment constructs could not answer their research questions about growth and human emotions. In 1919, as a consequence, the Bureau would switch to a *pre-form* of participative and cyclical action research. First functioning as a clearinghouse, then, from mid-1917 onwards more and more aiming at becoming a scientific research institute, the BEE ultimately drastically changed its priorities in 1919 while it embraced two laboratory schools as its very action research heart. In this sense, Bureau members were true *forerunners* in action research too.

This, however, was only possible after formation of the Progressive Education Association, earlier that year, as a result of a suggestion made in January of 1918 by then-BEE member Marietta Johnson to a colleague progressive educator to found a nationwide progressive education organization. I showed that Johnson thereby duplicated an idea first put forward at a BEE meeting by Gertrude Hartman, one of the Bureau's consulting researchers. Allegorically speaking, the Bureau of Educational Experiments, born from the Public Education Association, was midwife to the Progressive Education Association.

BEE members aided the early PEA in different ways. After the PEA was founded, BEE members could subsequently leave clearinghouse activities to the PEA, which had a truly nationwide reach; it freed them to begin conducting small-scale action research. During the whole of the 1920s, they thereby focused on immediate educational processes in their two laboratory schools: *e.g.*, introduction of a jobs program for older children at City and Country School; the use of blocks in recreating field trip experiences afterwards through dramatic play for younger children at both the BEE Nursery School and City and Country School.

In this dissertation I further emphasized that Marietta Johnson, Caroline Pratt and other women rather independently from (male) educational theorists organized new ways of educating and expressed new theories about education. For instance, Johnson developed a political agenda of Georgist organic education and implemented a curriculum based on her views in the practice of actual class situations in her Fairhope school. Pratt (1913) developed a theory about shop classes as model as to how the whole of child education should proceed under the adage that "the shop might serve as a clearing house for the whole school" (p. 99). She implemented her theories, designed and constructed her own toys and blocks, and used them in the actual class situations of the school she founded.

I additionally indicated that by the end of World War I, the extraordinary situation arose that John Dewey became the ultimate spokesmodel for progressive education. Even while he was still shrugging off the 1917 NYC "Garyizing" of public schools disaster (since he did not really commit himself), it was *his* voice that was needed in the media and at public meetings to promote the educational renewal practice initiated and established by the women united in the BEE. This suggests, viewed from another angle, a changing of perspective in the history of education: In spite of the mutually beneficial relationship which developed between progressive BEE women educators and Dewey, it seems as if the women needed a man's voice to get ideas across. The women did not exclusively promote their ideas and practice as their own — but promoted as

their spokesperson, a man, articulating *their* ideas. They made Dewey their champion, and he was happy to contribute. Dewey remained; the accomplishments of the Bureau progressive women educators went into oblivion, as did the early history of the BEE, and as did the early history of the founding of the PEA.

Finally, I roughly stressed that Johnson's School of Organic Education, Pratt's City and Country School, and the BEE that changed into the Bank Street College of Education tended to be lasting institutions. This did not happen with theoretical contributions to progressive education by the (female) Bureau members. Yet, if we use the right tools, as I tried to do, we will unearth previously unacknowledged texts, reports, newspaper articles, *etc.* In that way we definitely rewrite long-told narratives, and in so doing (perhaps) change essential parts of the established history of education.

A number of findings in this dissertation are new. Hopefully, they will widen the reader's perspective and sharpen the focus on American early twentieth-century education reform efforts. The historiography of American education reform, while extensive, mainly concerns a small number of topics and persons — even since the revisionist interpretations of the 1970s. One topic rightfully advanced by revisionists is the role of women in educational reform.

This dissertation offers an overview of women who would join the Bureau of Educational Experiments between 1916 and 1919. Among my various aims with this dissertation is showing that certain women reform leaders — within a number of New York City settlement houses (roughly between 1905 and 1910), the Women's Trade Union League (roughly between 1909 and 1915) and the Public Education Association (roughly between 1908 and 1916), before they, in 1916, became Bureau of Educational Experiments members — were highly motivated to reform education across an array of specific facets. Their sense of purpose ranged from campaigning for provision of noon meals at public schools, fighting child labour, sponsoring and delivering sex education classes, introducing the visiting teacher program to NYC schools and becoming visiting teachers, to exploring the efficacy of an emerging science of education by becoming pioneer intelligence test administrators in public elementary schools. Going beyond earlier research of the lives and work of *individual* women educational reform leaders (e.g., Newman, 1999; Semel, 1999b), I sketch a deeper understanding of a group of women forming a particular *women-led network of reformers*, first as settlement house workers, then as Women's Trade Union League allies, Public Education Association workers, Gary School League members, and ending as Bureau of Educational Experiment members, seeing how their continuing reciprocal, cooperative work was sustained over at least two decades, and eventually led to the founding of the Progressive Education Association and to conducting sound education practice research. In so doing, I principally revise the existing body of knowledge and understandings of the histories of these women and institutions in which they worked.

It was not only Marietta Johnson, Caroline Pratt, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, or Harriet Johnson, *etc.*, but all the women, together, leading the Bureau of Educational Experiments outlined here, who gained mutual energy and insight from their practice of almost daily discussion, project management, collaborative research, and collaborative writing. I show the depth of their commitment as Bureau of Educational Experiment members, illustrating how their interdependent, non-dogmatic practice allowed them to grow and adjust to new circumstances (for instance, they were not defeated by the losses over the Gary Plan fiasco) and learn from their mistakes (for instance, from the Neurological Institute laboratory school debacle). Still, I must commemorate one particularly outstanding yet unintended outcome of their activities, that is, the

establishment of the Progressive Education Association as a progressive education clearinghouse and professionalization organization in 1919.

Meanwhile, as my dissertation demonstrates, I found no support for a specific critique expressed by revisionist historians of education, that is: the assumed aim of reformers to promote social control. Yes, shades of paternalism (or, in this case: *maternalism*) are detectable in early writings of some of the women. Still, only a handful of their texts (e.g., Garrett, 1914c; Irwin in Rodman, 1915d) actually slide into vague hints of social control, such as fear of evolutionary degeneration. On the other hand, most show a genuine (and productive) scientific curiosity about the growth of children, displaying strong distancing from eugenic and societal control topics (Pratt, 1911b; E. H. Johnson, 1913). Therefore, “eugenicists waiting in the political wings” (Bender, 2008, p. 7) were not part of this women-led network of reformers.

Ending this summary, I have to mention one underlying, but in no way unimportant, aspect of the women-led network of reformers: their independent funding. Interestingly, often the same extremely wealthy women fortified the network of reformers by financing their endeavours, from when they worked for settlement houses until they joined the Bureau of Educational Experiments. Self-financing of social settlement houses, the Women’s Trade Union League, Public Education Association, and Gary School League, as well as the Bureau of Educational Experiments enabled the reformers to work within organizations devoid of much bureaucratization and (local) government or state interference. Succession of independent funding continued from the mid-1900s well into the 1930s, when the Bureau became Cooperative School for Student Teachers, later renamed Cooperative School for Teachers (CST) (Cenedella, 1996). CST was only the last in line of heterodoxly funded organizations focusing on community and educational reform led by the network of reformers discussed here. This continuous financially sovereign stance safeguarded the women against having to make large compromises and other unwished decisions. They were free to pursue their reform ideas in mostly undisturbed ways.

The women who are the subjects of the thesis began making their contributions to community and education reform more than a century ago. They transcended their immediate circumstances in several ways. For example, although they fell short of their goal of establishing progressive education practices across the spectrum of American schools, as Bureau of Educational Experiments members during the 1920s and 1930s they — at their two laboratory schools — developed a kind of pioneer small-scale short-term action research, forming the basis for their later teacher training activities, making real progress in showing how a science of education can inform day-to-day work in a classroom. Both Bureau lab schools survive, as does the Bureau-transformed-into the Bank Street College of Education, which today operates as a feeder of teachers in progressive schools throughout the U.S. (Grinberg, 2005).

Finally, to bring the findings of this dissertation to bear upon the Dutch context, I hope to have shown how endeavours of Bureau members are of importance at yet other levels as well. Specifically, this dissertation supports my view that Dutch *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) school war participants can learn valuable lessons from studying the history of successes and failures of the Bureau members. It is striking that the findings I describe in these chapters directly pertain to recommendations made by the Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms in their 2008 report *Tijd voor Onderwijs*, and also listed in the *Introduction*: investments should be made in both initial training and expertise training of teachers, schools must be accountable to parents, *Nieuwe Leren* schools should restructure through a gradual process with involvement of (specialist) teachers rather than through large-scale educational reform from above, a



clearinghouse infrastructure ought to be developed and maintained, and lastly, small-scale short-term research should be done, focusing on specific aspects.

The history of the Bureau of Educational Experiments network of women introduced here indeed teaches us valuable lessons. The majority of them professionalized themselves on the job, and by pursuing formal (expertise) training as well, gaining academic degrees during the 1900s, 1910s, and 1920s in order to improve the quality of their reforms. During the Gary School war they learned the hard way that schools must be accountable to parents, that reform cannot be imposed top-down, either by the (local) government or by the management of schools, and that parents need a voice in educational reform. As passionate educators they established and maintained an educational clearinghouse; later, during the 1920s, they introduced small-scale short-term action research in two laboratory schools. In so doing they empowered teachers working at the schools to feel and become responsible for educational renewal and its needed revision, and to form a body of knowledge necessary to support the introduced reforms.

Related to conducting research and establishing an educational clearinghouse, the 2008 Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms report advised that “the relationship between schools and science (research) should be strengthened” (Commissie Parlementair Onderzoek Onderwijsvernieuwingen, 2008, p. 154). This recommendation leaves open whether the government will appoint academic investigators to conduct the proposed researches, or whether they will encourage schools to organize the research — empowering their teachers to conduct small-scale short-term action research, supervised by expert teachers, the outcomes preserved in a school's clearinghouse. In the light of the Dutch New Learning debate that fell flat in 2008, might it not be wise to encourage teachers to gain expertise training and academic degrees, to conduct small-scale short-term action research, build a body of knowledge in their school's clearinghouse, share outcomes with other schools, in this way honour the example of mutual assistance, professional commitment, drive to learn and to know, stimulating just good interaction and basic peer atmosphere of the Bureau of Educational Experiments network of women?



# EPILOGUE

## What Became of Johnson and Pratt?

"The future of democratic society depends upon the socialization of the schools. When they become practice communities in which young people through their growing years are trained to respond in desirable ways to social institutions, when students are versed in solving social problems, when the curriculum is enriched by a broad social interpretation, we shall have the hope of creating a society capable of directing social changes instead of being overwhelmed by them."

Gertrude Hartman cited in *The New Leaven: The Progressive Education and Its Effect Upon the Child and Society*; Cobb, 1928, pp. 130-131.

Sketches of the fate of the Progressive Education Association and Bureau of Educational Experiments in foregoing chapters clarify how the resolute women of the BEE contributed to an organization that was, in large part, a model for the PEA. Two questions remain to be answered: "What became of Marietta Johnson and her School of Organic Education? What became of Caroline Pratt and her Play School?"

### **Marietta Johnson and the School of Organic Education**

While working with the BEE, atypically for her, Marietta Johnson neither expressed views on the war effort nor for other political causes she had championed, finding other means to act on her socio-political aspirations.<sup>320</sup> In *Chapter 4*, I have shown that early in 1918, Johnson approached Stanwood Cobb, to encourage founding a national association bringing together teachers to support progressive education. The 1919 founding meeting of the Progressive Education Association "represented a dream come true [for] Minnesota-born Marietta Johnson" (Graham, 1967 p. 17). To be sure, the PEA did *not* resemble the dream Johnson (1909) articulated a decade earlier in *The Public*. However, now an organisation existed to bring together educational reformers on a national level, contributing to a nationwide professionalization process of progressive teachers and progressive education and to protoprofessionalization processes of parents and other laypersons.

The *naissance* of the PEA in the winter of 1919 and Johnson's PEA related organizing duties, combined with lecturing activities (increasingly nationwide), gave her ample fund-raising opportunities for Fairhope. It seems it never became a burden to be constantly fund-raising, being a part-time Alabama school director, a part-time Connecticut school director, organizing summer schools (*The Sun*, 1919d), lecturing far from her Alabama home. However, following the death of her husband Frank in August 1919 (*New York Herald*, 1919), she temporarily halted fund-raising. A few months later, though, the Fairhope Educational Foundation (the former Fairhope League) saw to it that her schedule of lectures and demonstrations was active again. Johnson's (1974) autobiography describes an occasion that probably occurred in 1919 or 1920: an invitation to speak in Detroit. In the audience were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford. They donated \$12,000 to the cause of Johnson's Fairhope School of Organic Education. This lucky event suggests that her worries about the survival of the school may have abated. They had not.<sup>321</sup>

Between 1920 and 1925, numerous newspapers reported, Johnson lectured in at least twenty states — states as far apart as California and Florida, Wisconsin and Texas.<sup>322</sup> It seems, the spring 1918 BEE events had noticeably made her more determined on her way to national and international recognition. However, her increasing absences during parts of the year profoundly impacted her school and its curriculum. She did not delegate authority outside her family. Before her husband's death, when she was on lecture tours or spending time in New York City in 1917 and 1918, Frank took charge of the school. After his death, when Marietta toured, there was no Johnson present to direct either school or teacher training.

There were problems before Frank's death. For instance, there is no indication in the many media reports about Johnson's school from 1909 to 1920 that the School of Organic Education's curriculum evolved in any way after its 1907 inception. Then, the circumstances that led Johnson and the BEE to sever a working relationship left her without an opportunity for discussions with equally successful, like-minded peers. Even were she inclined toward self-reflection and assessment, she had no one with whom she could engage about how their education theory manifested in practice. Without a serious program of self-assessment, Johnson was unable to shed the popular impression that she was merely the prophet of organic education, directing an extremist school in the Deep South. Johnson's incessant *post*-World War I fund-raising tours raised concerns among the school's teaching staff, hindered recruiting competent teachers, and stagnated curriculum development.

Not long after the Roaring Twenties' onset, Alice Howell (1922), who had taught at the Fairhope School of Organic Education during the 1919-1920 season, wrote an internal analysis of the school. She found numerous curriculum flaws and organisational problems. A lack of continuous tradition manifested at the opening of each school year. One third of the teachers were new, often newly graduated teachers from the school's training class. This led to a serious delay in "getting the school machinery started" (p. 242). A number of students, the majority with special needs, seemed unsuited for the school's busy atmosphere; they did not receive proper guidance. There were a limited number of teachers in the school "with the vision, the mental suppleness, and the physical stamina necessary for so arduous a career" (p. 246). Referring to scarce material equipment and too few high-calibre teachers, Howell concluded, "[Fully] two-thirds of the unfavourable criticism of Mrs. Johnson's work at Fairhope is due to the incompleteness with which her ideas can be worked out under the hampering conditions which meagre funds impose" (*ibid.*). Howell warned that anxiety amongst the staff threatened the long-term survival of the school.

During the 1920s, the number of boarding students enrolled gradually decreased. It dropped off sharply during the Great Depression. Johnson's 1907 earnest pledge to effectively maintain the school herself, more and more became a race for money against all odds. She began conducting mid-winter adult courses in 1921. Parents from all over the country attended these. Even though she had a greatly expanded national and international reputation (Montoliu, 1921), it could not turn the tide.

An author of a letter to the editor of the *Evening Post* remarked that she was shocked to learn that the school was in financial danger (Fisher, 1923). Whether this was the outcome of a publicity stunt by Johnson, or a genuine concern, there is no telling. The letter states that the school was approaching extinction and that it was in desperate need of \$16,000. A year later, in 1924, Johnson was forced to mortgage her school. *Progressive Education* (1925) reported a debt of \$10,000. This debt remained outstanding during the 1920s and early 1930s.

Johnson's (1929) book *Youth in a World of Men* was not received well. During the 1930s the Fairhope Educational League discontinued financial support of the school. Newman (1999), who describes the school's later fate, states that in 1934 Johnson was even "dismissed as past her prime, written off as a 'play schooler'" by her professional colleagues (p. 83). The school barely stayed afloat during her lifetime. Marietta L. (Pierce) Johnson died on December 23, 1938. Her autobiography appeared posthumously (M. L. Johnson, 1974). The Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education celebrated its centennial in 2007.

### **Caroline Pratt and the Play School / City and Country School**

The November 24, 1895, *School Journal*, referenced in *Chapter 3*, strongly suggests that Caroline Pratt's late nineteenth-century manual training classes mainly applied conventional graded exercises methods. Her early twentieth-century writings, in contrast, conclusively show that she was evolving her own approach to education — and reinventing herself as an experimental, progressive, teacher. Her articles, bulletins and book contributions reveal a steady progression in *independent* theorizing based on years of observing children (in groups she supervised) using toys and blocks she had designed and constructed. She observed them experientially learning at school about interdependences of the physical and social worlds, and during field trips in the inner city of New York. She observed them afterwards reconstructing their activities and experiences, "*recasting experience in symbolic form*" (Franklin, 1996, p. 4). And she observed their dramatic play tying impressions gained during the trips with social studies perspectives. Pratt's writings form major theoretical contributions to experimental educational perspectives.

Play School renamed City and Country School in April 1919. The contents of *The City & Country School* (1919), an illustrated information pamphlet for parents issued by the school, indicate that the school's student population had grown considerably between 1916 and 1919, as had the number of classrooms.<sup>323</sup> The pamphlet details field trips into the city, programs to let the children help prepare lunch, or planning, marketing and serving lunches, estimating the costs. These "real experiences" would help them with their understanding of geography, history, science and arithmetic. The pamphlet further states that the pupils were expected to spend two summer months at the school's farm. During the summer breaks, the BEE rented the farm near Poughkeepsie, New York. However, an increasing part of City and Country School families were vacationing with their children during the summer months; the farm experiment was abandoned after only a few years.<sup>324</sup>

1919 also marks the final act of Pratt's business enterprise trying to sell her Do-With Toys™. At the time, the dolls and toys were already slowly disappearing from the scenes at City and Country School. In December 1919, though, an exhibition of American-made toys was opened at the Art Institute of Chicago "to recognize the making of toys as an art" (C. W. E., 1919).<sup>325</sup> The Toy Exhibition Committee gave a reception. For her group of wooden dolls, Pratt was awarded the Mrs. Hubbard Carpenter Award for toys of greatest art and educational value.<sup>326</sup> Pratt closed the toy-manufacturing chapter of her life the very moment she received the award. *Artistic Do-With Toys™* had become *true art* — an art of the past, exhibited in museums. *Unit Blocks*, devised by Pratt around 1910, gradually replaced Do-Withs. Blocks became the school's most important playthings.<sup>327</sup>

In the autumn of 1921, City and Country School moved to its present address in New York City.<sup>328</sup> While the school developed a services, or jobs, program during the 1920s, Pratt would edit a series of four books on the experimental teaching practice in her

school.<sup>329</sup> Various magazine and newspaper articles and books depicted the school's unique curriculum, its social sciences approach, its health program, its class size of ten children per class, and its educational approach to art — strongly praising the art produced by the students.<sup>330</sup> *Ladies' Home Journal* noted how schools best stimulate self-government and active citizenship, naming City and Country School as *the* commendable school in this respect (Jordan, 1921).<sup>331</sup> The school was exemplary in quite another respect as well. *Health News* (1922) claimed the school was “a laboratory school, supported through private funds, making provision for children of the rank and file of a congested neighborhood, and is fairly representative of the children of such a community...About fifty per cent of the parents pay the regular tuition fee; a fund is provided to care for those unable to pay” (p. 97).

Pratt's school severed from the BEE in 1929.<sup>332</sup> In 1934, Pratt and others founded the Associated Experimental Schools, an organization of seven schools, “coeducational, non-profit-making [and] without race discrimination” (The Associated Experimental Schools, n.d., p. 1), which cooperated in the fields of fund raising and buying equipment and supplies during the Depression years, planning and developing health programs and experimental school programs, as well as coordinating children's art exhibitions.<sup>333</sup> Around 1940, however, the Association disbanded.

