The History of American Education
Dr. Jeff Sapp

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”
G. Santayana, 1905

The Value of the History of Education to You

Provides the knowledge base of the profession
Connects professionals with visions of others, enabling them to develop their educational vision
Provides new insights into contemporary programs and practices
Enables professionals to be active participants in applying timeless ideas to everyday practice
Helps guide reflection and practice
It helps us answer timeless questions of our profession, such as “What is worth knowing?” and “How best to teach?”

You’re entering the grand conversation.

Educational philosophy & practice often swings like a pendulum back-and-forth about every 10 or so years...

...and “if it’s new, it’s not true and if it’s true, it’s not new”...
Just some sound-bites about the history of education...

...like a ship without a rudder...

...like a chicken with your head cut off...

...jumping on the latest bandwagon

The Reading Wars
### Key Periods in Educational History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical Period</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ancient</strong> (1000 BCE to 850 BC)</td>
<td>Study the written word, religious instruction &amp; moral instruction for the afterlife</td>
<td>Scribes, Teachers &amp; Scribes</td>
<td>Memorization, chanting, recitation, discussion</td>
<td>Religious texts, classical literature, manual labor</td>
<td>Parents, elders, government officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greek</strong> (500 BCE to 300 BCE)</td>
<td>Cultivate civic duty, social cohesion, and public service</td>
<td>Boys (7-20)</td>
<td>Drills, recitation, recitation &amp; discussion</td>
<td>Religious texts, classical literature &amp; philosophy</td>
<td>Educators (Sparta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roman</strong> (500 BCE to 100 BCE)</td>
<td>Prepare young citizens for military service</td>
<td>Boys (7-20)</td>
<td>Drills, recitation, recitation &amp; discussion</td>
<td>Religious texts, classical literature &amp; philosophy</td>
<td>Educators (Sparta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medieval</strong> (500-1500 AD)</td>
<td>Prepare young clerics for the clergy</td>
<td>Boys (7-20)</td>
<td>Drills, recitation, recitation &amp; discussion</td>
<td>Religious texts, classical literature &amp; philosophy</td>
<td>Educators (Sparta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reformation</strong> (1500-1600 AD)</td>
<td>Develop a comprehensive education</td>
<td>Boys (7-20)</td>
<td>Drills, recitation, recitation &amp; discussion</td>
<td>Religious texts, classical literature &amp; philosophy</td>
<td>Educators (Sparta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industrial</strong> (1700-1800 AD)</td>
<td>Develop a general education</td>
<td>Boys (7-20)</td>
<td>Drills, recitation, recitation &amp; discussion</td>
<td>Religious texts, classical literature &amp; philosophy</td>
<td>Educators (Sparta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modern</strong> (1800-1900 AD)</td>
<td>Develop a comprehensive education</td>
<td>Boys (7-20)</td>
<td>Drills, recitation, recitation &amp; discussion</td>
<td>Religious texts, classical literature &amp; philosophy</td>
<td>Educators (Sparta)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Themes

- Race
- Class
- Gender
- Other?
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- Gender
- Other?

An inheritance

- “Both schooling for democratic citizenship and schooling for second-class citizenship have been basic traditions in American education... Both were fundamental American conceptions of society and progress, occupied the same time and space, were fostered by the same governments, and usually were embraced by the same leaders.”

  J. D. Anderson
  The Education of Blacks in the South

“O Chiefs when you sit and counsel for the welfare of the people, think not of yourself or your family or even your generation. But make your decisions on behalf of the seventh generation coming.”

The Great Peacemaker
Founder of the Haudenosaunee,
Circa 1000 A.D.

Postmodern Influences on Education in America

- Civil Rights Movement
- Bureaucratization of Schools
- The School Choice Movement
- Technology
- Sputnik and The Cold War
- Legislation for People With Disabilities
- Cultural Diversity
- Liberal & Conservative Agendas
- War on Poverty
- Others?

Education Research & School Reform Movements

1872
Great Quotes

“Beyond the power of diffusing old wealth, [education] has the prerogative of creating new. It is a thousand times more lucrative than fraud; and adds a thousand fold more to a nation’s resources than the most successful conquest.”

Horace Mann

“Father of the Common School”, 1848

Instructions to Teachers (1872)

1. Teachers will fill lamps, clean chimneys, and trim wicks each day.
2. Each teacher will bring a scuttle of coal and a bucket of water for the day’s use.
3. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs for the individual tastes of children.
4. Men teachers may take one evening a week for courting purposes or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.
5. After ten hours in the school the teacher should spend the remaining time reading the Bible and other good books.
6. Women teachers who marry or engage in other unseemly conduct will be dismissed.
7. Every teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequent pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop will give good reasons to suspect his worth, intentions, integrity and honesty.
8. The teacher who performs his labors faithfully without fault for five years will be given an increase of $2.00 a week in his pay — provided the Board of Education approves.

Punishments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ladies</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Boys and Girls Playing Together</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fighting at School</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Quarrelling at School</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gambling or Betting at School</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Playing at Cards at School</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Clothing for Every Foot Over Three Feet Up a Time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Telling Lies</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Telling Tales Out of School</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Going Each Other Ill Names</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Swearing at School</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. For Making a Noise in School</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. For Denying a Teacher’s Authority</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Making Swings and Swinging on Them</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. For Wanting Long Finger Nails</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Misbehaving in Persons on the Road</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. For Going in Girls Play Places</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Girls Going to Boys Play Places</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Coming to School With Dusty Faces and Hands</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. For Calling Each Other Lines</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. For Wrestling at School</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. For Wanting Each Other Washing at Playtimes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Ruffling at School</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. For Going and Playing about the Mill or Creek</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. For Going, about the Barn, or doing any Mischiefs about the Place</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

November 9, 1856

1881

Before

After
Brown vs. Board of Education

**Separate Is Not Equal**

**Timeline**

1896 - *Plessy v. Ferguson*

U.S. Supreme Court rules, in a case concerning railroad passenger cars, that laws requiring segregated facilities do not violate the Constitution.

1945 - *Méndez v. Westminster* 1946

The California State Supreme Court rules against the segregation of Latino children in an Orange County School.

1952 - *Brown v. Board of Education*

1954 - *Brown v. Board of Education*

1955 - *Brown v. Board of Education* (also known as *Brown II*). The Court rules that in implementing the first Brown decision, desegregation is to proceed with "all deliberate speed," and each local school district can set its own timetable.

1963 - Civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama

1964 - Passage of Civil Rights Act

**Méndez v. Westminster 1946**

The California State Supreme Court rules against the segregation of Latino children in an Orange County School.

1952 - *Brown v. Board of Education* first filed with the U.S. Supreme Court.

1954 - *Brown v. Board of Education*: U.S. Supreme Court overturns *Plessy v. Ferguson*, ruling that the doctrine of separate but equal violates the 14th Amendment guarantee of equal protection.

1955 - *Brown v. Board of Education* (also known as *Brown II*). The Court rules that in implementing the first Brown decision, desegregation is to proceed with "all deliberate speed," and each local school district can set its own timetable.

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**And today...**

Schools in the U.S. are more segregated today than they have been in more than 4 decades. According to a new Civil Rights report published by UCLA, schools in the U.S. are 44% non-white, and minorities are rapidly emerging as the majority of public school students in the U.S. Latinos and blacks, the two largest minority groups, attend schools more segregated today than during the civil rights movement 40 years ago. In Latino and African American populations, 2 out of every 5 students attend intensely segregated schools.
The March Continues

My Grandmother – Nanny or Grace Ott West – and the History of Teaching