In 1935, City and Country School opened an *Extension Service* that in 1936 built up an after school Recreation Center at Public School 33 in Chelsea, Manhattan, later dubbed Chelsea School Project, and trained its volunteers.<sup>334</sup> In 1937, the program became an all-day, all-year service, during school hours and summer vacations. In fact, City and Country School exported its curriculum and teaching techniques (community trips, map making, games, modelling, group discussions, shop work, dramatic play, block building, jobs program, arts and rhythms programs, remedial instruction, *etc.*) to an inner-city public school with many underprivileged children. From 1938 onward, the Public Education Association sponsored Chelsea School Project. Fascinatingly, Pratt made *The Nation's* 1939 ‘Roll of Honor’ for her “devotion to the principles of progressive education...in the reorganization of a number of public schools in New York State” (*Capital Times*, 1940). In 1942, when the Board of Education took over Chelsea School Project, it was held up as example for other schools in time of war and was extended to P.S. 194 and several other NYC public schools that became known as All-Day Neighborhood Schools.<sup>335</sup>

Throughout the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s until her retirement from the school after thirty-two years of service as the school's director on June 1, 1945 (*The Sun*, 1945a), Pratt was a prolific writer. She wrote about her school, its curriculum making, its pedagogy, learning methods, and the craft of progressive education teaching. Pratt's autobiography appeared in 1948. Caroline L. Pratt died on June 6, 1954. On May 18, 1979, Manhattan Borough President Andrew Stein officially proclaimed City and Country School the oldest progressive school in the State of New York. The school plans to celebrate its centennial in 2014.

# NOTES

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSC: BEE Archives at Bank Street College of Education, New York City.

C&C: BEE Archives at City and Country School, New York City.

RBML: Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, New York City.

## FOREWORD

1. BSC: "For Discussion by the Bureau of Educational Experiments." Minutes Executive Committee, November 27, 1918. Minutes Working Council, November 25, 1918. "November 27, 1916." "Statements to be Challenged by the Bureau of Educational Experiments at a Bureau Meeting to be held Monday, November 25th, 1918 at 8 P.M."

C&C: "Annual Report of the Chairman of the Working Council. Bureau of Educational Experiments 1916-1917." Minutes Membership Committee, November 22, 1917. Minutes Working Council, November 27, 1916. "Plan Submitted to the Bureau of Educational Experiments. December 26, 1916." "Report of Executive Committee, March 12, 1917." See also the November 27, 1918, and February 6, 1919, minutes of the weekly Play School teachers meetings; City and Country School archives.

RBML: Diaries of Wesley Clair Mitchell; 1916, 1917, 1918.

## INTRODUCTION

2. See Simons, 2006; Stevens 2006a; Van der Werf, 2006b. In the fall of 2006, Van der Werf (2006c) and Stevens (2006b) crossed swords in a special issue of *Christen Democratische Verkenningen* titled *De nieuwe schoolstrijd* (The New School War). Subsequently, "school war" became a common way of discussing the New Learning debate; for instance, Van Herpen's (2007) "verbal school war" (p. 39).

3. For scientific research in New Learning schools, see, for instance, Blok, Oostdam, & Peetsma, 2007; Oostdam, Peetsma, Derriks, & Van Gelderen, 2006; Smit, Driessen, Sluiter, & Brus, 2008; Teurlings, Van Wolput, & Vermeulen, 2006.

4. Extensive research outside of The Netherlands suggests that metacognitive learning strategies, including 'modelling,' 'monitoring,' 'scaffolding' and 'peer learning,' indeed stimulate students self-directing their individual learning processes (Trabasso & Bouchard, 2002).

5. On August 6, 1921, the New Education Fellowship (NEF) was established — an international organization with local sections in Great Britain, Germany and Switzerland. Among others, Marietta Johnson, Maria Montessori, and John Dewey attended the *Congrès Fondateur* (founding conference). The NEF formally affiliated with the American Progressive Education Association in the early 1930s. In 1958, the NEF became the World Education Fellowship (Brehony, 2004).

6. I use the term professionalization as a sensitizing concept (Blumer, 1969).

## CHAPTER 1

7. The phrase *New Education* appears in England in the 1860s (Selleck, 1968). Throughout the 1870s, as with English practice, New Education was commonly used in the United States in kindergarten literature. Through the late 1860s to the early 1910s, New Education headed a variety of general education books and articles (Reese, 2005). Ravitch (2001) observes that by 1900 the phrase had come to indicate work-related studies, including manual training, domestic science, and agricultural and commercial studies as well as industrial and vocational education. The connotations were already manifesting in the literature of the 1880s and 1890s. Still, New Education was only used sporadically during World War I, the 1920s and early 1930s.

8. Between 1897 and 1899, John Dewey issued signed texts as well as anonymous texts in *University Record* — in 1900 and 1901 reprinted in a series of nine *Elementary School Record* monographs, edited by Dewey and Lab School history teacher Laura L. Runyon. There were few contemporaneous reports of teaching practices at the school published by its teachers (e.g., *American Kitchen Magazine*, 1900; Runyon, 1900; *School Education*, 1901; Tough, 1900). Former Laboratory School teachers Mayhew and Edwards (1936) finally compiled *The Dewey School*, forty years after the school's founding.

9. See, for instance, *Michigan School Moderator*, 1898a-b, 1899a-d; *Primary Education*, 1898, 1899; *School Journal*, 1898.

10. E.g., J. Dewey, 1898, p. 328; 1899, p. 16; 1902, p. 20. In *The Educational Situation*, Dewey (1904) acknowledged that a New Education did not exist, as yet. "The real conflict is not between a certain group of studies, the three R's, those having to do with the symbols and tools of intellectual life, and other studies representing the personal development of the child, but between our professed ends and the means we are using to realize these ends" (pp. 39-40).

11. Evelyn Dewey (1889-1965) graduated B.A. in 1911, Barnard College, New York City. During 1910-1911 she was Editor-in-chief of *The Bear*, supplement of the *Barnard Bulletin*. She and her mother Alice Dewey travelled in Italy (Europe) in 1913-14 to visit various Montessori schools, meeting Montessori on January 31, 1914. In 1915, together with her father John Dewey, she published *Schools of To-Morrow*. In 1916, she became charter member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments (see *Chapter 4*). In 1919, she resigned from her work at the Bureau and travelled to Japan to visit her parents there. Later she regularly published on education.

12. See Henderson, 1889, 1894a-b, 1896, 1898, 1901.

13. Even when the majority of reviews of Henderson's *Education and the Larger Life* were mildly positive, the *National Magazine* may well have expressed a general feeling of the public: "If the United States were heaven, and all its youths angels with a bent for knowledge, then Mr. Henderson's educational plan would be ideal...It is a lofty, stimulating but wholly impractical hope, this of *Education and the Larger Life*" (D. L. S., 1902).

14. After 1902, Henderson published a few books on education and two novels. In 1914, ending his tenure as director of the Pratt Institute High School in New York City, he became principal of the Marienfield Open-air School for Boys in Samarcand, North Carolina, where he more and more retreated from public discourse.

15. Davis (1967), however, does not identify the carpentry shop teacher, or her method of teaching. The Hartley House, in the densely populated Midtown West Hell's Kitchen neighbourhood of Manhattan, was established in January 1897 under the auspices of the New York City Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (A.I.C.P.). Hartley House was named for Robert M. Hartley, first General Secretary of the A.I.C.P., established in 1843 (Woods & Kennedy (Eds.), 1911). "Forty thousand persons in twenty-three overcrowded blocks constitute the "parish" of this settlement" (Montgomery (Ed.), 1905, p. 78). From November 1903, when May Mathews began work as head worker of Hartley House (she would remain half a century), its settlement workers "were encouraged to invent new ways of handling already-established activities" (Carlton, 1986, p. 158). Hartley House was characterized by an atmosphere of "encouragement, sympathy, and understanding" amongst its social settlement workers, offering "an unusual opportunity for [them] to create, develop, and experiment with new ideas" (*ibid.*).

16. According to Carlton (1986), the *Hartley House News* reported Pratt's activities on November 2, 1901; February 7, 1902; December 5, 1902; March 8, 1903; April 2, 1903; January 11, 1905, and February 1, 1905. I found additional reports (see *Hartley House News*, 1902a-b, 1905a, 1906, 1907, 1908a-d).

17. In his *My Pedagogic Creed*, John Dewey (1897) stressed that education is "a process of living and not a preparation for future living" (p. 7).

18. Later, in the *Manual Training Magazine*, Pratt (1905b) again put the accent on analysis of her experimental carpentry classes.

19. Mary Marot was a daughter of Philadelphia well-to-do Quakers Hannah (*née* Griscom) Marot and Charles Henry Marot, bookseller and publisher of *The Gardener's Monthly*. One of their



four daughters died young. Mary Marot's siblings were younger sisters Elizabeth and Helen, and younger brother William. Mary Marot received her education at Philadelphia Friends schools and privately at home. Around 1890 she began working at a Philadelphia kindergarten (Lodor, 1895; *Primary Education*, 1894; Witse, 1895). In 1918, she was hired by the Bureau of Educational Experiments as their record keeper (see *Chapter 4*).

20. Harriet Merrill Johnson (1867-1934) was born in Portland, Maine. She taught for a number of years in a private school in Bangor, Maine. In 1895 she entered the nurses' training course at Massachusetts Homeopathic Hospital in Boston. After graduation from the nurses' training in 1898, she became a private nurse for two years; for another two years, she was Superintendent of the Nurses' Training at the Homeopathic Hospital in Biddleford, Maine (Homoeopathic Hospital, 1900, p. 33). In 1902, Johnson completed a one-year course in Hospital Economics (Banfield, 1902), and attended other Nursing and Health courses at Teachers College, Columbia University (I. L. Pratt, 1903). In March 1903, she began work at Hartley House under auspices of Henry Street Settlement (*Hartley House News*, 1903). In 1905, both Johnson and Harriet Forbes worked at Hartley House. The same year they published *Home Nursing*, promoting basic hygienic skills (Forbes & Johnson, 1905). In the winter of 1906, they took up joint residence in a three-room flat in the tenements in the East Side as an extension of the Henry Street Settlement (*New York Press*, 1906). In 1916, she became charter member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments (see *Chapter 4*).

21. Harriet Forbes (1867-?) began nurses' training at Massachusetts Homeopathic Hospital in Boston in 1894; she graduated in 1897 (Homoeopathic Hospital, 1900, p. 33). In 1902, Forbes completed a one-year course in Hospital Economics at Teachers College, Columbia University (Banfield, 1902). Forbes was also a graduate nurse of the Sloane Maternity Hospital, New York City. In 1916, Forbes and Harriet Johnson adopted a baby girl, born in Milo, Maine, who was baptized Mary Pauline (Polly) Forbes-Johnson (1916-2002). Harriet Johnson became the girl's legal parent. In 1916, Forbes became charter member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments (see *Chapter 4*).

22. Johnson (1905) reported her work in the *American Journal of Nursing*, stressing cooperation with other social agencies. Early in 1906, in *The Dietetic And Hygiene Gazette*, Johnson (1906) maintained, "We claim for our work a certain educational value, and here is field enough to test its worth" (p. 249).

23. During the winter of 1906, Marot "made an investigation into the conditions in several cities and in an effort to learn ways of getting parents at home to reinforce and supplement the educational aims of the schools" (Carlton, 1986, p. 158). Following her return to Hartley House in the spring of 1906, Marot began her work as a visiting teacher. In the fall of 1906, she formed a committee for home and school visiting. The committee was composed of Marot, her colleague visiting teacher Effie Abrahams, head worker of Hartley House May Mathews, head worker of College Settlement Elizabeth Williams, and head worker of the Richmond Hill Settlement House Elizabeth Roemer.

24. *Charities and The Commons* (1907), the *New York Times* (1907a), and the *New York Tribune* (1907) reported on the Visiting Teacher Committee of the Public Education Association.

25. Marot reported on her work in the media (see *Evening Post*, 1909a; M. Flexner, 1913b; M. S. Marot, 1907, 1908a-b, 1910a-b, 1911, 1912, 1924; *The Sun*, 1909b).

26. See also Mason, 1908; *New York Tribune*, 1910c; Richman, 1910. In 1913 a second Miss Johnson employed by the Association — that is, Eleanor Johnson (1913b) — published about the work of visiting teachers in *The Survey*. She narrated the story of a visiting teacher investigating the home of undersized eleven-year-old "Utterly Bad" boy Nello (p. 178), to find out why he was incorrigible in school. "She found ample cause. Nello's mother was dying of cancer. His father was a heavy drinker...who shared his beer with the small boy...Nello was the only nurse his mother and the three younger children had, and his burden of responsibility gave him no other outlet except the schoolroom tantrum" (p. 174). Not long after this publication, Johnson began working with the Neurological Institute. In 1916, she joined the staff of Sprague Mitchell's Psychological Survey at the Public Education Association.

27. In 1912, for instance, visiting teachers Mary Flexner, Eleanor Johnson, and Harriet Johnson were among the experts at the Annual Meeting of the New Jersey Conference of Charities and Correction held at Orange, New Jersey, to “demonstrate efficient methods and effective achievements in the educational ‘treatment’ of feeble-minded and otherwise ‘defective’ children” (*The Survey*, 1912, p. 115; see also E. H. Johnson, 1913). In April 1913, the Association report by Mary Flexner (1913a) noted the success of the Visiting Teacher project with supportive statistics. A month later Flexner (1913b) published an article in *The Survey*, on the “new type of ‘school ma’ams’” (*Geneva Daily Times*, 1913), that is, visiting teachers. In June 1915, the Association released a report on truancy by Elisabeth Irwin (1915) citing the efforts of visiting teachers to maximize regular school attendance.

28. Wealthy social activist Dorothy Payne Straight (*née* Whitney) liberally subsidized the program. In 1910, for example, she subsidized the Public Education Association’s Visiting Teacher Fund to pay the salaries of visiting teachers Forbes and Johnson.

29. Harriet Johnson (1917) also gave a presentation on visiting teachers at the Ninth Congress of the American School Hygiene Association, July 4-8, 1916, at New York City.

30. See *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1908a-b; Marsh, 1908; Martin, 1908.

31. Helen Marot (1866-1940) was the youngest daughter of Charles and Hannah Marot (*New York Times*, 1910a). Marot received her education at Philadelphia Friends schools and privately at home. In an era when it was unusual for women born into means to work outside the home, except for charity, she had a remarkable career path. In 1890, she was a manager at the West Philadelphia Hospital for Women (Comyges, 1909). Between 1893 and 1895, she worked for the Philadelphia University Extension Society. She graduated in the class of 1895 at the Philadelphia Drexel Institute Library School (*Library Journal*, 1895). In 1896, she worked as a cataloguer at the Wilmington Institute Free Library, Wilmington, Delaware (Sewall, 1897). Three years later, Marot (1899b) published a book review and compiled *A Handbook in Labor Literature* (1899a), her first book. During 1899 and 1900, she co-authored the *Report of the Committee on an Association of Librarians to Maintain the Standard of Work and Wages* (Marot, Morris, & Randall, 1900). Later, in New York City, during the end of 1905 and the first months of 1906, Marot worked with the School Visiting Committee of the Public Education Association until she became the Secretary of the Women’s Trade Union League in New York City. In 1917 she was hired by the Bureau of Educational Experiments as researcher (see *Chapter 4*).

32. Cohen and Mohl (1979) document the overcrowding of schools in 1914. “Some 20,000 teachers handled almost 800,000 students...expansion of the system had not kept pace with New York City’s population...The city did not have enough schools” (p. 36).

33. Elsa Ueland, who worked for the Vocational Guidance Survey of the Public Education Association, became Secretary-Treasurer of the School and Civic League of the Ninth District. Ueland (1888-1980), born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was a graduate of the University of Minnesota in 1909. She attended courses at the NYC School of Philanthropy and at Columbia University, obtaining her M.A. degree. She also worked at NYC Richmond Hill Settlement House where Elizabeth Roemer was head worker since a few years. Ueland may have been a volunteer picket during the 1909-1910 shirtwaist strike; she co-authored an article about the shirtwaist trade in the *Journal of Political Economy* (Goodman & Ueland, 1910). See also *Notes 51, 64, 234, and 259*.

34. See *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1913b; *Evening Post*, 1913a; *New York Call*, 1913a; *New York Herald*, 1913; *Oswego Daily Palladium*, 1913.

35. The Teachers’ League’s main aims, as listed in *New York Call* (1913a), were promoting teachers’ claims to seats and the right to vote in the Board of Education, promoting teachers’ claims “to have a share in the administration of the affairs of their own schools,” promoting “scientific study of educational experience,” promoting the decrease of unhygienic conditions in numerous schools, and promoting the decrease of the size of schools and the size of classes, meaning a decrease of school congestion. The League also aimed to fight other unfavourable conditions in schools, like “the excess of clerical labor, the salaries and ratings of teachers and the lack of opportunity for professional improvement during tenure of office.”

36. The second decade of the twentieth century marks the founding of laboratory schools akin to the Dewey School in Chicago — by parents. Diverse motives guided the establishment of such (private) schools. The Moraine Park School of Dayton, Ohio, for example, had its inception in the mind of Arthur E. Morgan, a parent who together with other parents sent a questionnaire to educationists inviting suggestions for the school's curriculum. Morgan became the first President of the PEA. The financing of the school was unique too — fees proportioned to the parents' income (Cobb, 1920; Slutz, 1920; Slutz & Gillmore, 1921). Banker Frank Vanderlip founded a laboratory school at his home in Scarborough-on-the-Hudson, New York, where students could proceed from their interests and traditional schooling was absent. A small group of NYC political activists who adhered to libertarian anti-authoritarian ideas founded the Modern School at Stelton, New Jersey (Sargent, 1918).

37. Pratt filed claims on November 23, 1908 (*Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office* (1911b, p. 496); they registered Pratt's trademark on December 12, 1911 (*Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office*, 1911a, p. 248; 1911c, p. 580).

38. "Garyizing," with and without the quotation marks, was in the lexicon of early twentieth-century writers on education. Once de-"Garyizing" of the NYC public schools took place, "Garyizing" dropped from the lexicon.

39. Alice Barrows Fernandez did not hyphenate her name. She first published as Barrows, then Barrows Fernandez, and again as Barrows, depending on her marriage state.

40. Barrows Fernandez's columns also address other plans to solve the problems related to the city's severe school congestion (e.g., Barrows Fernandez, 1915, 1916b-c). In 1915, *American Teacher*, *The New Republic*, *School*, and *Vassar Quarterly* had articles by Barrows Fernandez about the Gary plan too (McMillen, 1917). Note that the *New York Call* also had a column about "Garyizing" of the city's public schools (see, for instance, Tanenbaum, 1915, 1916a-c).

41. Bourne published several articles in *The New Republic* and letters to the editor in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, *Evening Post*, *New York Times* and *New York Tribune* describing the Gary laboratory schools (e.g., Bourne, 1915a-f, 1916a). He rewrote these in order to include them as chapters in his book *The Gary Schools*. In 1915 and 1916, *American Teacher*, *Educational Administration and Supervision*, and *Scribner's Magazine* had articles by Bourne about Gary schools too (McMillen, 1917).

42. Schneider failed to make an impact on his superiors at Lehigh University. He was unable to show advantages of his system over existing methods of instruction (Yates, 1992).

43. The Cincinnati continuation schools had a half-day per week arrangement with the apprentices and their employers. "The boys are sent to school one-half day per week for four years. They are rotated in such a way that the school has always the same number of students...The boys are paid for their time in school just as if they were working at their machines" (*American Engineer and Railroad Journal*, 1909, p. 405). Circa 1910, the plan was introduced at the American Steel & Wire Company in Cleveland, Ohio, to benefit the sons of its employees (Kempton, n.d.). These continuation schools, by 1914 also introduced in the state of Wisconsin, were known as four-hours-a-week schools (Bourne, 1917a). Also in 1909, Schneider (1910) presented a paper relating his scheme at a special meeting of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers in New York City.

44. Schneider's plan was discussed at the Second National Conference on Vocational Guidance organized by the Public Education Association, held in New York City in October 1912 (Ueland, 1913). See also *American Machinist*, 1913; Schneider, 1913a-b, 1915a-b. Kreuzpointer (1913) stated that Schneider's plan had been previously executed at the shops of the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Co., with evening continuation schools in addition to day apprentice schools.

45. Ten High Schools and sixty-three firms participated in the experiment in 1915 (Park, 1943). A year later *School Review* (1916) reported, "Eighty-seven firms, 95 schools, and 486 students are in 1916 experimenting with this plan" (p. 558).

46. Commercial courses using Schneider's plan were offered in 1914; they were successful on a small scale (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1914). These courses eventually led to the establishment of the Haaren High School in 1921 (Calkins, 1921a).

47. See Dounce, 1917; *New York Tribune*, 1918; *School Review*, 1916. Principal William Grady of P.S. 64 was extremely enthused by Ettinger's system. He promoted the plan in speeches and newspaper articles (e.g., Grady, 1915a-b; Rodman, 1915f).

48. See *American Review of Reviews*, 1915; Cohen, 1990; Cohen & Mohl, 1979; Cremin, 1961; Grady, 1916; Haaren, 1916; Ravitch, 1974. Wirt's plan, also known as the Double School Plan, the Duplicate Schools Plan, the Gary System, the Platoon System, the Two-School Plan, and the Work-Study-Play System, applied principles of "multiple use and balanced load" (Meyer, 1945, p. 185).

49. All students were allowed to participate in so-called *released time* off-campus religious instruction.

50. Lucy Sprague (1878-1967) was the fourth of six children of Otho Sprague (co-founder of the Chicago based Sprague Warner and Company, the later General Foods) and Lucia Sprague (*née* Atwood). In 1900, she majored with honours in philosophy at Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1906, she became the first Dean of Women as well as the first female English instructor at the University of California in Berkeley. Sprague was the first to organize field trips for university students to community institutions, social settlements, etc. (Antler, 1977, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1992; Cenedella, 1996; Gordon, 1990; Grinberg, 2005; Marcus, 1992; Rauchway, 2001; Sprague Mitchell, 1953; Vascellaro, 2000, 2011). After her marriage in 1912, she moved to New York City where she co-authored the *Directory of Trade, Technical and Vocational Schools in Greater New York* (*New York Times*, 1913a). She attended lectures by John Dewey and Edward Thorndike and took courses at Columbia University's Teacher College (Cenedella, 1996). She also offered her services to the Public Education Association. Lucy Sprague Mitchell did not hyphenate her name. Here I will further refer to Sprague Mitchell. In 1916, she became charter member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments (see *Chapter 4*).

51. Two hearts and minds Johnson immediately won for the Gary experiment were Elizabeth Roemer and Elsa Ueland. Roemer (c. 1870-1961), born in Denmark, had attended universities in Denmark and France (Cohen, 1990). In 1901, she moved to New York City, becoming head worker at the Richmond Hill Settlement House in 1906. The *New York Times* (1909a) listed her as a "college girl" volunteer picket during the 1909-1910 shirtwaist strike. In September 1911, Ueland and Roemer began work for the Public Education Association Vocational Guidance Survey under the direction of Alice P. Barrows, later Alice Barrows Fernandez (Contosta, 1997). During the 1909-1910 shirtwaist strike, Barrows investigated sanitary conditions in shirtwaist sweatshops (W. Hutchinson, 1910). She also wrote about the millinery trade (Barrows 1910; Van Cleek & Barrows, 1910). From 1911 to 1914, Roemer and Ueland worked for the Vocational Guidance Survey, renamed Vocational Education Survey in 1912 (Ueland explained her work in a *New York Tribune* (1914b) interview).

Roemer and Ueland became so engaged with Gary schools that they resigned their Survey work in August 1914 to begin teaching in Gary a month later. Ueland first taught in the middle grades at Jefferson School. In the spring of 1915, she was reassigned to Emerson School. She spoke excitedly about the Gary schools curriculum in her 1915 articles (Ueland, 1915a-c). Roemer taught in the middle grades too, but in 1916 became director of registering children, keeping track of truancy and organizing a scheme of visiting teachers. In July 1916, at the New York City conference of visiting teachers organized by the Public Education Association, Roemer delivered an address on visiting teachers in Gary called *Register Teachers* (Schoff & Lombard, 1916, p. 294). By 1917 she made a career switch, succeeding Barrows (now named Barrows Fernandez) as director of the Gary School League. By the end of that year she was suggested as social worker to the Bureau of Educational Experiments (BSC: Minutes Working Council, December 5, 1917). Early in 1916, Ueland was appointed special Secretary to Superintendent Wirt. Ueland's work for Wirt included gathering of data, guiding visitors, and "possibly contribute a volume to a projected series [of books and articles] on the Gary Plan" (Cohen, 1990, p. 53). See, for example, Ueland's (1916) *The New Republic* article. However, there was to be no series of books and articles as foreseen; after a few months she resigned her job in Gary to become President of Carson College for Orphan Girls in Flourtown near Philadelphia (*Evening Public Ledger*, 1916, 1917; McGarry, 1921; *The Survey*, 1924). In May 1917, she also became a

non-resident member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments. (See also *Note 33* above, and *Notes 64, 234, and 259*, below).

52. For example, in April 1915 Barrows Fernandez (1915a) wrote a flaming page-long illustrated article about the Gary schools for the *New York Tribune*, and she made presentations on Wirt's system at a meeting under the auspices of The Teachers' League of New York (*Evening Post*, 1915b), and at meetings with the editors of *The Survey* and *The New Republic*. This resulted, for example, in a series of articles on Gary schools by Randolph Bourne in the spring 1915 issues of *The New Republic*. In June 1915, the *New York Tribune* had an opinion piece by Howes and Barrows Fernandez (1915). And in July 1916, Barrows Fernandez (1916a) unreservedly recommended the plan in a lengthy article in the *Daily Star*. Others, like Agnes de Lima, Secretary of the Women's Municipal League, endorsed the plan (*Evening Post*, 1916a). On May 30, 1916, the Education Committee of the Woman's Municipal League of the City of New York issued "Modern Schools for New York City," a report compiled by Agnes de Lima, promoting the Gary plan.

53. See, for instance, Manny, 1916. Manny wrote that Wirt carried over "the Dewey experiment into the conditions of a city public school in what is popularly known as the Gary system" (p. 542). See also *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1916; *Evening Post*, 1916c.

54. Alice Barrows Fernandez, Alice Ritter (principal of P.S. 89 in Brooklyn) and Angelo Patri (principal of P.S. 45) spoke in favour of the Gary Plan, while William Grady (principal of P.S. 64) spoke in favour of the Ettinger Plan. In February 1915, Ritter, Patri, and District Superintendent of Schools Joseph S. Taylor visited Gary to study the Gary schools more extensively (Taylor, 1917). Patri would write about implementation of the Gary Plan in P.S. 45 (see Bonner, 1915; Edman, 1916) in an unpublished memoir (see Wallace, 2006).

55. Historians of education Cohen and Mohl (1979) confirm: "William Wirt and Alice Barrows [Fernandez] represented the...principal strains of progressive education: he, the efficiency and control side, she, the human and reconstructionist side" (p. 32).

56. For example, journalist Tristram Metcalfe, who in June 1914 visited schools in Gary in the company of Mayor Mitchel, fulminated against the plan in speeches and in his *Globe* columns — inducing a strong rebuttal by Barrows Fernandez (1915b) in the *New York Tribune*.

57. Another complicating factor is the fact that annual reports of the Public Education Association for the years 1914-1917 are missing (Cohen, 1964, p. 89).

58. See Cohen, 1990; Cohen & Mohl, 1979; Weiner, 2010.

59. Ostensibly, many religious Jews feared the *released time* off-campus religious instruction. Their members wanted no religious instruction of Jewish children during (public) school hours. Instead, they lobbied for religious education in Hebrew schools after school. This conflict appears emblematic of a deeper rift. The progressive educators and settlement house workers were descendants, in many cases directly, of a tradition of education dating the Congregationalist settlers of New England. With the establishing of schools like Boston Latin School (in 1635) and Harvard University (in 1636), they instituted an effective and extensive education system of indoctrination into Protestant values. Settlement house workers can be viewed as secular missionaries of these values. However, while religious leadership among Jews, Catholics, and other religious groups were naturally distrustful, friendships established between settlement house workers and immigrant strikers could have led to more trusting relationships with the immigrant religious leaders had city politicians promoted the Gary plan in a less top-down manner.

60. Ironically, settlement house workers had, only a few years earlier, lent support to union organizing among immigrant women garment workers in these very communities.

61. Eleanor Hope Johnson (1871-1969) graduated B.A. from Smith College in 1894. Afterwards she was a social settlement worker at Hull House — Jane Addams's settlement house in Chicago. In 1897, she spent six months in England. In 1898, she lived in Eagle Pass, Texas. In 1899 she moved to New York City and worked at Hartley House. In the fall of 1900 she moved to Farmington, Connecticut, where she became the Editor of *The Farmington Magazine*. Between 1901 and 1904, she was School Visitor at Farmington. During the 1900s, Johnson (1900, 1902a-b, 1906, 1907, 1908) authored children and adult fiction. Around 1905 she moved back to New York City and worked for the College Settlement Association and the 8<sup>th</sup> District local school

board. During the early and mid-1910s, Johnson worked as Secretary of the Committee on Hygiene of School Children of the Public Education Association and later with the Bureau of Ungraded Classes at the New York City Department of Education. She regularly published about her work (see *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1913a; E. H. Johnson, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914a-b, 1915, 1916, 1917a-b). She also wrote the introduction to *Colored School Children in New York* by Francis Blascoer (1915), the first Secretary of the NAACP, on request by the Public Education Association (compare Popenoe, 1920). Early in 1916, Johnson joined the staff of Sprague Mitchell's Psychological Survey at the Public Education Association. In May 1916, she began her work at the Bureau of Educational Experiments when she became charter member of the Bureau. In 1917 she became Chairman of Advisory Board of the newly founded Committee of the Volunteer Service of the Intercollegiate Bureau of Occupations (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1917d; E. H. Johnson, 1917a); she also became a member of the New York Committee on Feeble-Mindedness. In 1920 she began work with the bureau of ungraded classes at the NYC Department of Education. She received her Master's degree at Columbia University in 1921 (see E. H. Johnson, 1920a-b, 1921a-c). In the fall 1922 Johnson became Instructor in Psychology and director of the Psychological Laboratory of the Hartford School of Religious Pedagogy, Hartford, Connecticut. A few years later, a book review by Johnson (1924) shows her ongoing involvement with her former work with ungraded classes.

62. After the move to New York, Alice (*née* Chipman) Dewey's career stood in the shadow of her husband's (Stack Jr., 2009). She mainly devoted her time to the cause of woman's suffrage. In 1907, she taught elementary education at Teachers College. She also worked for the Collegiate Equal Suffrage League. In 1910, she invited African American women to join the Woman Suffrage Party. Between 1910 and 1913 she worked as Manager of the State Hospital for the Care of Crippled and Deformed Children. In 1912, she began work as a member of the Columbia University Extension Board. In 1914 she began working for the New York Board of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage. She became a member of the Committee on Education of the Woman's City Club that informed the Public Education Association when writing their report *The Status of the Kindergarten in the New York Public Schools*, and she gave lectures on kindergarten education at the New York School of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Alice Dewey (1915) wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, defending college education for women. In 1916, she joined the Woodrow Wilson Independent League. In 1917, she was hired by the Bureau of Educational Experiments to write the history of her 1896-1904 Chicago University Laboratory School (BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, January 19, and February 13, 1917. Minutes Department of Teaching Experiments, October 29, 1917. C&C: Minutes Working Council, March 12, 1917. See also Dalton, 2002). After her return from a trip to Japan and China, she (1921) wrote an article on Chinese women for the *New York Tribune*.

63. See *Dobbs Ferry Register*, 1916; *Evening Post*, 1916b; *School and Society*, 1916; Tanenbaum, 1916d.

64. After her move from Gary to Philadelphia in September 1916 to become President of Carson College for Orphan Girls (see also *Note 33*, above), no longer working for Wirt, Ueland still occasionally promoted his cause. In May 1917 she narrated a film on Gary schools, shown at the William Penn High School in Philadelphia (*Civic Club Bulletin*, 1917).

65. Eleanor Johnson still chaired a Gary School League committee in 1917. Among other officers, Public Education Association director Nudd was on the Finance Committee, and Secretary of the Women's Municipal League Agnes de Lima chaired the News and Literature Committee. Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Alice Dewey no longer chaired a sub-committee in 1917. Also in 1917, with 200 members and affiliated with the Public Education Association, the League paid salaries to at least two women to propagandize the Gary plan at street corners and at mothers' clubs meetings (*Daily Standard Union*, 1917a-b).

66. See *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1917a-b. At the same time, the *New York Times* and *The Sun* had illustrated articles praising Wirt's plan. The *Evening World* had an analysis of the city's overcrowding of schools. Angelo Patri of Bronx School No. 45 defended the Gary Plan (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1917c), while the President of the Interborough Women Teachers' Association opposed the "Garyizing" of the city's schools (Marshall, 1917).

67. In September 1917, John Dewey co-founded the pro-Gary Committee on Public Education. This action came too late to be of any importance regarding the Gary School War.

68. Through the 1910s, schools in other parts of the country began experimenting with the plan too. Bourne (1916b) mentioned schools in Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. By 1920, more than thirty cities had implemented Wirt's system in almost 120 schools; by 1929 more than two hundred cities had "Garyized" more than 1,000 schools. During the 1920s, Barrows Fernandez (Barrows again after her divorce), who in 1918 began work for the United States Bureau of Education in Washington, D.C., organized conferences where she spoke of Wirt's plan (e.g., Barrows, 1922). As of 1925, she edited *The Platoon School*, a quarterly propagating the "Garyizing" of schools (Cohen, 1990). All this hard work, however, failed to lead to a national movement for progressive education reform of classroom teaching.

69. The book was Alexander's (1918a) *Man's Supreme Inheritance*. Randolph Bourne (1918a) and Carl Zigrosser's (1918) reviews of *Man's Supreme Inheritance* show strong similarities. Both reviewers knew each other since they, Columbia University students in 1911-1912, served the board of *Columbia Monthly*. Later they shared rooms for a while at East 31<sup>st</sup> Street, Manhattan (Avrich, 1980). Most probably they analyzed the book together.

70. RBML: Randolph Bourne Papers, Box 9; draft of a letter to John Dewey, 28 May 1918. The existence of Bourne's final letter to Dewey in the Columbia University Butler Library remained unknown until the end of last millennium (see Staring, 1994, pp. 29-33).

71. Bourne "was convinced that government officials had been hanging around the *New Republic* asking about his loyalty — on a tip from John Dewey, [Bourne's friend] Dorothy Teall remembers him saying" (Clayton, 1984, p. 256). Moreau (1966) cited Bourne telling a friend, "You don't know Dewey...He is terribly vain. He was offended by my article and would do anything to injure me" (p. 193).

72. Bourne died in the arms of Agnes de Lima (not his fiancé), at the time director of the Public Education Association (Moreau, 1966).

73. The five co-founders were Anne George, Marietta Johnson, Otis Caldwell, Stanwood Cobb and Eugene Smith.

74. The seven PEA principles read: Freedom to develop naturally; Interest, the motive of all work; The teacher a guide, not a taskmaster; Scientific study of pupil development; Greater attention to all that affects the child's physical development; Co-operation between school and home to meet the needs of child life; The progressive school, a leader in educational movements.

75. 'Progressive education' was meant to express the *esprit de corps*: "The word "Progressive" is now recognized as implying specific ideals in education. This fact is significant, for not until the term "Progressive Education" comes to have a specific meaning, the specific meaning assigned by our founders, will the Association exert its greatest influence. A further advantage lies in the sense of unity which this name, thus understood, brings to people all over the country who have been carrying out or advocating some of the ideals upheld by our Association" (Cobb, 1921b, p. 1).

76. The PEA constitution (1920) declared that the Association aims "1. To act as an exchange bureau. 2. To council and to cooperate with parents in solving their educational problems. 3. To encourage the training of teachers in the principles and methods of progressive education. 4. To give field aid to those who are organizing or developing progressive schools. 5. To influence public education toward progressivism by educating the public to demand it. 6. To further propagate the principles of progressive education by means of: (a) Lectures. (b) Newspaper and magazine articles. (c) A periodical publication to serve as the official organ of the Association, issued free to all members" (pp. 44-45). Only the second paragraph specifically refers to counselling and cooperating with parents.

77. Gertrude Stevens Ayres edited the PEA bulletins. Ayres directed a school in Washington, D.C., modelled on Marietta Johnson's School of Organic Education (*Washington Times*, 1920).

78. The April-May-June 1926 *Progressive Education* number, titled "Creative Expression Through Art," for instance, was first reprinted in book format in 1926 (see Hartman (Ed.), 1926).

An extended edition edited for the PEA was issued in the 1930s (see Hartman & Shumaker (Eds.), 1931, 1939).

79. It is true, for instance, that parents of children attending progressive schools who were PEA members would articulate better “their troubles as problems for professional treatment and seek corresponding professional service for the problems so defined” (De Swaan, 1988, p. 245).

80. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (1921b) declared that after the Gary system “had been overwhelmingly rejected by popular vote,” New York City would certainly not “experiment with small primary classes which would double the demand for new schoolhouses and teachers.”

81. John Dewey (1933) listed four conditions to be fulfilled by projects. The first condition, interest, was usually met. Further conditions are: project activities must be worthwhile intrinsically; projects ought to “present problems that awaken new curiosity and create demand for information” (p. 218). And lastly, projects should involve considerable time spans for their “adequate execution” (p. 219). Only in case the four conditions are fulfilled, projects or “constructive occupations...may be truly educative” (p. 217).

82. The phrase was broadly applied before in manual training and vocational training education, for example by Calvin Milton Woodward (1887) who brought in the concept of learning by projects in a book describing his own vocational education school and its methods. In 1879, Woodward had founded the Manual Training School — a public high school at St. Louis, Missouri. The President of Harvard University suggested the name Manual Training School to Woodward — after having rejected several other promising names like Hand-and-Head-Work School, Technical School, Industrial Trade School and Skilled Labor School. The school had carpentry and machine shops and a smithy and introduced a manual skills education which Woodward dubbed *shop-work*. Students were supposed to learn the basic tools of a diversity of jobs. Once students had learned these basic manual training skills through graded shop exercises, they were given the opportunity of undertaking projects marking the end of their vocational education, applying and showing their technical skills. “When these exercises are finished, a variety of combination pieces may be executed by the members of a class jointly or separately. These projects should be carefully matured” (p. 159).

According to Knoll (1988, 1995, 1997), Woodward’s learning by projects approach had a long history in Academies of Art and Architecture in Rome (Italy) and Paris (France) and in European and American technical universities in Paris (France), Karlsruhe (Germany), Zürich (Switzerland) and Boston (USA). Kliebard (1995) refers to Rufus Stimson and his Home Project Plan as Kilpatrick’s precursor. Stimson (1912) reported a successful introduction of learning by projects in agricultural education in 1908. Stimson (1919) elucidated his *Project Study* suitable for vocational agricultural education. His writings strongly influenced David Snedden’s writings on vocational education, advocating learning by projects.

83. Educational methods come and go. Although first results of an early study of the project method were optimistic (Collings, 1923), it soon came under harsh criticism (see *Note 83*, below). Kilpatrick (1923) applauded Collings’ study. However recently, Knoll (1996) has shown that Collings (1923) manipulated his data. Another evaluation of teaching by projects courses shows that students conceded the following advantages of learning by projects: self-reliance; general orderliness; good fellowship, aroused and increased interest. On the other hand, they conceded the following disadvantages: loss of time due to parliamentary and needless discussions, required subject matter slighted, and non-participation on part of some students. The findings strongly suggest that a critical fraction of the students was idling, misusing the freedom given to them (Hatch, 1921). It is likely that such conduct led to problems of discipline (*The Sun*, 1924).

84. Soon after schools began teaching by projects, charges were made against the reform. The phrase “project method” caused endless trouble because it had become associated...with a type of undirected and more or less chaotic school organization” (Rugg, 1926, pp. 4-5). And, “unbridled freedom was responsible for unruly, unmannerly behavior of children” (Tenenbaum, 1951, p. 232). Did this originate from a wide-ranging fear for the unknown? Unrelenting charges of unguided freedom made against schools where students learned by projects, indicate that it most probably was not (Harris, 1928). Instead, one defence of project method is that inexperienced teachers were to blame when problems did exist. John Dewey (1930) held, “To fail to assure [students] guidance and direction is not merely to permit them to operate in a blind and



spasmodic fashion, but it promotes the formation of habits of immature, undeveloped and egoistic activity” (p. 205). Dewey (1902) feared that there is always a possibility that exceptionally progressive teaching approaches will toss students back onto themselves: “The child is expected to ‘develop’ this or that fact or truth out of his own mind. He is told to think things out, or work things out for himself, without being supplied any of the enviroing conditions which are requisite to start and guide thought” (p. 24).

85. Gertrude Hartman (1876-1955) attended the Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Girls’ High School. Between 1901 and 1903, she was Holder of the New Century Club Scholarship, and attended the Philadelphia Normal School for Girls. Hartman graduated B.A. at Bryn Mawr College in 1905. Between 1905 and 1915, she taught English in the Baldwin School for Girls, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania; was assistant director of the Winsor School, Fenway Station, Boston, Massachusetts, and head of the English department at the Veltin School in New York City (*Evening Public Ledger*, 1915). In 1908, she co-authored *Exercises for Parsing and Analysis* (Choate & Hartman, 1912). In 1915, Hartman became principal of a newly established *open-air* school, the Merion Country Day School, Merion Station, Pennsylvania (Kingsley & Dresslar, 1917). Pratt listed the school among experimental schools (Pratt & Deming, 1917). Hartman began work as special field worker with the Bureau of Educational Experiments in New York City in October 1917.

86. Hartman’s initial duty concerned the preparation of a publication on sex education. Later, before writing her *The Child and His School*, she made a study of children’s drawings.

87. Vandewalker (1923) referenced Pratt’s City and Country School (formerly the Play School) in her article “Suggestions Concerning the Application of the *Project Method* to Kindergarten Education” (emphasis added). See also Collings, 1924.

88. Ravitch (2001) observes, “The curriculum revision movement paved the way for the activity movement in elementary schools” (p. 242). Note that *learning by activities* in Pratt’s experimental school (founded in 1913) was reviewed in *Twenty-Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* (Bonser, 1926, p. 355). A section of the yearbook was devoted to curriculum design in private laboratory schools. Eleven associated contributors to the yearbook introduced the curriculum of their own school (see, for instance, M. L. Johnson, 1926a; Pratt, 1926). Note further that Marietta Johnson (1915b) stated in 1915: “[We] must obey the law of growth and provide occupations and *activities* which will satisfy the needs of the growing body, the inquiring mind, and the delight of the spirit” (emphasis added). Johnson, however, did not deliver a theory of learning by occupations and activities (consult also Herring, 1910; M. L. Johnson, 1910, p. 568).

89. Calkins (1921b) claimed that Pratt’s school offered “an elaboration of the project method, clear through the several years. It is the seductive inductive method. Question gives rise to answer, and answer to question. The children determine the next step. Arithmetic, if allowed to do so, gives birth to marketing, and marketing to arithmetic. The practical and the theoretical are so cleverly intertwined as to be inseparably attractive” (p. 698).

90. Courtis (1926) agreed with Pratt; he thought that a curriculum of a truly progressive school would be best written “in terms of activities and opportunities and not in terms of content at all” (p. 96). In 1928, Pratt stated, “We are not willing to be dominated or have the children dominated by subject matter... We wish them to form strong habits of first-hand research and to use what they find” (in M. J. Taylor, 1928). Pratt explained in 1927: “We are pretty sure that if children are sent to us early enough, we can establish the habit of being motivated from within... This principle of motivation is, to me, what the new education stands or falls by” (p. 108).

## CHAPTER 2

91. Marietta’s twin sister Harriet became a nurse (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1895b; *Saint Paul Globe*, 1899b). Florence became a teacher and was active in the Minnesota Christian Missionary Society (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1895a). Clifford became a teacher too (*Saint Paul Globe*, 1898). Lowell became the owner of the local City Milk Company (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1893). And

Ernest became a registrar at the University of Minnesota (Marquis (Ed.), 1907). In 1890, Florence, Harriet, Everett, and Clifford starred in two plays (*Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1890).

92. See *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, 1884; *Saint Paul Globe*, 1896a.

93. See State of Minnesota, 1887, 1895; Superintendent, 1885.

94. See Galbreath, 1896; Kirkpatrick, Rowe, Lawrence, Rankin, & Blaisdell, 1897; Parr & Koehler, 1896.

95. See *Saint Paul Globe*, 1896b; 1897, 1899c.

96. See M. L. Johnson, 1898; Koehler, Cox, Robbins, Darling, Earhart, & Johnson, 1898.

97. Newman (1999; 2002), following Gaston (1984), dates Johnson's conversion experience as having occurred in 1901, instead of during 1898-1899. The origin of this discrepancy is a 1913 *New York Times* interview, when Johnson told of receiving Oppenheim's book from the superintendent of the St. Paul Teachers' Training School (Edwards, 1913). However, in a 1928 interview in the *Evening Post* she remembered that she worked as "head of the primary department of the State Normal College" in Minnesota when she was given Oppenheim's book (McCarroll, 1928); this is when she was principal of the Primary Practice School at the Mankato State Normal School, 1896-1900.

98. See, for instance, Bennett, 1912; Edwards, 1913; M. L. Johnson, 1913a, 1923a; McCarroll, 1928; *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 1929.

99. Fairhope housed the first utopian single tax colony, officially the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation, established by George devotees in the U.S.A. The corporation owned the land, which it rented out. The rental payment of home, farm, and business owners was used to pay, among other taxes, the taxes on the land. In 1900, another Georgist single tax community was founded in Arden, Delaware (see Edwards, 1993; *Municipal Record*, 1921; Robinson, 1914; Sreenivasan, 2008).

100. Comings (1904) opposed memorizing of what he called the "dry facts and abstract statements of principles" (p. 31), injuring the character and moral development of students and deadening the "joy of learning" (*ibid.*). He argued that Froebel's insight to train "hands, head and heart at the same time" (p. 17) should be put to practice in industrial training, using handicraft training; cabinet work; gardening and horticulture; and practical studies in biology as "formative influences" (p. 69) to develop "creative power of hand and head" (p. 17); "moral and spiritual uplift" (p. 34); self-government (p. 40); and "habits of care, nicety and thoroughness of detail" (p. 67). Note that, in speaking of "race elevation" Comings' racist ideas were unmistakably identified by W. E. B. Du Bois in a 1904 letter to Comings (in H. Aptheker (Ed.), 1973, pp. 80-81).

101. Henderson (1902) also used the phrase *organic training*.

102. In 1908 the school was named Comings Memorial College of Organic Education, renamed School for Organic Training in 1909, renamed Comings Memorial School of Organic Education in 1910, and later renamed School of Organic Education.

103. In this light it is interesting to note that Hermann Kutter's (1908) *They Must*, a treatise about Christian Social Democracy by the Zürich, Switzerland, based Minister, references George's 1883 book *Social Problems* (pp. 181, 186) and specifies that "Mrs. Mariette [*sic*] L. Johnson, Fairhope, Ala.," purchased three copies (p. 221).

104. Henderson (1902) propagated a similar class organization in *Education and the Larger Life*: "The work itself is so largely individual that a single group may properly include children of quite unlike ages" (p. 190).

105. At the time the school did not advertise widely. It also advertised in the 22 September, and the 6, 13 and 20 October 1911 issues of *The Public*: "School of Organic Education, at Fairhope, Ala. A Boarding School where Boys and Girls Develop Naturally and Really Live. Mariette [*sic*] L. Johnson, Principal."

106. The often-cited line by Henderson (1902) reads, "The social purpose is a humanized world, composed of men and women and children, sound and accomplished and beautiful in body; intelligent and sympathetic in mind; reverent in spirit" (p. 48). Note that even though Dewey and Henderson never credited Herbert Spencer, they were influenced by his 1866 *Education: Intellectual, Moral and Physical* (Cremin, 1961; Kieran, 2002).

107. It concerns the text of a paper presented at the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the Maine Federation, held in Portland, October 20-22, 1908. According to the *Pensacola Journal* (1908a-b), Comings presented a paper titled “Organic Training” at the First Methodist Church on November 27, 1908, Pensacola, Florida. The text of this paper is missing.

108. Possibly the article constitutes the text of a paper titled “Organic Education” which Comings — according to the *Utica Daily Express* (1909) — presented at the Utica, New York, New Century Club on January 7, 1909.

109. Like Pratt (1902b) had done prior to 1909, Johnson evidently referenced John Dewey’s (1897) *My Pedagogic Creed*, stressing that education is “a process of living and not a preparation for future living” (p. 7).

110. Marietta Johnson dubbed the field trips “field geography and nature study in the form of walks” (in *Ogden Standard*, 1913).

111. A second 1910 article in the *Boston Daily Globe* by Herring (married in the meantime) references Johnson’s Comings Memorial College of Organic Education as well (Christopher, 1910). See also *Boston Evening Transcript* (1912).

112. The official transcript of Johnson’s address (1910b) in the Minnesota *Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* does not speak of Fairhope, though, or of single tax plans.

113. The *Arizona Republican* (1910), the *Christian Science Monitor* (1910b), the *Commoner* (1910), the *Daily Star* (1910) and the *Labor Digest* (1910) reprinted the article.

114. The 10 December 1911 *San Francisco Chronicle* also printed Potter’s article. In 1920, Potter became the first director of the Fairhope Educational Foundation (Huntington, 1921).

115. See *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, 1911; *Washington Herald*, 1911a; *Washington Times*, 1911a-b.

116. No wonder that Foster (1924) stated that Johnson was purely concerned with health problems; that her views were “health education theories,” and that work in her school was planned “to meet health needs” (p. 153).

117. See also Marietta Johnson’s contribution in Sidis, Baker, Johnson, & Maxwell, 1911.

118. Johnson travelled first to Washington, D.C. to attend the Eleventh Annual Convention of the Women’s National Single Tax League where on May 28 she gave a talk on “Education and Economics” (Luther, 1912; *Single Tax Review*, 1912) and where she lectured at the Sherwood Presbyterian Church on June 17 (*Washington Herald*, 1912b-c; *Washington Times*, 1912a-b).

119. The *Boston Daily Globe* (1912), the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (1912), the *Illustrated Buffalo Express* (1912) and the *Washington Herald* (1912a) reprinted the article. Chesman (1912) is the source of circulation numbers.

120. See also *American Educational Review*, 1912a-b.

121. Other, less significant, 1912 articles highlighting the school are not reviewed here. See, for instance, *The Sun*, 1912b; *Trenton Evening Times*, 1912; *Trenton Evening True American*, 1912a-b.

122. Edwards’ (1913) *New York Times* article was published on March 16, 1913. The same day Johnson lectured about “The Value of Organic Education as Opposed to Public School Methods” at a meeting of the Brooklyn Philosophical Association (*Daily Standard Union*, 1913).

123. See *Syracuse Journal*, 1913; *Washington Herald*, 1913a-b; *Washington Times*, 1913a-b.

124. See *Arizona Republican*, 1913; *Baltimore Sun*, 1913; Bennett, 1913a-c; *Case and Comment*, 1913; *Clinch Valley News*, 1913; *Fourth Church*, 1913; *Hearst’s Magazine*, 1913; *Hopkinsville Kentuckian*, 1913a-b; *Mt. Sterling Advocate*, 1913; *New Smyrna News*, 1913; *New York Times*, 1913e; *Pittsburgh Press*, 1913; *Primary Education*, 1913; *Trenton Evening True American*, 1913; *Stanhope Journal*, 1913; Wilcox, 1913a-d.

125. Jean Lee Hunt was the former Assistant Mistress of the New Milford, Connecticut, Ingleside School. In 1915, she began writing book reviews (see, for instance, Hunt, 1915, 1918a, 1921, 1925). She also translated a book (Hamaïde, 1924) and co-authored a book on creative activity (Hunt, Todd, & Winship, 1926). In 1916, she became charter member of the Bureau of Educational Experiments (see Chapter 4).

126. See *American Educational Review*, 1913; *Boston Daily Globe*, 1913.

127. These reports, however, did not differ much in content from 1913 newspaper stories. See, for instance, *American Educational Review*, 1914; Hamilton, 1914; *Washington Times*, 1914; Watson, 1914.

128. See, for instance, *Boston Daily Globe*, 1915; Case, 1914; *Current Opinion*, 1914; Gruenberg, 1914; Hildebrand, 1914; M. M. Marshall, 1914a-b; *New York Tribune*, 1914a; *Youngstown Daily Vindicator*, 1914.

129. See *New York Times*, 1913b-d; Naumburg, 1913.

130. See, for instance, Adams, 1914; Brooks, 1914; F. S. Marshall, 1914a-b.

131. See, for instance, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1915; Dille, 1915a-b; *Evening Post*, 1915a, 1915c; *New Rochelle Pioneer*, 1915; MacKenzie, 1915; Merrill, 1915; *Popular Educator*, 1915; Rodman, 1915c; *Semi-Weekly Times*, 1915; *Troy Times*, 1915; *Warsaw Daily Union*, 1915.

132. Johnson (1929) later stated, "The child is not a little adult" (p. 20). In this sense she agreed with Rousseau. However, she did not share a Rousseauian view that children should be "allowed to grow without any adult restraint" (Meyer, 1945, p. 2). Even though the *Buffalo Morning Express* (1912), the *Evening Post* (1913b), and Young (1914) called Johnson's school a do-as-you-please school, and even Marietta Johnson did too (in *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1912b; Todd, 1913), she (M. L. Johnson, 1926b) explained that her approach to education "does not mean a 'do as you please program.' The child is too ignorant to know what is best for him...It means that he must be guided and controlled but this guidance and control must be determined by his nature and need rather than by any external standard or pre-conceived notion of the adult" (p. 338). (Consult also *New York Times*, 1923). Sinclair (1920) wrote, "Mrs. Johnson is frequently asked about discipline. She would develop discipline in the child through giving him the opportunity to persist and struggle for an end which to him was of supreme importance, for she says that all work under impulsion, or direction, without freedom of choice, tends to weaken the will and make him dependent on external decisions." Note, on the other hand, that Johnson told a *Baltimore Sun* reporter that there were "penalties for misconduct" in her school and that she had "even gone so far as to spank" (Hamilton, 1914). And in 1921, Johnson stated, "We must insist upon obedience, even using physical force, if necessary" (*Educator-Journal*, 1921).

133. See, for instance, Comings, 1915; Davis & Kroll, 1915; Scott, 1915; Writer, 1915.

134. Note that when *The Survey* published a letter to the editor by Johnson's pen in the 25 December 1915 issue, the editor felt he should remind readers that the letter would be of more interest if they knew that Johnson's school had received Dewey's praise, and that *The Survey* had earlier run an article on her methods and philosophy. "Health of School Children," Johnson's (1915a) letter to the editor, does not contain new views, though. She attacked the early learning to read, the sitting behind a desk by little children, the prevailing egotism, nationalism, self-deception and insincerity undermining "character as well as health."

135. See, for instance, Colby, Churchill, & Krans (Eds.), 1916; Graves, 1916; Hall, 1916; *Oswego Daily Palladium*, 1916; Sargent, 1916.

136. See, for instance, *Single Tax Review*, 1915, 1918.

137. See, for instance, Beery, 1917; Bourne, 1917a; Crane, 1917; Grupe, 1917; Miller (Ed.), 1917; Sargent, 1917.

138. C&C: Copy letter by Marietta L. Johnson, March 24, 1917.

139. BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, March 5, 1917. Sprague Mitchell added, "Miss [Elisabeth] Irwin would like the approval of the Executive Committee to her plan to have Mrs. Johnson devote some of her time to Miss Irwin's class of precocious children in P.S. 64" (*ibid.*).

140. C&C: Minutes Working Council, March 12, 1917. Johnson would also supervise the teaching of a class at Public School 64; see Irwin & Marks, 1926, pp. vii-viii + 115-117.

141. BSC: Budget recommended, June 1917. Around October 1917, the definitive 1917-1918 budget plans show that Johnson received \$2,500 salary, and another \$300 expenses (see BSC: Budget - 1917-18).

### CHAPTER 3

142. Pratt (1948) wrote in her autobiography, "I read Shakespeare and the English novelists before I was fifteen" (p. 85).

143. Note in this light that the abolitionist Matilda Joslyn Gage (1826-1898) had resided in Fayetteville since 1854. Her father helped escaped slaves during their *Underground Railroad* journey north. Since the early 1850s Gage was a nationwide campaigner for women's suffrage. She was President of the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1875 and 1876. In 1880, in Fayetteville, women who were property owners won voting privileges for the first time — in school board elections (school suffrage) (Carlton, 1986).

144. The May 24, 1892, letter of recommendation by neighbour Mrs. A. L. Seward to addressee Walter L. Hervey, Dean and Acting President of the College for the Training of Teachers, is reprinted in Carlton, 1986, p. 129. Carlton notes, "Hervey immediately sent off a letter with the offer of a scholarship" (*ibid.*).

145. The College had already affiliated with Columbia University but was still situated at 9 University Place near Washington Square, Greenwich Village.

146. See Board of Public Education, 1896, 1897, 1898; *Fayetteville Recorder*, 1895; Howe Company, 1897.

147. See Woodward, 1887, 1889, 1890.

148. The *Journal of Education* (1896) reported that George H. Cliff, principal of the Normal School for Girls, had placed Pratt in special charge of the "study of carpentry, or the training in sloyd...a revelation of the city of Brotherly Love." The journal further indicated, "The equipment is complete, the training skilful, the effect upon the girls' physical, intellectual, and professional life noticeable."

149. The *Kindergarten Magazine* (1901) states, "What a charming place and life must be that of the students who summer at Nääs, Sweden — the now famous sloyd center. Miss Caroline Pratt, of Philadelphia, describes it in Education" (pp. 445-446).

150. See also Craig, 1901; A. Johnson, 1921; Thorbjörnsson, 2006.

151. Pratt (1948) found that Marietta Johnson was "a disciple of Henderson," behaving like a preacher. But then again, at one fell swoop she confessed that Henderson "had stirred up [her] own thinking years before" (p. 57).

152. See *City and State*, 1898; *Library Journal*, 1897, 1900; Mrs. Logan, 1912; H. Marot, 1902.

153. See also, for instance, Marot's (1909) letter to the editor of the *New York Call*.

154. The 1900 United States Federal Census reveals that Caroline Pratt (as boarder) and Helen Marot lived under one roof together with Helen's (widowed) mother and Helen's sister Elizabeth.

155. Neither the 1901 report, nor the 1903 booklet, have been often referenced (see, for instance, Blodgett, 1966; Gaudioso, 1992; Mrs. Logan, 1912; Polansky, 1987). Bernheimer (1905) prominently acknowledged, "The writer is indebted to Miss Helen Marot and Miss Caroline L. Pratt for some of the data furnished in reference to the clothing trade" (p. 122). The executive committee of the 1906 Industrial Exhibit, held in Philadelphia, acknowledged, "The schedules of [a number of] Booths...were taken very largely from the reports of an investigation published in 1903 by Miss Helen Marot and Miss C. L. Pratt" (Industrial Exhibit, 1906, p. 18).

156. The outspoken manner in which Marot and Pratt presented the results of their investigation apparently provoked the College Settlement of Philadelphia, Pratt's new employer, to respond. They issued a circular, denying, on the one hand, the impression that ready-made clothing always "bears the stigma of the sweat-shop, and that sweat-shops are places to be shunned by all who care to have their clothing made in sanitary workrooms." On the other hand, they offered suggestions to enable customers to identify first-class tailors who make clothes "on the premises or in sanitary workrooms suitable for the purpose" (*City and State*, 1901, p. 231).

157. Marot closed the Philadelphia Free Library of Economics and Political Science, transferring it to the care of the Philadelphia Allied Building Trades Council at 315 Odd Fellows' Temple (*Church Standard*, 1901a) and the American Academy of Political and Social Science (H. Marot, 1902).

158. See Davis, 1967; Felt, 1965; *The Churchman*, 1903. The Child Labor Committee included, among others, Lillian Wald (head worker Henry Street Settlement), Florence Kelley (Secretary of the National Consumers League) and Mary Simkhovitch (head worker Greenwich House settlement).

159. Marot's work resulted in the enactment of New York City's Compulsory Education Act (Antler, 1987). See *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1903b; *Charities*, 1903; *Evening Post*, 1903; *New York Times*, 1903; *New York Tribune*, 1903; *The Public*, 1904; *The Sun*, 1903. Marot also wrote book reviews for the 1904 *A.L.A. Catalog* (M. Dewey (Ed.), 1904).

160. See *Charities*, 1902; Durland, 1905; H. Marot, 1904. Helen Marot (1905) issued "Progress in Pennsylvania," a report of her work. See also *Daily Star*, 1904; *Philadelphia Record*, 1905a-b; *Pittsburgh Press*, 1904.

161. It is interesting to note that Florence Kelley, Helen Marot and Lillian Wald were among the signers of the 12 February 1909 call to form the National Association of the Advancement of the Colored People (Current, 1959; Ovington, 1914). They remained active supporters of the NAACP (Daniels, 1989; McDaniel & Juley, 2009).

162. See Barnum, 1908; Basch, 1990; H. Marot, 1911a-b, 1912a-b; *New York Times*, 1907b. The affluent sisters Alice Lewisohn and Irene Lewisohn paid Marot's salary (Dye, 1980).

163. See, for instance, *Charities*, 1903b; *Hartley House News*, 1903, 1908c.

164. Settlement worker, municipal reformer, political activist, millionaire and philanthropist James Graham Phelps Stokes — "the moving spirit of Hartley House," according to Elton (1903) — introduced Pratt's letter to the editor (Phelps Stokes, 1905), giving high praise for Pratt's work as an instructor of manual training.

165. Pratt referred to William Henry Maxwell (1852-1920), New York City Superintendent of Schools. In 1905, Maxwell defended his policy against accusations of stimulating 'fads and frills,' see *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1908c-d; Cuban, 1984; *New York Times*, 1908; *The Sun*, 1906, 1908.

166. In "A Socialist Education," a draft of an unpublished article, Pratt asserts that "our schools will remain what they are — direct feeders to the factory system" (in Antler, 1987, p. 242).

167. Other names in Dilling's *Red Network* include Albert Einstein, John Dewey, Florence Kelley, Wesley Mitchell, and Jane Addams.

168. According to *Hampton's Magazine* (1910), WTUL allies were "college girls, students of social questions and others...sympathetic with the cause of organized labor" (p. 423).

169. The shirtwaist makers' strike was also known as waistmakers' revolt and as the Uprising of the 20,000.

170. Earlier, on September 10, 1909, during a strike against her former employer's sweatshop, the shop's hirelings had assaulted Lemlich and beaten her unconscious (*New York Call*, 1909b; *New York Herald*, 1909).

171. See *Hampton's Magazine*, 1910. Lemlich joined the WTUL during the strike and became a member of its Executive Board (Foner, 1979). In 1912, *The Sun* (1912a) listed her, Helen Marot and Caroline Pratt as "women prominent in its organization work."

172. For a contemporaneous account of the WTUL role in the Uprising of the 20,000, see Clark & Wyatt, 1911. For a brief history of the role of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and the militancy of newly immigrated Jewish workers from Russian and Poland, see Sachar, 1992.

173. The *New York Times* (1910b) dubbed Marot "the league's strike-leading secretary," while *Collier's* (1910) found that the "personality of Helen Marot" had been a "powerful factor in the shirt-waist strike" (p. 10).

174. Marot and her life-partner Caroline Pratt shared living quarters but did not openly declare sexual preference.

175. Did members of the Socialist Party meet at the rooms of Pratt and Marot before going to the 22 November ILGWU meeting at Cooper Union? Basch (1990) mentions, "union officials, socialist lawyers, and members of the WTUL sat on the platform" (p. 30).

176. E.g., Hofstadter, 1955; see also Casper, Cuffaro, Schultz, Silin, & Wickens, 1996; Dye, 1986.

177. Edna Smith would finance Pratt's Play School in 1913.

178. During 1910, Mary Marot and Harriet Johnson also organized evening English classes for foreign-speaking girls at the WTUL headquarters (*New York Call*, 1910a).

179. See also *New York Call*, 1909a. *Hampton's Magazine* (1910) explains that the phrase 'uptown scum' originated as a sobriquet for WTUL allies, Colony Club members, as well as suffragists. See also Dorr, 1910.

180. Rose Pastor Stokes' millionaire husband James Graham Phelps Stokes, founder of Hartley House (Felt, 1965), had introduced Pratt's letter to the editor in the *Evening Post* (see *Note 163*, above). Helen Marot and Phelps Stokes knew each other since 1903 when they both were on the subcommittee on legislation of the Association of Neighborhood Workers' Committee on Child Labor (Davis, 1967).

181. While working at Hartley House in 1906, Forbes, Johnson, and Mary Marot had initiated the flourishing Visiting Teacher program (see *Chapter 1*) — inspired by the Visiting Nurse Service program initiated by Lillian Wald at Henry Street Settlement house (see Beard, 1915; Daniels, 1989; Lagemann, 1979; Wald, 1915).

182. Marot remained busy as ever; see, for instance, Bruere, Poole, Marot, Fraiser, & Maily, 1910; H. Marot, 1911a, 1912a. Carlton (1986) states that Marot went to Europe, that is, France and Italy, for six months in 1911. Between May and July 1912, she toured the United States, visiting Kansas City, St. Louis, Denver, Scranton and other places as a special WTUL National Organizer (*Evening Post*, 1912; S. M. Franklin, 1913; H. Marot, 1912b).

183. It is very likely that Marot and Pratt were actively involved in the 1913 Paterson Silk Strike. There are however no confirming data. Pratt was involved in the 1912 Lawrence Strike (Dye, 1980).

184. Marot's second book (1914a) became available in 1914. In the autumn of the same year, Marot again found salaried employment as a contributing editor of *New Review*. Her first article featured in the December 1914 issue (H. Marot, 1914b). On 9 January 1915, she testified before the New York State commission investigating minimum wage legislation (Factory Investigating Commission, 1915, pp. 2823-2833; *New York Times*, 1915c). Between 1914 and 1916 she serviced on the U.S. Industrial Relations Commission (Colby, Churchill, & Krans (Eds.), 1916; Leja, 1993; H. Marot, 1915c). While on the Commission, Marot also spoke at meetings of strikers (*New York Call*, 1916a). In 1915, she began writing for *The Masses*, another Socialist politics monthly magazine (Gaudioso, 1992). Articles by Marot's pen initialled "H.M." appeared regularly in *The Masses* in 1916 and 1917.

After *The Masses* had merged with *New Review*, Marot served the editorial board of *The Masses* until December 1917 — when the government for its believed antiwar policy repressed the publication of the magazine. She continued to be a fierce advocate for labour and peace causes. Marot's (1917b) review of Thorstein Veblen's *The Nature of Peace and the Terms of its Perpetuation* in *Political Science Quarterly*, for instance, shows her strong commitment to peace efforts. In November 1919, she joined the Executive Committee of the League of Oppressed Peoples, which soon disbanded.

185. See Spargo (Ed.), 1912. Helen Marot was a member of the Socialist Party too (*International Socialist Review*, 1913; Walsh, Marot, & Harvey, 1917a-b).

186. Recall that the *School Journal* (1895) already pointed out that Pratt's 1894-1901 teaching goals in the Philadelphia Normal School for Girls included facilitating prospecting teachers to become educators "able to correlate and co-ordinate the woodworking with the language, arithmetic, and other work of the school" (p. 475).

187. Since the editor of *The Coming Nation* (Simons, 1913) announced in their 24 May 1913 issue that Pratt would report on shop work in public schools, it is very likely that "Tools vs. Rules" (Pratt, 1913) reviewed in this section is the report on shop work announced in *The Coming Nation*.

188. See *Kindergarten Review*, 1909; *Kindergarten-Primary Magazine*, 1909.

189. Advertisements in the 19 December 1910 *Evening World* and *Evening Telegram* show that Pratt's Do-With Toys™ were available at Gimbel Brothers, corner Broadway and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York City.

190. The text also appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* (1910a) and in the *Daily Metropolis* (1910). A synopsis of the article appeared in the *Detroit Free Press* (1910).

191. Sections in the *New York Herald* (1910a) article are virtually identical to sections in the *Evening Post* (1909b), the *New York Tribune* (1910a), the *Washington Herald* (1909), and the *San Francisco Call* (1911). Besides, several photographs illustrating the *New York Herald* (1910a) article also appeared in the *San Francisco Call* (1911). Likely journalists made use of a press kit assembled by Pratt.

192. Pratt's *Unit Blocks* — also known as *Caroline Pratt Blocks* (Benedict, 1942) or *Pratt Project Play Blocks* (Franklin & Benedict, 1943) typically measure 5.5" long by 2.75" wide by 1.375" in height. Different blocks range in size from half the unit in length to four times the unit in length (Cuffaro, 1996). See *Christian Science Monitor*, 1910a, 1913, 1914a; *Daily Metropolis*, 1910; *Detroit Free Press*, 1910; *New York Tribune*, 1910a; O'Reilly, 1911; Pratt, 1911c-d, 1914a-b.

193. The *Handbook of the New York Child Welfare Exhibit* explicitly refers to the Do-With dolls and toys as well as to Pratt's activities as an expert demonstrator during the exhibit (New York Child Welfare Committee, 1911). A few months later the handbook of the Chicago Child Welfare Exhibit had the text too (Chicago Child Welfare Exhibit, 1911).

194. See, for instance, *American City*, 1911; *Bisbee Daily Review*, 1911; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1911b; C. S. Brown, 1911; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1911; *Evening Recorder And Daily Democrat*, 1911; Friedman, 1911; *Geneva Daily Times*, 1911; Hyde, 1911; Lunsford, 1911; M. M. Marshall, 1910; *New York Times*, 1911; *New York Tribune*, 1910b; *Picket Line Post*, 1911; Ralph, 1911; Thompson, 1911; *The Spectator*, 1911; *The Survey*, 1911; *Washington Herald*, 1911b; Watson, 1911; *Winona Republican Herald*, 1911.

195. The *Whitesville News* interview was reprinted in the 2 June *Castilian*; the 2 June *Dakota County Herald*; the 3 June *Corbett's Herald*; the 9 June *North Platte Semi-Weekly Tribune*; the 12 June *Sheboygan Daily Press*; the 12 June *Oelwein Daily Register*; the 19 June *Evening Telegram*, and the 10 August *Waukesha Freeman*.

196. The photo also appeared in Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, 1911; Zachert, 1913.

197. The final paragraph on the history of playing in Pratt's (1905a) letter to the editor of the *Evening Post* (the epigraph beginning this chapter) completes theoretical aspects of her *Survey / Reform Advocate* article.

198. The following laudation in *The Mother's Book* shows that Do-With Toys™ were still remembered as late as in 1919: "In the [1911] 'Child Welfare Exhibit,' a great revelation was made...in what they called 'do-with' toys; that is, toys that the child can do something with" (Burrell, Forbush, & Burdick (Eds.), 1919, p. 118).

199. In a *Boston Daily Globe* (1911) article about the Hingham Society of Arts and Crafts, the reporter praises Pratt's toys for empowering children and letting their imagination surface, declaring that she approached her work from the standpoint of artist and teacher. Between 1910 and 1912 Pratt was a Craftsman Member of the Society of Crafts and Arts (Society of Arts and Crafts, 1910, 1911, 1912).

200. In 1910, both Pratt and Hill served on the Sub Committee on Home Life to organize the Child Welfare exhibit of toys and playthings (New York Child Welfare Committee, 1911). At the exhibit's Playshop they demonstrated Pratt's toys, sharing numerous ideas on toys and children's play.

201. Other reports that drew attention to the Do-With Toys™ include: *Evening Post*, 1911a-b; Merrill, 1912; *New York Herald*, 1911a-b; *New York Tribune*, 1911.

202. A few years later, the *Kindergarten Review* (1914) reported a talk delivered by Hill before the New York Public School Kindergarten Association, again referencing Pratt's toys.

203. See, for instance, Burrell, Forbush, & Burdick (Eds.), 1919, p. 118; *Christian Science Monitor*, 1913, 1914a-b, 1915; Johnston, 1918.

204. Perhaps the Do-With Toys™ were too costly (Pratt, 1911c) or too abstract, as suggested (Hirsch, 1978)?

205. Pratt (1911c) argued that toy manufacturing needs to keep pace with changing social conditions. Toys manufactured to her specifications, she asserted, "satisfy the [child's] demands of playability, durability, make-ability, and of artistic merit" (p. 893).

206. The *Christian Science Monitor* (1914a) quoted Pratt's (1914b) article almost in its entirety.



207. Pratt probably read William James' (1899) *Talks to Teachers on Psychology* that articulates a related theory of habit acquisition. For example, Pratt (1905b) wrote that the children's "instinct of ownership" (p. 160) when making an object during her Hartley House manual training class represents a means to get them exercise their will and their intelligence. It was Pratt's view that around the time that children start to want to own things for what these things can bring them in the way of pleasure, shop work will appeal to them — boys and girls alike. The idea is very much in agreement with James (1899) who wrote, "Sloyd successfully avails itself of this instinct in causing the pupil to make a collection of wooden implements fit for his own private use at home" (p. 58).

208. The structure of Pratt's *Educational Foundations* lead article seems to be: (1) aims of an experiment; (2) current unfavourable conditions; (3) ways to reverse these unfavourable conditions; (4) principles of an experiment; (5) financing of the experiment. The first three items are present in the article. The latter two are not.

209. Edna Louise Smith (1885-1922) was born in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. A 1907 Vassar graduate, she studied at the Chicago Art Institute for two years. She was a draughtsman during 1908 and 1909. In 1909 and 1910, she studied at the University of Illinois in Chicago. Her father, the millionaire Captain Charles H. Smith, was President and main stockholder of the Western Wheeled Scraper Company, Aurora, Illinois. Smith's mother was Selma (Teuscher) Smith. In November 1910, Edna Smith succeeded her father on the Board of Directors of the company. At that time, she was the owner of stock in the concern valued at more than \$300,000 (*Syracuse Journal*, 1910).

Smith not only co-founded the Play School. In 1914, she co-founded the Juvenile Protective Association of Aurora. In 1915, she founded the Garden School, Carmel, California. She was the secret matron of musician Henry Cowell (1897-1965). In 1921, Smith and Cowell became engaged (Hicks, 2002). On 15 April 1922, Smith died in a car-crash near Lakewood, New Jersey (*Evening Post*, 1922; *Illustrated Buffalo Express*, 1922; *New York Tribune*, 1922; *New York Times*, 1922a). The *New York Times* (1922b) reported, "[While] on a visit to New York [Edna Smith] established a school in New York for the education of the poor children," referring to the Play School.

210. Carlton (1986) used the phrase *bineted* after Alfred Binet (1857-1911). In 1911, Harriet Johnson attended the Summer School at the Training School for Feeble-Minded Girls and Boys at Vineland, New Jersey, supervised by Henry Goddard (compare also H. M. Johnson & Steinbach, 1911); she was taught how to administer intelligence tests.

211. See the 17 January 1915 *Sun* under the heading "Business Troubles;" the 20 January 1915 *Sun* under the heading "Business Troubles / Receivers Appointed" and the 1 February 1915 *New York Times* under the heading "Trade Sales This Week / Monday."

212. Marten (1917) has a working drawing of "one of the 'Do-With' models manufactured by C. Pratt, 9 Jones Street, New York" (p. 119).

213. It is very likely that Pratt and Rodman knew each other since the 1909-1910 shirtwaist makers' strike, when they were both politically active. Rodman supported the 1913 Patterson Silk Strike (Golin, 1988). Rodman and Pratt certainly knew each other since early 1913 when they both were among the signers of the call for founding the *Teachers' League of New York*.

214. At least three other newspapers issued a short article about Pratt and her teaching methods immediately in succession to Rodman's *New York Tribune* article. The *New York Utica Herald-Dispatch* (1915) printed a photograph, claiming it was a photograph showing Pratt. Since it is virtually identical to a photograph showing Rodman in the 12 November 1914 *New York Tribune*, it is likely that it is *not* Pratt's, but Rodman's. See also *Kingston Daily Freeman*, 1915; *Sunday Independent*, 1915.

215. Carlton (1986) calls these activities "constructive play." See also Reed & Wright, 1932; J. S. Taylor, 1928a-b.

216. Herring (1910) described field trips by Marietta Johnson. Roger de Guimps, a former student of Pestalozzi (1746-1827), spoke of field trips during summertime in a description of Pestalozzi's institute at Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland (in Curtis & Boulton, 1966, p. 336). And Brubacher (1947, p. 206) stated that educator August Hermann Francke (1663-1727) of

Halle, Germany, organized field excursions. Around 1900, Dewey's Chicago Lab School organized exploring field trips (Mayhew & Edwards, 1936), and around 1914, schools in Gary, Indiana, organized field excursions to "dairies, factories, bakeries, food-stores" (Bourne, 1916b, p. 128).

217. See Chesler, 1992; Katz, Hajo, & Engelman (Eds.), 2003. When Sanger was in exile, feminists who knew her from the Heterodoxy Club organized the National Birth Control League (NBCL). Among these women were Helen Marot and Lucy Sprague Mitchell (*The Survey*, 1915b).

218. The Stelton Modern School, Piscataway, New Jersey, first opened its doors on January 1, 1911, then located at St. Mark's Place, New York City. The school was the educational part of the 'Ferrer Center and Modern School.' The Ferrer Center was named after Spanish Francisco Ferrer (1859-1909), who had founded his first 'modern' school, the *Escuela Moderna*, in Barcelona, Spain, in 1901 (Avrich, 1980). One of the school's first eleven students was Sanger's firstborn son Stuart. Later, the school moved to East 12<sup>th</sup> Street, then to East 107<sup>th</sup> Street, and finally, in May 1915, to Stelton, New Jersey. A farmhouse near the school, the so-called Living House, had been converted into the school's boarding house.

219. See *New York Tribune*, 1915a-b; *The Survey*, 1915a-b.

220. Elisabeth Antoinette Irwin (1880-1942) was daughter to cotton exchange merchant William Henry Irwin and Josephine Augusta (*née* Easton) Irwin. She attended Packer Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn, New York City. In 1899 she entered Smith College (Northampton, Massachusetts) where she obtained a B.A. degree in Psychology in 1903 (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1903a). She then studied Philanthropic Work during the sixth summer school session of the NYC School of Philanthropy (*Charities*, 1903b; Charity Organization Society, 1903). From the fall of 1903 and until mid-1904 she was outdoor Play Leader (playground supervisor) at Seward Park, Manhattan (MacDonald & Irwin, 1904; Davis, 1967). In 1905 she was in charge of a model flat in a tenement house. After working a year at the College Settlement, Irwin became free-lance reporter writing for *The American Magazine* (Irwin, 1907a), *The Craftsman* (Irwin, 1907b-c, 1908a) and *Good Housekeeping* (Irwin, 1908b-c). After working at the College Settlement again, during 1909 and 1910, she joined the Public Education Association of the City of New York as fieldworker of the Committee on Hygiene of School Children in 1911 (Beard, 1915; Cenedella, 1996; O'Han, 2009; *The Sun*, 1911a).

Irwin regularly reported on results of psychological testing (Irwin, 1912a-1912f, 1913a-b, 1914, 1915a, 1916). Until 1916, according to Cohen (1964, p. 125), Irwin also worked with the Bureau of Ungraded Classes of the Board of Education. She wrote a report on truancy (Irwin, 1915b). The media regularly reported about her work: Beard, 1915, p. 19; *Buffalo Morning Express*, 1913a; the *Evening Post* (Montlier, 1915); *Hudson Evening Register*, 1917; *Illustrated Buffalo Express*, 1913; *Morning Herald*, 1913; *New York Times*, 1913a, 1915b; the *New York Tribune* (Rodman, 1915d); *The Sun*, 1911, 1915b; *Utica Daily Express*, 1913. From 1916 to 1921 Irwin administered intelligence tests at Public School 64, identifying so-called 'superior children.' Irwin and principal of P.S. 64 Louis Marks and the media reported results of the work (*Evening Post*, 1919, 1920, 1921; Franklin, 1919; Hall, 1920; *Hudson Evening Register*, 1917; Irwin, 1918a, 1919, 1920; Marks, 1921a-c; *New York Tribune*, 1919c, 1920a; *School and Society*, 1919b; Strayer & Evenden, 1922; *Suffolk County News*, 1924; *The Sun*, 1919b). Irwin also explained the curriculum of the newly built Manhattan Trade School for Girls in the *New York Tribune* (Irwin, 1918b).

In 1921, Irwin established and became principal of the elementary education Little Red School House (Bell, 1925; Biber, Murphy, Woodcock, & Black, 1942; Cohen, 1964; De Lima, 1926; 1942; *Evening Post*, 1936; Irwin, 1924a-b; 1928a-b, 1929, 1930; Irwin & Marks, 1924; O'Han, 2009).

221. C&C: "Extract from the original letter of Mrs. Mitchell's to Mrs. Coolidge," dated April 15, 1916.

222. See Deming, 1917; minutes of the 1918-1919 weekly Play School teachers meetings at City and Country School archives; *The City & Country School*, 1919. In 1918, Pratt hired William Zorach (1887-1966) to give art instruction twice a week (Stack Jr., 2004; Zorach, 1967). Other artists who taught at Pratt's school are painters Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975), Charles

Pollock (1902-1988), Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), rhythmic teacher Ruth Doing, and music teacher Margaret Bradford (1893-1974) (Barnard, 1929; Biber, 1972; Doing, 1931a-b). Sprague Mitchell contributed as storyteller, resulting in her (1921a) *Here and Now Story Book* and in her (1921b) "Language Work," a book section.

223. To my knowledge, Pratt's name was only mentioned a few times by the press in 1916 — however, unrelated to her educational views (see *New York Call*, 1916b; *New York Herald*, 1916; *The Sun*, 1916).

#### CHAPTER 4

224. In 1914, Sprague Mitchell worked with Harriet Johnson in Public School 3, and collaborated with Elisabeth Irwin at Public School 15 and Public School 64 (Antler, 1982; Cenedella, 1996). For a brief time in 1914, she also worked at the Department of Mentally Retarded Children of the New York City Board of Education, under Elizabeth Farrell (Davis, 1967).

225. An article by Sprague Mitchell (1914) in *The Survey* likely parallels her 1913 presentation proposing novel means to implement sex education program in elementary schools. Little more than a year later, Sprague Mitchell (1916) reported first results of the proposed instruction, taught by an unnamed special teacher (almost certainly Laura Garrett) in an undisclosed school (most likely Pratt's Play School). Sprague Mitchell was also present at the October 1915 meeting of the Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis, discussing matters of sex education; see Gregory, 1916; Leland, 1915; Wile, 1915.

226. Laura B. Garrett (1872-1953) attended the Friends School of Baltimore, the Drexel Institute in Philadelphia, and graduated in 1901 in Philanthropic Work at the New York City School of Philanthropy. Her thesis was called *A Study Among the Italians in New York City*. In 1904, she published "Notes on Poles in Baltimore" (Garrett, 1904), her first article. In 1909, she began offering courses in sex education in New England secondary schools, colleges, and social settlements (*Baltimore Sun*, 1909a-b; Cabot, 1914; Garrett, 1910a). While working as salaried field Secretary for the Maryland Society of Social Hygiene (Hooker, 1910), and for the American Purity Alliance too, she lectured on sex education at numerous meetings and conferences (*New York Call*, 1914); e.g., in Baltimore (*Evening Post*, 1910; *Washington Times*, 1910); in Boston (*Auburn Semi-Weekly Journal*, 1911; *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1911a, 1911c; *El Paso Herald*, 1911; McCrady, 1913; *The Sun*, 1911b); in Essex County, New Jersey (Pinneo, 1911); in Little Rock, Arkansas (Garrett, 1910b); in Philadelphia (*Evening Telegram*, 1912; Russell, 1912; *Syracuse Journal*, 1912a-b); in Richmond, Virginia (*Children's Charities*, 1911; *Mathews Journal*, 1911; *Missionary Voice*, 1911; *Times Dispatch*, 1911); and in Utica, New York (*Utica Sunday Tribune*, 1913). In 1913 she read a paper at the Fourth International Congress on School Hygiene in Buffalo, New York (*Buffalo Morning Express*, 1913b; Chadwick, 1913; Garrett, 1913a-b). In New York City and in Clinton, New York, she lectured on eugenics and "race progress" (*Clinton Courier*, 1913a-b; *New York Call*, 1913b; WTUL, 1913, p. 19; see also WTUL advertisement in the 16 February 1913 *New York Call*). Garrett — a staunch eugenicist (see her contribution in A. Johnson (Ed.), 1912, p. 283) lectured on birth control as well (e.g., *The Sun*, 1917). She published several letters to the editor (Garrett, 1912, 1914b). In 1914 she delivered a paper on sex education before the Women's Educational and Industrial Union in Rochester, New York (*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 1914). And she published an article about her teaching and a book review in the *New York Call* (Garrett, 1914a, 1914c). In 1915 she lectured on eugenics in Pittsburgh (*Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, 1915) and explained her teaching and lecture arrangements in the *Journal of Social Hygiene* (Garrett, 1915). At the June 1915 convention of the WTUL, Garrett opposed the U.S.A. entrance into the war (*New York Call*, 1915). In 1916 and subsequent years, she lectured at the NYC Socialist Party's Rand School of Social Science. See also M. L. Pratt, 1913. During the 1920s she organized Housatonic Camp, a spring vacation and summer vacation camp in Canaan (Connecticut), at the foothills of the Berkshires (see, for instance, *The Sun*, 1929).

227. Frederick W. Ellis (1857-1949) graduated in 1889 in psychology at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. He became director of the Department of Social Research at the Neurological Institute (Collins, 1912; Elsberg, 1944). Between 1912 and 1917, Ellis wrote the

Neurological Institute's annual reports, including results of mental examinations of children that he conducted (Ellis, 1912, 1913a-b, 1914a-b, 1915b, 1916, 1917; Ellis & Bingham, 1915, 1916). Ellis (1915a) explained interpreting Binet and Simon Age Scale tests in *Ungraded*. Early in 1919, Ellis and Wesley Mitchell were among the co-founders of the New School for Social Research (*New York Tribune*, 1919b). In February 1919, they delivered founding lectures at New School.

228. Then President of the American Psychological Association Robert Yerkes directed administration of the widely discussed U.S. Army Intelligence Tests (Cremin, 1961). As well as Goddard, Yerkes' team at Vineland included Stanford's Lewis H. Terman, Carnegie Foundation's Walter V. Bingham and other leading American psychologists of the era (Du Bois, 1970; Zenderland, 1998). However, the Army tests were administered to groups (1.75 million military recruits). Irwin mainly focused on administering tests to students individually, more along the lines of the original intent of Binet-Simon test protocols (Irwin, 1913a-b).

229. Sprague Mitchell wrote the proposal in consultation with Eleanor Johnson, Harriet Johnson, Elizabeth Farrell, and Lillian Wald (of Henry Street Settlement), and the professional male academics John Dewey and Frederick Ellis.

230. The early BEE comprised twelve active members: nine women and three men. They met in diverse councils, forming various standing and special committees. The female members were Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Evelyn Dewey, Harriet Forbes, Laura Garrett, Jean Lee Hunt, Elisabeth Irwin, Eleanor Johnson, Harriet Johnson, and Caroline Pratt. Together with her husband, Sprague Mitchell also sat on the BEE Board of Trustees. The other two men, Frederick Ellis and Arthur Hulbert (1870-1937), shared committee work with the female members. Hulbert was, and remained director of a high school in Park Ridge, New Jersey; he did not stay long with the BEE. There are few biographical facts available about him. He became director of the Park Ridge School in 1900.

231. C&C: "By-Laws of the Bureau of Educational Experiments." See also Hunt, 1917a; Poffenberger Jr., 1916; Rugg, 1917.

232. Sprague Mitchell, Eleanor Johnson and Alice Dewey probably joined the "Committee of 100 Women" on the Gary School Plan in March 1916. In April, the Committee became the Gary School League (Tanenbaum, 1916d).

233. BSC: "May 24th, 1916." C&C: "Annual Report of the Chairman of the Working Council. Bureau of Educational Experiments 1916-1917."

234. Elsa Ueland, who in 1915 had already published her views regarding the Gary System (Ueland, 1915a-c; see also *Notes* 33, 51, and 64, above), compiled the *Gary Bibliography* (see BSC: "June 26th, 1916"), now missing.

235. C&C: "Annual Report of the Chairman of the Working Council. Bureau of Educational Experiments 1916-1917." Weekly Bulletin, numbers 2-6 and 8.

236. After the Gary School League declared they had no interest in using them, the screens were set up in a Community Center, and later stored. After New York City Mayor Mitchel failed to win reelection in November 1917 and the Wirt Plan to "Garyize" the city's public school system came to a halt, the BEE Working Council withdrew the screens from further exhibition. In 1918, William Wirt accepted transporting them to Gary to be on display in one of the original Gary schools.

237. C&C: "Copy The Gary School League," letter by Alyse Gregory of the Gary School League, dated March 1, 1917.

238. Dewey declined an offer to become the Bureau's educational advisor. Noteworthy too: both Dewey and Wirt were frequent dinner guests at the Michells' home.

239. This exhibit on toys and school equipment was later shown at a meeting of the National Kindergarten Association in Boston and then moved back to New York City, to the Women's City Club.

240. This exhibition on psychological tests produced by Elisabeth Irwin was later exhibited at the National Psychological Association Annual Meeting at Columbia University, and then moved and used in the BEE offices (*Pedagogical Seminary*, 1917).

241. See Bureau of Educational Experiments, 1917; Boardman, 1917; Hunt (Ed.), 1918c; Mitchell & Ruger, 1918; Ruger, 1918.

242. See also statistical assessments in articles by one of the Bureau's psychologists: B. J. Johnson, 1918, 1919, 1920b; B. J. Johnson & Schriefer, 1922.

243. *The American Library Annual, 1916-1917* (American Library Annual, 1917) reported that in the winter of 1917 the BEE library had "about 250 volumes and about 500 pamphlets chiefly in the specialties of primary and elementary education, psychological and pedagogical tests, educational theory" (p. 395). In 1922, the library counted already 1500 volumes. See also *American Journal of School Hygiene*, 1917a; Hunt, 1917c.

244. See Boardman, 1917; Bureau of Educational Experiments, 1917; Garrett, 1917; Goodlander, 1921; Hunt (Ed.), 1918b-c; R. H. Hutchinson, D. D. Hutchinson, Bates & Deming, 1917; H. M. Johnson, 1922; M. S. Marot, 1922; Mitchell & Ruger, 1918; Naumburg & Deming, 1917; Pratt & Deming, 1917. Additionally, in 1918, the Bureau issued a supplement to the psychological tests bulletins (Ruger, 1918). The Bureau also subsidized translating a foreign language article and publishing it in an American journal (Schiotz, 1920).

245. C&C: "A Trial Outline." See also BSC: "May 24th, 1916."

246. Among the proposals in the BEE archives at City and Country School (C&C) are: (1). Harriet Forbes: "*Proposed Study of Nutrition*." (2). Laura Garrett: an untitled proposal concerning a Civic Center for Children. (3) Harriet Johnson: "*Plan for Bureau to put in next year's program; Plan for an Observation Class*." (4) Caroline Pratt: "*A Summer Play School. (Country)*."

247. C&C: "List of Possible Topics for Conferences Winter of 1916-1917."

248. BSC: "A Program for Emergency Activities in Relation to The Proposed Mobilization of Boy Labor for Farms." Minutes Committee of Teaching Experiments, June 4, 1917. Minutes Department of Information, February 6, 1918. Minutes Teaching Department, March 22, 1918. Minutes Working Council, February 18, 1918; April 30, 1917. "Report of Miss Marot's Committee." "Statement to the Trustees. April 1918."

C&C: "Conference on the Educational Aspects of Military Training in Public Schools. Plan as submitted by Miss Marot, March 8th." Minutes Working Council, May 4, and May 21, 1917. "Tentative Outlines of Suggestions for Use of City Boys in Farm Service." Consult also *The Public*, 1917.

249. C&C: "An Interview with Mr. Ellis," p. 9.

250. BSC: "Bureau of Educational Experiments Chairman's Report May 1919." "October 12th, 1916." C&C: "Annual Report of the Chairman of the Working Council. Bureau of Educational Experiments 1916-1917." "An Interview with Mr. Ellis." Minutes Executive Committee, May 10, and May 12, 1917. "Report of the Executive Committee. May 1917." "Statement for the Executive Committee on the Laboratory School. March 21, 1917." "The Laboratory School."

251. See *Educational Foundations*, 1915; Foote, 1922; Harvey, 1920; *Journal of Education*, 1920; Kendall & Mirick, 1918; Towne, 1999; Winship, 1917.

252. BSC: "November 14, 1916." "October 12th, 1916." "December 11, 1916." C&C: "November 25, 1916. C&C: "Annual Report of the Chairman of the Working Council. Bureau of Educational Experiments 1916-1917."

253. The 1919 Chairman's Report speaks about "spot" experiments "in an alien atmosphere." See BSC: "Bureau of Educational Experiments Chairman's Report May 1919."

254. C&C: "Annual Report of the Chairman of the Working Council. Bureau of Educational Experiments 1916-1917," pp. 4-5.

255. See, for instance, BSC: "Annual Statement to the Trustees — May 1919." "Chairman's Report of the Bureau of Educational Experiments 1921-1922 and 1922-1923." "Executive Committee Report — 1919-1920." "Meeting of the Working Council with Teachers of the Play and Nursery Schools. November 10, 1919." "Statement to the Trustees — April 1918."

256. Psychologist David Mitchell (1884-1956) was hired in the fall of 1917. In 1910, Mitchell graduated A.B. from the University of Toronto. In 1911 he gained his master's degree in psychology at the University of Pennsylvania and in 1913 a PhD at the same university. Until he became director of psychological research at the BEE in 1918, he was Instructor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Mitchell (1916) published a survey on schools and classes for exceptional children (see also Goddard, 1916), and delivered community talks, for instance on spiritualism (*Albany Evening Journal*, 1919a-b) and on mind reading (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1922).

He accepted a post as BEE psychologist in 1917 (BSC: Minutes Working Council, October 15, 1917). Between 1921 and 1927 he held the post of Assistant Professor of Psychology at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. He also lectured at Teachers College in New York City. In 1921, he founded the New York State Association of Consulting Psychologists, of which he was President until 1930.

257. Psychologist Buford Jennette Johnson (1880-??) was hired in 1918. In 1916, Johnson earned her doctorate in Psychology at Johns Hopkins University, published the following year (B. J. Johnson, 1917). Next, she worked as assistant psychologist at the Laboratory of Social Hygiene in Bedford Hills, New York. She resigned in 1918 to accept the position as BEE research assistant (BSC: Minutes Social, Mental and Physical Experiments Committee, December 5, 1917; *Science*, 1918). While working for the Bureau, Buford Johnson (1918, 1919, 1920a-b, 1922) published about testing, emotional instability in children, and fatigue effects. She co-authored *Health Education and the Nutrition Class* (Hunt, Johnson, & Lincoln, 1921), and an article on mental age testing (B. J. Johnson & Schrieffer, 1922). In 1920, she accepted the position of Professor of Psychology at Johns Hopkins University. Three years later she published her monograph based on data she had gathered while working at the BEE: *Mental Growth of Children in Relation to Rate of Growth in Bodily Development* (B. J. Johnson, 1925). See BSC: "Report of Studies from Psychological Laboratory Presented by Dr. Buford Johnson to the Research Committee. January 20, 1923."

258. Physician Edith (Maas) Lincoln (1899-1971) was hired in 1919. In 1916, Edith Maas received her medical degree at Johns Hopkins University. In 1917 she married Asa Lincoln and was accepted for training in pediatrics at the NYC Bellevue Hospital. Edith (Maas) Lincoln began work as pediatrician in the Children's Chest Clinic at Bellevue Hospital in 1922. Later she pioneered treatment of childhood tuberculosis. Donald (2013) describes Lincoln's full career.

259. In 1922, after completing the text of her BEE bulletin *School Records — An Experiment* (M. S. Marot, 1922), Mary Marot moved back to her birth town Philadelphia to become Recorder at Elsa Ueland's Carson College in Flourtown (Contosta, 1997; McGarry, 1921; *The Survey*, 1924; Willets & Marot, 1922). Ueland (1918, 1924, 1925) regularly informed colleagues about progress made in her school. In May 1917, the BEE welcomed Ueland as a non-resident member. During the mid- and late 1920s Ueland was on the Executive Committee of the Progressive Education Association (PEA, 1926). During the 1930s she was a member of the Central Staff of the Cooperative School for Teachers (CST), founded by the BEE in 1930 — predecessor of Bank Street College of Education. (See also *Notes* 33, 51, 64, and 234, above).

260. Jacob Theobald was the principal of Public School 89. In 1915, P.S. 89 was among schools examined by the Public Education Association for achievements of so-called 'colored' students (Blascoer, 1915a-b; *New York Times*, 1915a; Theobald, 1920).

261. BSC: Minutes Committee on Teaching Experiments, June 4, 1917. Minutes Social Physical and Mental Experiments Committee, December 12, 1917. Minutes Working Council, June 4, 1917.

262. Of further importance was Pratt's (1917a) approach to the school's toys: "children supplement the [toys] stock by constructing toys for their own special use" (p. 13). Many items made by toy manufacturers were, and still are, *not* used in City and Country School. Stated Harriet K. Cuffaro, a former teacher at the school, "If you needed a vehicle you made it at the workbench. Need a tree? Draw it and attach to a block. Need vegetables for the grocery store? Make them out of plasticine or draw them" (personal communication, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010).

263. Deming (1917b) portrayed the school's interior and reported the school's curriculum. Interestingly, the *Modern School* magazine — in 1912 grown out of the Ferrer Association's *News Letter* issued by the Ferrer Colony at Stelton, New Jersey — carried educational articles which originally appeared as BEE bulletins (see also Rugg, 1917, p. 759). The "Editorial Note and Comment" by Carl Zigrosser (1917a) in the November 1917 issue draws attention to the BEE. "Few educational institutions in this country have a more enlightened attitude or constructive intention than the Bureau of Educational Experiments" (p. 159). Zigrosser stated that the *Modern School* magazine was reprinting, "by Caroline Pratt's permission, a part of her admirable essay on 'Playthings'" (*ibid.*). The text of the *Playthings* bulletin appeared in two successive issues of the

*Modern School* magazine — the first part in the November 1917 issue (Pratt, 1917b), credited to Pratt in both the contents table and at the end of the first part of the article, the concluding part in the December 1917 issue with the BEE Committee on Toys and School Equipment credited at the end of the article (Committee on Toys, 1917b; see also *Modern School*, 1917). Presumably the greater part of the bulletin's intellectual contents should indeed be attributed to Pratt. Nevertheless, the BEE Committee on Toys and School Equipment claimed authorship of *Playthings* (Bureau of Educational Experiments, 1917).

264. Minutes of the 18 March 1918 BEE Working Council meeting state that the Bureau wished a conference “to be arranged with Mrs. [Barrows] Fernandez [of the Gary School League] to enable the Bureau members to listen to her new plans for [work] with public schools” (BSC: Minutes Working Council, March 18, 1918).

265. C&C: Copy letter by Marietta L. Johnson, March 24, 1917.

266. C&C: Report of Executive Committee, March 12, 1917.

267. BSC: Minutes Department of teaching experiments, February 1, 1918. Minutes Executive Committee, March 13, and April 16, 1917. Minutes S. P. & M. Department, January 23, 1918. Minutes Working Council, December 17, 1917.

268. BSC: Minutes S. P. & M. Department, January 30, and February 6, 1918.

269. BSC: Minutes Membership Committee, November 22, 1917. Minutes Working Council, October 1, 1917. “Report of the Membership Committee, December 6, 1917.”

270. BSC: Minutes Working Council, December 10, 1917.

271. BSC: Minutes Department of Information, December 6, 1917. Minutes Department of Teaching Experiments, October 19, November 16, November 23, and December 6, 1917; January 18, 1918. Minutes of Teaching Committee, December 14, 1917.

272. Editor of *The Modern School* Carl Zigrosser (1917c), related that after a lecture at “an old-fashioned dinner in the country” (p. 172), date and other details not given, Johnson sped back home on the train in his company. Zigrosser took the opportunity to interview Johnson for his magazine. In his editorial (1917b), he stated that Johnson had maintained a “Modern Experimental School,” though her school was not “quite so thoroughly radical as the logical extremist might desire, but it is ever so much more liberal than the orthodox school” (p. 190). Throughout the interview (Zigrosser, 1917c), Johnson said not a single word about her non-resident BEE membership, the sensitive issues of her work at P.S. 95, BEE plans to remove her Summer School to Hopewell Junction and train teachers during summer months. She merely mentioned her schools in Fairhope and in Greenwich, giving examples of how the children learned following their spontaneous interests and how guidance by teachers stimulated their interests, in woodshop, in geography class, and in music classes.

273. BSC: Minutes Department of Teaching Experiments, November 9, 1917. Minutes Teaching Department, March 22, 1918. Minutes Working Council, November 12, 1917. “Work Accomplished and Work Proposed.”

274. BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, April 22, 1918. Minutes Working Council, April 15, 1918. “Statement to the Trustees. April 1918.” “Work Accomplished and Work Proposed by Psychological Department. 20 April 1918.”

275. BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, April 24, 1918.

276. First effects of growing parental influence after the November 1917 NYC mayoral elections became visible immediately in P.S. 95. Harriet Johnson reported during a December 1917 meeting of the BEE Social, Mental and Physical Experiments Committee, that the principal of P.S. 95 “said that special permission would be necessary before arrangements could be made for the physical examination of the children of P.S. 95 [in the experimental organic education class supervised by Marietta Johnson], and that the work would have to be done in the school building” (BSC: Minutes Social, Mental and Physical Experiments Committee, December 5, 1917). See also BSC: Minutes Department of Teaching Experiments, February 1, 1918. Minutes S., P. & M. Department, March 13, 1918.

277. The principal's reasons were not recorded in BEE minutes. Bureau archives hold no data revealing Johnson's reaction to the sudden change of plans, nor of her activities in P.S. 64. It is likely she felt offended. BEE minutes (BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, May 13, 1918) suggest that she considered that a BEE letter addressed to her may have adversely affected her

“professional reputation;” see also BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, May 1, May 3, May 8, and May 27, 1918. Minutes Working Council, April 28, 1918.

278. The first Bureau-backed publications, announcing the upcoming experiments, appeared in *The Sun* and in *The Survey*, referencing the 1918 preparatory work (Uzzell, 1918a-b). In 1919 and 1920, Bureau researchers published several interim reports (Mitchell, 1919; Mitchell & Forbes, 1920), which received positive media reviews. An accounting of the 1918-1921 nutrition researches at P.S. 64 appeared in *Health Education and the Nutrition Class* (Hunt, Johnson, & Lincoln, 1921). Jean Lee Hunt and Buford J. Johnson were also members of the New York Nutrition Council’s Committee on Statistics. In 1922 they published *Height and Weight as an Index of Nutrition Including Practical Instructions* (Committee of Statistics of the New York Nutrition Council, 1922).

279. This particular nutrition research was originally suggested in 1916 in a plan handed in by Bureau member Harriet Forbes (C&C: “*Proposed Study of Nutrition*”). In 1917, Forbes interviewed Tufts University Professor of Pediatrics William Emerson to set up and supervise the research (BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, April 19, May 17, June 4, and June 11, 1917). At the time, Emerson also directed the Woman’s Home Companion Clinic for Delicate Children and was President of the Nutrition Clinic for Delicate Children. See Emerson, 1917, 1919a-b, 1922; Emerson & Manny, 1920; Marshall, 1922; *New York Times*, 1917.

280. Many BEE minutes in the archives of Bank Street College of Education and City and Country School discuss the Bureau’s matters related to the nutrition research project. See also Andress, 1919, pp. 63-67.

281. E.g., Antler, 1982, pp. 575-576. Sprague Mitchell’s skepticism about the value of rank order reports from standardized test administrations anticipates late twentieth and early twenty-first century debates among psychometricians. Sprague Mitchell and her Bureau colleagues sought measure of student growth. However, conventional mental test assessments, which at the time were based on population sampling, were not designed to generate growth measures. Instead, they provided static snap shots. Benjamin Drake Wright (b1926), the Chicago University psychometrician who initiated that debate among American psychometricians, attributed his scientific interests in education measurement to when he was an elementary school student at Little Red School House, the NYC experimental school that grew out of BEE member Elisabeth Irwin’s experimental classes in P.S. 64 (Bouchard, 2010). Instead of population sampling statistics, Wright championed a method of item analysis models developed by the Danish mathematician Georg Rasch. See also Rasch, 1980; Ward, Stoker, & Murray-Ward, 1996a-b; Wright & Stone, 2004.

282. First, however, the year 1917 would almost end in disaster. The McDougal Alley Play School annex barely escaped destruction during a fire that began early morning of December 27 in an adjacent two-story building occupied by the “Board of Education as a school for defective children” (*Evening Post*, 1917). Marot and Pratt’s townhouse still housed two groups of the Play School in 1917 and 1918.

283. BSC: Minutes Working Council, February 26, 1917. Minutes Working Council, December 10, 1917.

284. BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, May 17, 1917. Minutes Working Council, June 4, 1917.

285. BSC: Minutes Department of Information, January 6, 1918.

286. Marot (1918b) dedicated *The Creative Impulse in Industry* to “Caroline Pratt whose appreciation of educational factors in the play world of children, intensified for the author the significance of the growth processes in industrial and adult life” (p. v).

287. It will come as no surprise to learn that the underlying theme, as one reviewer so pointedly précised, was the idea that the “industry to properly perform its function must be first of all a continuation of the educational process begun at school, and must therefore offer opportunity for first-hand experimentation” (Wolf, 1918, p. 209).

288. Marot criticized the Gary Plan, saying, “while the Gary system did offer children much first hand experience in industry, it did not give them a proper conception of its connection with the world” (*Evening Telegram*, 1919; *School*, 1919).



289. Marot (1918b) declared: “[The] work done by Caroline Pratt on children’s playthings has disclosed the fact that the present toy market is below grade from the point of view of the service of toys to children. The market does not supply the children with the sort of material and the sort of tools they require in their play schemes. Therefore, the product chosen has a legitimate social claim on the market” (p. 116).

290. Later in her life, Marot (1939, pp. 208-213) would again refer to Pratt and her school, in her *Oneself*, a yet unpublished manuscript. Hauser (2006) states, “A manuscript [Marot] was working on when she died...was never published” (p. 48). Leja (1993) states, “The present location of the manuscript is unknown” (p. 357). In 2011, I discovered the manuscript is *not* missing, but is in safe and sound condition in the archives of City and Country School, including a letter of Columbia University Press, dated May 9, 1950, addressed to Caroline Pratt.

291. The 1919 BEE “Annual Statement to the Trustees” states that Helen Marot had associated with Mr. Constantine, “a man who has been a production manager...and later supervisor of industrial education in the schools of Passaic,” and that a set of models that had been made, called “Little World Toys,” had received “favorable comments from toy manufacturers and buyers.” The statement further reads, “The factory is to be initiated first and toys for the Christmas trade made before the plan for a school is attempted. The success of the venture depends of course on Mr. Constantine’s ability to raise the necessary capital. The toys are on exhibition at the Bureau office” (BSC: Annual Statement to the Trustees — May 1919, p. 4). See also BSC: “Annual Statement to the Trustees — May 1919.” Minutes Department of Information, December 13, 1917; January 8, and May 9, 1918. Minutes Executive Committee, April 13, May 20, May 27, June 25, and December 19, 1918. Minutes of Miss Helen Marot’s Special Committee, May 6, 1918. Minutes Teaching Department, March 22, 1918. Minutes Working Council, April 8, May 6, and December 16, 1918; January 6, 1919. “Reports April 1<sup>st</sup> and June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1918.” “To Every Member of the Working Council,” letter by Lucy Sprague Mitchell, December 2, 1918.

It is likely that a collection of painted wooden dolls in the Bank Street College of Education archives forms part of, or is, the set of Little World Toys models which had been made — most probably — by Caroline Pratt. At some time during the 1930s, either Lucy Sprague Mitchell or Harriet Johnson gave the set of dolls to Bank Street College of Education educator Barbara Biber. In September 2011, her daughter —former Sarah Lawrence College Child Development Institute Director Margery B. Franklin — donated them to the Bank Street College of Education archives (personal communication Margery B. Franklin, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013).

292. Between 1916 and 1920, Marot was also active outside the BEE. She had accepted the Vice-Chairmanship of the National Labor Defence Council (Walsh, Marot, & Harvey, 1917a, 1917b). In 1918 she began writing for *The Dial*. She served its editorial staff from October 1918 until November 1919. She was a member of the United States’ Industrial Relations Commission (Leja, 1993, p. 143; *New York Call*, 1916a) and often received invitations to give addresses and lectures. In 1919 she was “summoned to inquisitorial State hearings and bound under some undisclosed threat not to reveal what questions were asked” (Mumford, 1982, p. 244). At the time she lectured at the Rand School of Social Science. Marot remained a frequent speaker at conferences until she retired around 1920 (Shaplen, 1919; Wayne, 1919). She published her final article in 1920; her final book review appeared a year later (see H. Marot, 1920, 1921). Mumford (1982) claimed that she then turned to writing, though unsuccessfully, and to studying psychology. Helen Marot died in 1940. Ten years later, Pratt sent Marot’s (1939) manuscript *Oneself* to Columbia University Press for publication, but the publishers were not interested in adding it to their program.

293. BSC: Minutes Executive Committee, October 6, 1919. Minutes Working Council, October 6, 1919.

294. “To Every Member of the Working Council. December 2, 1918.”

295. C&C: “*Plan for Bureau to put in next year’s program*,” by Harriet Johnson.

296. See also BSC: “Chairman’s Report of the Bureau of Educational Experiments 1921-1922 and 1922-1923.” “Committee on Plans. Preamble. March 31, 1919.” “Executive Committee Report — 1919-1920.” Minutes Executive Committee, November 3, 1920. Minutes Working Council, December 9, 1918; April 26, 1920. “To Every Member of the Working Council.

December 2, 1918.” “To the Executive Committee,” letter by Lucy Sprague Mitchell, dated September 14, 1920.

297. Cobb, a co-founder of the PEA, taught English at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, also near Washington, D.C. Johnson delivered the lecture at Park School in Baltimore. Eugene Smith, also a co-founder of the PEA, was principal of the school.

298. Hartman, a BEE consulting researcher, was then writing a book on progressive education (see *Chapter 1*).

299. BSC: Minutes Department of Information, January 17, 1918; italics added.

300. BSC: Minutes Working Council, February 18, 1918.

301. BSC: Minutes Department of Information, March 8, and March 22, 1918. Minutes Teaching Department, March 22, 1918.

302. BEE minutes do not show any involvement with Johnson’s actions regarding the founding of a national educational organization.

303. See Ayres, 1921; *Buffalo Evening News*, 1919; *Daily Journal*, 1919; *Evening Missourian*, 1920; *School and Society*, 1919a; *Syracuse Journal*, 1919; *The Sun*, 1919c; *Washington Herald*, 1919.

304. BSC: Minutes Working Council, March 31, 1919. BEE members Harriet Johnson and Jean Lee Hunt were empowered to consult with Cobb. On April 9, 1919, the BEE Working Council discussed whether the Bureau would financially support the Association, whether Jean Lee Hunt would become a member of the Association’s executive committee, and whether the Bureau would advice about handling copy for a magazine the Association wished to issue. See BSC: Minutes Working Council, April 9, 1919.

305. BEE charter member Jean Lee Hunt was among the Association’s fifty-five 1919-1920 contributing members who paid \$5 to \$50.

306. Later Cobb listed the names of the educators who co-formulated the *preliminary* principles (Cobb, 1928, pp. 16-17). He also listed the principles, including explanation.

307. During the 1920s, Bureau members regularly contributed services to the PEA. BEE members Laura Garrett, Jean Lee Hunt, Elisabeth Irwin, Harriet Johnson, Caroline Pratt, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, and Elsa Ueland published numerous articles in *Progressive Education*. From the mid-1920s, Bureau member Elsa Ueland was on the Association’s Executive Committee. BEE founding mother Lucy Sprague Mitchell (1928a) even chaired a Group Conference during the 1928 PEA annual meeting, as did BEE member Caroline Pratt (1928).

308. Pratt’s school was referenced in Bailey, 1919; Burrell, Forbush, & Burdick, 1919; *The City & Country School*, 1919; Dunbar 1919; Moses, 1919; *New York Tribune*, 1919a; Pratt, 1919; Sargent, 1919; Severance, 1919.

309. Apart from publishing general educational articles (see H. M. Johnson, 1927, 1928b, 1930b, 1930c, 1931a, 1933), BEE Nursery School director Harriet Johnson wrote prolifically about her nursery school (see H. M. Johnson, 1922, 1925, 1926, 1928a, 1930a, 1931b, 1932; H. M. Johnson, Garrison, & G. E. Johnson, 1929). Posthumous publications of interest are: H. M. Johnson, 1934, 1936, 1966, 1972. She also co-authored a report of the National Association for Nursery Education (Davis, Johnson, & Richardson, 1930). Noteworthy, Johnson’s laboratory nursery school received positive media attention during the 1920s. Reportage of the school appeared in *Boston Daily Globe*, 1929; Foster & Mattson, 1929; *Health News*, 1922; *Nation’s Health*, 1923; *New York Times*, 1925; *The Playground*, 1923; Vandewalker, 1922.

310. For instance, *Health News* (1922, p. 96) reported, “The development of motor-coordination, symptoms of fatigue, and its causes, irritability and other expressions of maladjustment are being studied by the physician and the psychologist who are in charge of the research work of the Bureau.” BEE physician Lincoln began making a study of City and Country School children’s postures in 1921. Since F. M. Alexander at that time did not work at Pratt’s school, nor had official contacts with the BEE as shown by surviving minutes, Sprague Mitchell (1953, pp. 464-465) herself worked with a group of children teaching Alexander’s breathing and posture education method. She may also have taught at the BEE Nursery School because she told a reporter that in an undisclosed “experimental school for little children...beginning with babies of 16 months, the children are taught muscle co-ordination” (in *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1921a).

Earlier, Sprague Mitchell had lectured about “Emotional Attitudes Produced in Little Children by the Adult Approach to Physical Habits” (*New York Call*, 1920).

311. Goodlander, 1921; H. M. Johnson, 1922; M. S. Marot, 1922. One booklet issued by the BEE in 1921 — Jessie Stanton’s *Record of Work, Group III, 1919-20* — is missing.

312. E. Dewey, 1919; E. Dewey, Child, & Ruml, 1920; Hartman, 1921, 1923a; Hunt, Johnson, & Lincoln, 1921.

313. One educator wrote that the Bureau’s aim was “to promote the cause of “free education” by fostering experiments under classroom conditions and by disseminating information on experimental schools” (Martz, 1924a, p. 251; 1924b, p. 256).

314. See M. S. Marot, 1922. Marston (1927) indicates that in 1927 six child development researchers worked for the BEE: Frederick Ellis, Veda Elvin, Elizabeth Farber, Katherine Greene, Edith Lincoln, and Ruth Sawtell.

315. BSC: “General Staff Meeting, October 13, 1916.”

316. Until 1925, apart from publications cited above related to statistics, mental testing, and nutrition research in P.S. 64, as well as several BEE bulletins, Bureau-backed publications were limited to longitudinal socio-psychological research by the BEE consulting psychologist Buford J. Johnson (1920a, 1922, 1925). In 1927 and 1928, BEE physician Lincoln, who in 1921 co-authored *Health Education and the Nutrition Class* on the nutrition program of P.S. 64, published her results of long-term studies of respiratory and circulatory functions of City and Country School children in a medical journal (Lincoln, 1927, 1928b; Lincoln & Nicolson, 1928; Lincoln & Spillman, 1928). Lincoln (1928a) explained the school’s health program in *Childhood Education*. See also Allen, Discoll, Shaddy, & Felter, 2008, pp. 947-948. For a certain time in the 1920s, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial provided research funding.

317. Plans to establish a so-called “Student-Teachers Laboratory” already existed within the BEE since 1916; see C&C: “A Plan for a Student-Teachers Laboratory.”

318. The Cooperative School for Teachers (CST) began enrolling students in the fall of 1931. CST, organized like the BEE, originally counted eight cooperating schools: BEE Nursery School, Little Red School House and Livingston School (these three in New York City), Carson College for Orphan Girls (Flourtown, Pennsylvania), Manumit School (Pawling, New York), Mount Kemble School (Bernardville, New Jersey), Rosemary Junior School (Old Greenwich, Connecticut), and Spring Hill School (Litchfield, Connecticut). Around 1932, two schools left CST (Livingston School, Manumit School), and one school joined CST (Woodward School, New York City). See 69 Bank Street, 1933, 1935; Antler, 1982; Cenedella, 1996; Field, 1999; Grinberg, 2005; Sprague Mitchell, 1950, 1953, 2000; Sprague Mitchell (Ed.), 1954; *The Sun*, 1931, 1933a-b; *Vassar Miscellany News*, 1935; Winsor, 1976.

319. BSC: “Summary of the Development of the Bureau of Educational Experiments.” “The University of the State of New York Education Department Amendment to Charter of Bureau of Educational Experiments,” signed and dated November 16-17, 1950.

## EPILOGUE

320. Later, Johnson (1928) would express her political views again in a straightforward way, stressing equality of opportunity related to Georgist philosophy.

321. Johnson’s (1974) autobiography fails to give any account of her 1917-1918 involvement with the BEE and teaching and supervising at P.S. 95 and P.S. 64. That aspect of her life had remained virtually unknown. Her publications during the 1920s and 1930s never referred to her BEE involvement too. Much as she never referred to the death of her child, she seems to have suppressed even thinking about that personal history. I have found only eleven references to her tenure at P.S. 95 and/or P.S. 64. Four are by persons who worked with the BEE: Irwin, 1920, p. 188; Irwin & Marks, 1926, pp. vii-viii + 115-117; B. J. Johnson, 1925, pp. 4-5; Sprague Mitchell, 1953, pp. 457, 575. The others are Antler, 1982, pp. 566-567; Cenedella, 1996, pp. 111-113, 121; Cohen, 1964, p. 125; De Lima, 1926, p. 124; *Journal of the New York State Teachers’ Association*, 1918; *New York Call*, 1918; Rawson, 1920.

322. Johnson also travelled to Europe. Not only did she travel to Europe in 1921 for the founding conference of the New Education Fellowship in Calais (France), she attended

conferences in England (Cambridge, 1922), Germany (Heidelberg, 1925), Switzerland (Locarno, 1927) and Ireland (Dublin, 1933).

323. The contents of *The City & Country School* (1919, p. 3) show that BEE members Harriet Forbes, Laura Garrett and Sprague Mitchell taught at Pratt's school. Note further that Pratt (1921a) contributed a book chapter to the second volume of *The Home Kindergarten Manual*. It was taken from the school information pamphlet for parents (*The City & Country School*, 1919).

324. Hirsch (1978) writes that at an unspecified time during the early 1920s a tragedy forced Pratt to abandon the school's summer facility. The incident happened during either the 1922 or the 1923 summer play camp.

325. See also *Bulletin of The Art Institute of Chicago*, 1919, 1920; *Democratic Banner*, 1919; Ely, 1919; Jewett, 1919; *Post-Standard*, 1919; *The Sun*, 1919a.

326. See Art Institute of Chicago, 1919, 1920; *Arts & Decoration*, 1919a. The catalogue of the exhibition shows that Pratt's dolls and toys were not exhibited (The Art Institute and Art Alliance Chicago, 1919).

327. See *Arts & Decoration*, 1919b; Bugbee, 1939; H. M. Johnson, 1933; *Life*, 1945; *The Ounce*, 1928.

328. Sprague Mitchell had purchased three adjacent buildings on West Twelfth Street and three adjacent buildings on West Thirteenth Street (*New York Herald*, 1920; *New York Tribune*, 1920b). The Mitchell family moved in, as did Harriet Johnson and her life-long companion Harriet Forbes and their daughter, the complete Bureau of Educational Experiments, Harriet Johnson's experimental Nursery School, and to finish, Pratt's City and Country School — using several back-gardens as one great joint playground. Johnson's Nursery School had its playground on the roof of the West Thirteenth Street buildings (Barnard, 1926; *The Survey*, 1926).

329. See Pratt (Ed.), 1924; Pratt & Stanton, 1926; Stott, 1927, 1928. Helen Marot (1939) wrote that each group of students at Pratt's school was made responsible for a job assigned to them, a job "of importance to the school itself, that is, to their own communal life. One group is responsible for the transmission of messages from one part of the school to the other and for postal service. Another operates a store for the sale of school equipment to the different classes; another carries on the printing of school information and so on" (pp. 210-211).

330. See also Blanshard, 1931; *Boston Daily Globe*, 1929; Brock, 1926; Dunbar, 1920; *Evening Tribune*, 1929; Meister, 1921; *New York Times*, 1920a, 1927, 1928; *Pittsburgh Press*, 1922; Pratt, 1921b-c; Rice, 1921; Rohe, 1921a-b, 1922; Ryan, 1921; Seabrook, 1925; *Sunday Chronicle*, 1922; *The Sun*, 1928; *Utica Sunday Tribune*, 1922; *Woman Citizen*, 1919.

331. Compare Schuitema, Van Boxtel, Veugelers, & Ten Dam, 2011.

332. In June 1931, parents of children at Pratt's school together with the school would purchase the buildings from Sprague Mitchell (*Evening Post*, 1931).

333. The Associated Experimental Schools (AES) included seven schools, five in New York City, one in Pawling, New York, and one in Croton-on-Hudson, New York. Elisabeth Irwin of the Little Red School House became President of the AES; Pratt became Secretary. The City and Country School archives hold the AES records.

334. Leila V. Stott (1867-1969), assistant director at City and Country School, became director of the school's *Extension Service*. Stott became a Play School teacher in 1916 (*Schenectady Gazette*, 1917). She had worked at the Hartley House and was a member of the WTUL. *The Sun* (1932) claimed she also worked as a visiting teacher for the Public Education Association. Stott published about her work at Play School (Stott, 1921, 1927, 1928) and was even a character in an impromptu play (Amidon, 1932). She was not a prolific writer, but over the years published a book review in *The Survey* (Stott, 1933), several articles in *Progressive Education* (in 1939 and in 1943), and an article in *School Life* (Stott, 1941). She wrote book chapter contributions too. She resigned from City and Country School in 1945. The school's *Extension Service* first advised Central School in Putnam Valley, New York. Subsequently, the latter school experimented with Pratt's curriculum and play program (*Putnam County Courier*, 1935; Franklin & Benedict, 1943).

335. See, for instance, Arthur, 1942; Benedict, 1942; Ed, 1942; Franklin & Benedict, 1943; Melvin, 1943; *PM's Sunday Edition*, 1941; R. A., 1942a-b; Seeley, 1943, 1945; *The Sun*, 1938, 1939, 1940; 1941, 1942a-c, 1945c.

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# SUMMARY

In the *Introduction* to this dissertation, I briefly review an early twenty-first-century school war in the Netherlands over *Nieuwe Leren* (New Learning) educational methods. In February 2008, the Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms report, *Tijd voor Onderwijs* (Time for Education), abruptly settled the school war — not in favour of *Nieuwe Leren*. During the height of the conflict between 2005 and 2008, advocates and critics made infrequent cursory reference to *New Education*, that is, to closely related educational reform initiatives that took place in the United States from 1890 to 1919. However, neither advocates nor opponents exhausted exploration of the history and effectiveness of these American initiatives, nor to the relevance to Dutch *Nieuwe Leren*. The omission reinforced both supporters and opponents' positions that the Dutch school war only concerned a typical Dutch exchange of views about education reform implemented since the start of the millennium. This thesis sheds direct new light on the early twentieth-century American educational reform initiatives, and indirectly on its relevance to *Nieuwe Leren*.

Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt were key figures in the experimental, innovative early twentieth-century American education reform initiatives closely related to *Nieuwe Leren*. They were members of the Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) in New York City. Research into the careers of both educational reformers and BEE archives yielded the insight that the Bureau was far more influential — and played a much greater role in the history of progressive education and professionalization of educational innovators — than usually depicted in histories of the era.

These considerations led to the following central research question of the thesis:

What was the role played by the Bureau of Educational Experiments and its members in the history of progressive education between 1916 and 1919?

In *Chapter 1*, I argue that during the Progressive Era, that is, between 1890 and 1919, there was *no* national movement for progressive education in the United States. Certainly, local grassroots educational reform initiatives flourished — created by, among others, social settlement workers, parent associations, and civic groups. In the first part of this chapter, I discuss representative reform initiatives, especially those in New York City. It was instructive to learn that a number of the same women — that is, Caroline Pratt and her circle of activist, grassroots reformer colleagues — appear repeatedly, in differing settings. However, national and local social and political factors thwarted several educational organizations that were emerging during the Progressive Era from becoming national organizations for educational reorganization. For instance, to combat overcrowding and congested inner-city public schools, in 1916, educational reformers founded the Gary School League to advocate implementing the Gary plan in New York City. In the autumn of 1917, however, the loss of a mayoral election by a key political supporter, *not* failings of the New York City progressive reformers embracing the Gary Plan, led to the demise of the approach that progressive reformers embraced. This signaled the end of the so-called 'Gary School War,' which also brought to an end the Gary School League. The local loss stifled a possible further development of a national movement for such change. This particular conflict also demonstrated that parents and community leaders needed voice in education reform efforts and organizations. Another example emphasized is that Federal government repression of educators (and others) who had opposed the 1917 entry of the United States in World War I had an added suppressive impact on educational renewal in 1917 and 1918, especially in New York City. Yet, it did not dull the spirit of reformers. Only two-and-a-half months after the November 1918 armistice, essentially those same reformers aided to establish a national organization to professionalize progressive teachers — the Progressive Education

Association (PEA). This association also acted as a clearinghouse, propagated learning by projects, learning by activities, and *protoprofessionalized* parents and interested laypersons. The second part of the chapter outlines these processes between 1919 and the early 1930s when disputes about social reconstruction through education began to politicize debates within the Association, in the long run leading to the demise of the PEA in 1954. The synopsis of the chapter points to a gap in the body of knowledge that exists for the period ending World War I.

In *Chapters 2 and 3*, I outline parallel developments in the meandering careers of Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt, two women who became members of the Bureau of Educational Experiments. Around 1919, they would become essential links in the establishment of the PEA and the formulation of its mission. Both women received a Protestant religious education in small towns in rural surroundings. Both women became teacher in rural schools. Both also taught prospective teachers at Normal Schools.

Johnson experienced an existential crisis that she attributed to her founding an experimental coeducational rural school in a Georgist utopian colony in Fairhope, Alabama, ten years later. She presented herself as a reformer committed to bringing about a metamorphosis in kindergarten, primary and secondary education. Constantly struggling meeting the school's budget since 1912, she toured the country raising the needed funds by delivering lectures, thereby extending her social network while almost developing into a prophet of educational renewal.

After a like professional career crisis, before she founded an experimental co-educational school in New York City, Pratt first worked as a textile industry researcher, carpentry teacher, social worker at a settlement house, political activist, and toy manufacturer. She openly identified herself as a member of the Socialist Party and cherished her goal of improving society by her teaching.

Johnson and Pratt both advocated manual training, learning by activities, and integration of social sciences and the arts into one interconnected curriculum teaching the three R's. They promoted field trips for the children as part of their educational programmes, Johnson in rural areas, Pratt in inner-city conditions. Both women became members of the Bureau of Educational Experiments, Pratt at its inception in 1916, Johnson a year later.

In *Chapter 4*, I describe the early history of the Bureau of Educational Experiments and the founding of the Progressive Education Association. Between 1916 and 1919, Bureau members had no clear initial direction. On the one hand, they presented the BEE as a clearing house. Bureau members collected and distributed educational information, organized exhibitions, published bulletins, and maintained an extensive library. As the BEE, they professionalized the professional public while *protoprofessionalizing* the general public. As well, through the BEE, they subsidized, initiated, and supervised a series of educational experiments. Bureau members held great expectations regarding the benefits of psychological testing of school children, but these expectations were not met. Before they finally found their direction in 1919, by opening two associated laboratory schools as the new core of the organization, Bureau members scored some successes — and several failures. In the spring of 1917, parallel to the U.S. entry into World War I, they evaluated their progress and formulated new priorities. The evaluation led, among other things, to contracting of Marietta Johnson to supervise a demonstration class on 'Organic Education' at Public School 95. In 1917, Johnson also became a member of the Bureau.

A striking but unintentional success of the Bureau of Educational Experiments concerns its impact on the founding of the Progressive Education Association. In the fall of 1918, on the one hand, Johnson and several kindred spirits further developed the plan to set up a national organization for progressive education first brought forward by a Bureau hired researcher during an early 1918 Bureau meeting. When the Progressive Education

Association was founded in 1919, Johnson and Pratt were among those members who formulated its provisional objectives. On the other hand, in addition, members of the Bureau published regularly and preferably in *Progressive Education*, the journal issued by the PEA since 1924. Reciprocally, the formation of the PEA helped Pratt and her Bureau colleagues restructure the BEE organization and focus on small-scale research priorities to grow into a kind of *forerunner* action research institute. After 1930, the Bureau became a teacher training institute, essentially, a progressive Normal School.

The concluding section of the chapter summarizes the dissertation; I describe its focus on a women-led network of reformers, and I indicate how the findings pertain to recommendations made by the Dutch Parliamentary Commission on Educational Reforms in their 2008 report *Tijd voor Onderwijs*.

In the *Epilogue*, I recount the *post*-1919 lives of Marietta Johnson and Caroline Pratt. After the establishment of the PEA early in 1919, and the death of her husband in the summer of that year, Johnson resumed her energetic *pre*-Bureau wanderlust life, delivering lectures in many U.S. states, ostensibly to balance the budget of her Fairhope School of Organic Education. Though she enjoyed national and even international fame, it seems she did not manage her school adequately — frequent absences certainly did not help. Enrollement fell steadily; an article even commented her regular absence from the school and the negative impact this had on the school's curriculum and organization. In 1924, Johnson mortgaged the school for thousands of dollars. A book she published in 1929 was not well received; during the 1930s until her death in 1938, she and her school slowly slid into oblivion.

In contrast, during the 1920s, Pratt was busy strengthening her school's curriculum by introducing a jobs program and shaping the curriculum around the use of *Unit Blocks* designed by her. In 1929, the school severed from the Bureau of Educational Experiments. During the mid- and late-1930s, Pratt established a temporary alliance with other experimental schools to cope with financial consequences of the Great Depression. She also 'exported' the City and Country School curriculum concept to other, public, schools in New York. Pratt retired in 1945. She died in 1954.



# NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING

In de *Inleiding* tot deze dissertatie duid ik aan dat er zich een aantal jaren geleden in opvoedkundig Nederland een strijd afspeelde over methoden, nut en effectiviteit van het zogenoemde Nieuwe Leren. Deze strijd werd in februari 2008 tamelijk abrupt beslecht in het rapport *Tijd voor Onderwijs* van de Parlementaire Onderzoekscommissie Over de Onderwijsvernieuwingen in het Voortgezet Onderwijs in Nederland — niet ten gunste van het Nieuwe Leren. Tijdens het hoogtepunt van het conflict gedurende de jaren 2005 tot 2008 is er in de literatuur weliswaar op summiere wijze verwezen naar *New Education*, te weten de aan het Nieuwe Leren verwante onderwijsvernieuwingen in de Verenigde Staten tussen 1890 en 1919, maar noch voorstanders van het Nieuwe Leren, noch tegenstanders ervan hebben uitputtend aandacht besteed aan de ontstaansgeschiedenis, effectiviteit, relevantie, of evaluaties van die Amerikaanse onderwijsvernieuwingen. Deze omissie versterkte de door voor- en tegenstanders van het Nieuwe Leren gewekte schijn alsof hun strijd een typisch Nederlandse uitwisseling van standpunten was over het sinds de millenniumwisseling geïmplementeerde Nieuwe Leren. Dit proefschrift werpt een nieuw licht op de Amerikaanse initiatieven tot onderwijsvernieuwing van de vroege twintigste eeuw en zijdelings op de relevantie ervan voor het Nieuwe Leren.

De onderwijsgeschiedenis toont aan dat bijvoorbeeld Marietta Johnson en Caroline Pratt aan het begin van de twintigste eeuw sleutelfiguren waren binnen het Amerikaanse experimentele, vernieuwende onderwijs dat kenmerken vertoont met het huidige Nederlandse Nieuwe Leren. De scholen die zij hebben gesticht bestaan nog steeds. Johnson en Pratt waren gedurende een deel van hun leven lid van het Bureau of Educational Experiments (BEE) in New York City. Onderzoek van de levensloop van beide onderwijsvernieuwers en in de archieven van het Bureau of Educational Experiments leverde het inzicht op dat dit Bureau een veel grotere rol in de onderwijsvernieuwingsgeschiedenis en de professionalisering van onderwijsvernieuwers heeft gespeeld dan tot nu toe bekend was.

Deze overwegingen leidden naar de volgende centrale onderzoeksvraag van het proefschrift:

Wat was de rol van het Bureau of Educational Experiments en haar leden in de geschiedenis van de (Amerikaanse) onderwijsvernieuwing tussen 1916 en 1919?

In *Hoofdstuk 1* betoog ik dat er in de Verenigde Staten tijdens de *Progressive Era* tussen 1890 en 1919 *geen* nationale beweging voor onderwijsvernieuwing bestond. Toch ontsproten er lokale *grassroots*-onderwijshervormingen en gedijden onderwijsvernieuwing-initiatieven, in het leven geroepen door onder meer buurthuismedewerkers, ouderverenigingen en maatschappelijke groeperingen. In het eerste deel van het hoofdstuk bespreek ik een aantal van deze vernieuwingsinspanningen, met name in New York City. Het is een interessant gegeven dat daar steeds een aantal van telkens dezelfde vrouwen — te weten, Caroline Pratt en haar kring van activistische collega's — in verschillende samenwerkingsverbanden als *grassroots*-hervormers optrad. Nationale en lokale omstandigheden verhinderden echter dat verschillende educatieve organisaties die werden opgericht tijdens de *Progressive Era* konden uitgroeien tot nationale organisaties voor onderwijsvernieuwing. Bijvoorbeeld, om de gevolgen van overvolle openbare scholen te bestrijden, richtten onderwijshervormers in 1916 de Gary School League op om te pleiten voor de implementatie van het zogeheten Gary Plan in New York City. In het najaar van 1917, echter, leidde het verliezen van de burgemeestersverkiezing door een belangrijk politiek supporter van het Gary Plan (en *niet* tekortkomingen van de New Yorkse onderwijshervormers die het plan omhelsden) tot de teloorgang van de aanpak waar de onderwijsvernieuwers voorstander van waren. Deze afloop van de zogeheten *Gary School War* blokkeerde tevens een verdere ontwikkeling van de Gary School League tot een nationale onderwijsvernieuwingsbeweging. Dit specifieke

conflict toonde overigens ook duidelijk aan dat ouders en gemeenschapsleiders mee dienen te beslissen bij hervormingen binnen het (openbaar) onderwijs. Een ander punt dat ik benadruk is het gegeven dat overheidsinstanties die de civiele rechten ondermijnden van leerkrachten (en anderen) die deelname van de Verenigde Staten aan de Eerste Wereldoorlog aan de kaak stelden een bijkomend verlamdend effect sorteerden op onderwijsvernieuwingen, zowel in 1917 als in 1918, met name in New York City. Maar toch, dit tastte de vernieuwingsdrang van de hervormers niet aan. Slechts twee-en-een-halve maand na de wapenstilstand in november 1918 werd er een nationale organisatie opgericht die ernaar streefde onderwijsvernieuwend leerkrachten te professionaliseren — de Progressive Education Association (PEA). Deze vereniging fungeerde tevens als een *clearinghouse*, propageerde projectonderwijs en activiteitenonderwijs en bood daarnaast ouders en andere geïnteresseerde leken de middelen zich te *protoprofessionaliseren*. Het tweede deel van het hoofdstuk schetst deze processen tussen 1919 en de vroege jaren '30 toen geschillen over '*social reconstruction through education*' (onderwijs sociale dat bijdraagt aan wederopbouw) de gedachtewisseling binnen de vereniging begonnen te politiseren, op de lange termijn leidend tot de ondergang van de PEA in 1954. De synopsis van dit hoofdstuk wijst op een hiaat in de kennis die er bestaat over de laatste twee jaar van Wereldoorlog I.

In *Hoofdstuk 2* en *Hoofdstuk 3* schets ik parallele ontwikkelingen in de meanderende carrières van Marietta Johnson en Caroline Pratt, twee vrouwen die lid werden van het Bureau of Educational Experiments en die rond 1919 essentiële schakels waren bij de oprichting van de Progressive Education Association en de formulering van haar missie. Beide vrouwen ontvingen een protestantse opvoeding in kleine steden in een landelijke omgeving. Beide vrouwen werden lerares op plattelandsscholen. Ook doceerden zij later aan lerarenopleidingen.

Johnson geraakte in een existentiële crisis die tien jaar later resulteerde in de oprichting van een experimentele gemengde plattelandsschool in de utopische Georgistische kolonie in Fairhope, Alabama. Zij profileerde zich daarbij als een maatschappijhervormster die zich inzette voor een metamorfose van het kleuter-, lager en middelbaar onderwijs. Vanaf 1912 worstelde zij echter aanhoudend met de bekostiging van haar school en reisde zij stad en land af om door het geven van lezingen het benodigde geld bijeen te sprokkelen om de begroting sluitend te krijgen. Al doende dijde haar sociale netwerk zich uit en ontwikkelde zij zich bijna tot een onderwijsvernieuwingprofetes.

Na een vergelijkbare professionele crisis en een wisselende loopbaan als textielindustrieonderzoekster, lerares handvaardigheid en maatschappelijk werkster bij een buurthuis, politiek activiste en fabrikante van speelgoed, stichtte Pratt een experimentele gemengde school in New York City. Zij identificeerde zich openlijk als lid van de Socialistische Partij en koesterde het doel om de maatschappij te verbeteren door middel van haar onderwijs.

Johnson en Pratt waren allebei pleitbezorgsters van handvaardigheidsonderwijs en activiteitenonderwijs en van de samenvoeging van de '*three R's*' (*reading, writing, arithmetic*: lezen, schrijven, rekenen), maatschappijleer en expressieonderwijs in één onderling verbonden curriculum. Zij ondernamen excursies met hun leerlingen, als onderdeel van hun onderwijsprogramma, Johnson op het platteland en Pratt in de grootstedelijke omgeving. Beide vrouwen werden lid van het Bureau of Educational Experiments, Pratt bij de oprichting ervan in 1916, Johnson een jaar later.

In *Hoofdstuk 4* beschrijf ik de vroege geschiedenis van het Bureau of Educational Experiments en verhaal ik over de ontstaansgeschiedenis van de Progressive Education Association. De actieve leden van het BEE kenden tussen 1916 en 1919 geen duidelijke initiële koers en hinkten feitelijk op twee benen. Aan de ene kant presenteerde het Bureau of Educational Experiments zich als een *clearinghouse*: het verzamelde en verspreidde



onderwijskundige informatie, verzorgde tentoonstellingen, gaf bulletins uit en bouwde een uitgebreide bibliotheek op. Het Bureau professionaliseerde zo het professionele publiek en *protoprofessionaliseerde* tegelijkertijd het algemene publiek. Aan de andere kant subsidieerden, initieerden en begeleidden leden van het Bureau een reeks van onderwijsexperimenten. Hoewel er bij hen hoge verwachtingen over de voordelen van het psychologisch testen van schoolgaande kinderen bestonden, beantwoordden de testuitslagen niet aan hun verwachtingen. Voordat zij in 1919 uiteindelijk — als Bureau — een eigen, door hen zelf uitgestippelde koers volgden, door het openen van twee bijbehorende ‘laboratorium scholen’ als nieuwe kern van de organisatie, scoorden de leden van het Bureau een paar successen, maar zeker ook een aantal stevige mislukkingen. In het voorjaar van 1917, parallel aan de Amerikaanse entree in de Eerste Wereldoorlog, evalueerden zij hun voortgang en formuleerden zij nieuwe prioriteiten. Die evaluatie leidde onder andere tot het aantrekken en engageren van Marietta Johnson om op Public School 95 een demonstratieklas in ‘Organic Education’ te begeleiden. In 1917 werd Johnson daarnaast ook lid van het Bureau.

Een opvallend maar onbedoeld succes van het Bureau of Educational Experiments betreft haar invloed op de ontstaansgeschiedenis van de Progressive Education Association. Zo stamt enerzijds het plan om een nationale organisatie voor onderwijsvernieuwing op te richten uit januari 1918; het werd geopperd door een onderzoekster werkzaam voor het Bureau en werd verder uitgewerkt door Johnson en een aantal geestverwanten. Toen de Progressive Education Association in 1919 werd opgericht, formuleerden Johnson en Pratt, beiden PEA-leden, mede de voorlopige doelstellingen ervan. Anderzijds publiceerden leden van het Bureau regelmatig en met voorliefde in *Progressive Education*, het tijdschrift dat de PEA uitgaf sinds 1924. Wederkerig hielp de vorming van de PEA Pratt en haar BEE-collega's de organisatie van het Bureau te herstructureren en zich te richten op kleinschalig onderzoek. Zij groeiden daarbij uit tot een soort voorloperinstituut van actieonderzoek. Na 1930 werd het Bureau een lerarenopleiding.

Het afsluitende deel van het hoofdstuk biedt een samenvatting van het proefschrift; ook beschrijf ik de focus ervan op een door vrouwen geleid netwerk van hervormers en geef ik aan hoe mijn bevindingen betrekking hebben op aanbevelingen van de Commissie Parlementair Onderzoek Onderwijsvernieuwingen in haar rapport *Tijd voor Onderwijs* uit 2008.

In het *Nawoord* schets ik de verdere levensloop van Marietta Johnson en van Caroline Pratt. Na de oprichting van de PEA en het overlijden van haar man in 1919 hervatte Johnson energiek haar reislustige *pre-Bureau* leven en gaf zij lezingen in vele staten van de V.S. om het budget voor haar School of Organic Education in Fairhope bijeen te garen. Alhoewel zij nationale en zelfs internationale faam genoot, lukte het haar niet goed om de school te leiden. Leerlingaantallen liepen gestaag terug en een artikel gaf zelfs commentaar op haar regelmatige afwezigheid en de invloed ervan op het curriculum en de organisatie van de school. Daarnaast moest Johnson een hypotheek van duizenden dollars afsluiten op de school. Een boek dat zij uitgaf in 1929 werd niet goed ontvangen en in de jaren '30 tot aan haar dood in 1938 raakten zij en haar school in vergetelheid.

Pratt daarentegen was in de jaren '20 druk doende het curriculum van haar school te versterken met activiteitenprogramma's en met onderwijs dat was afgestemd op het gebruik van door haar ontworpen *Unit Blocks*, houten speelblokken. In 1929 scheidden zich de wegen van haar school en die van het Bureau of Educational Experiments. In de dertiger jaren ging Pratt enerzijds een tijdelijke alliantie aan met enkele andere experimentele scholen om de financiële gevolgen van de *Great Depression* het hoofd te kunnen bieden, terwijl ze anderzijds het door haar ontworpen City and Country School curriculum concept implementeerde op andere (openbare) scholen in de staat New York. In 1945 ging Pratt met pensioen; ze overleed in 1954.

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