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Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education: A Historical Analysis of Teacher Education Institutions

**By Chara Haeussler Bohan
& J. Wesley Null**

The history of normal school education remains an area of study that has attracted relatively little attention from educational historians in recent years, although a growing body of literature is emerging (see, Allison, 1998; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Herbst, 1991; Lucas, 1997; Monroe, 1952; Salvatori, 1996). Nonetheless, early normal schools in New England and the Midwest have received greater attention than those established in the Southwest. Normal schools were first established and derived their name from France. These institutions were established specifically to educate and train teachers, and they quickly spread across Europe and later to the United States as public education blossomed. This research details the normal school narrative in the late 1800s and early 1900s when “normals” primarily served as the only means for women in the Southwest to achieve advanced education. The intersection between gender and teacher education at normal schools is ex-

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Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

plored, as gender became a defining characteristic of these institutions. Eventually, many normal schools became universities that exist today.

Clear understandings of normal schools and teacher educators make enquiry into this area difficult in the contemporary world, and historical analysis is even more complex. The deeply contextual nature of the teaching profession further compounds the study of normal schools (Borrowman, 1956). The manner in which prospective teachers have been educated at particular institutions always has been heavily influenced by the specific nature of the institutions where this practice took place. At the same time, however, various states throughout the 20th century adopted standards for certification that prospective teachers in particular states had to attain before earning a certificate to teach. Thus, programs for the education of teachers have reflected not only the nature of specific institutions, but also the requirements mandated by state departments of education across the country.

Perhaps the most important issue that remains to be investigated in the story of normal school education is the question of gender. In order to understand the development of teacher education more fully, a historical analysis of the confluence of gender and teacher education curriculum at specific normal schools in Texas was undertaken. Research on normal school curriculum between the years 1890 and 1930 sheds light on the broader field of teacher education as it is commonly understood in the early 21st century. A comparison to normal schools in other states helps to highlight national trends. The teacher education curriculum at normal schools has served as a focus of investigation. Nevertheless, Christine Ogren (2005) noted in her work on normal schools that the voices of the students, who certainly influenced the curriculum, also must be explored.

Gender

More than any other field, the profession of teaching has been shaped by gender for centuries. In this research context, gender provides a theoretical framework to analyze teacher education in normal schools. Comparisons between men and women in the realm of early teacher education institutes serve to illuminate understanding of the history of education. This analytical framework is informed by many contemporary historians of education in the field who have helped to further knowledge of female education (see, Blount, 2005; Crocco, Munro & Weiler, 1999; Gordon, 1990; Rousmaniere, 2005; Sadovnik & Semel, 2002; Thorne, 1995). The feminization of the profession, especially in elementary education, following the establishment of normal schools has been well documented (Amott & Matthaie, 1991). Normal schools, which dominated elementary teacher education in the U.S. well into the 20th century, enrolled an overwhelming majority of women. The normal schools, however, evolved. Once they became state teachers colleges and later regional state universities, they began to employ an increasing number of faculty members from a wide variety of disciplines. These professors included mathematicians, historians, and philosophers, for example, and research became increasingly important.

The gendered nature of the normal schools faculty—and its transition—merits

detailed exploration. How did questions of gender relate to the evolution of teacher education curriculum? To what extent did faculty members from disciplines outside education, who were hired at various normal schools, view the profession of teaching? How did questions of gender relate to the evolution of normal schools into teachers colleges and later into regional state universities? These questions are not easy to answer and directly highlight the extremely gendered nature of the teaching profession itself (see, Carter, 2002; Dzuback, 2003; Eisenmann, 1997; Gordon, 1990; Sadovnik & Semel, 2002; Weiler, 1997).

Despite the fact that normal schools served as a primary avenue for educating women in the U.S., normal schools have been neglected in the historiography of women's education. According to Christine Ogren, historians of women's education have tended to focus on the more prestigious, elite colleges and universities (Ogren, 1996). Yet, she notes that in the years between 1880 and 1910, 32 to 40 percent of women in higher education attended normal schools. Later demographic analyses have estimated that nearly half of the women in higher education attended normal schools. Normal schools prepared students for teaching, which was one of the only professions available to educated women in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Many other professions—for example medicine, law, and business—were closed to women, with the exception of supportive roles such as nurse or secretary. But teaching is viewed as traditional, rather than an occupation that broke gender stereotypes. Hence, teaching is seemingly less intriguing to historians interested in women who braved new paths.

As Ogren (1996) and Carter (2002) point out, however, teaching may appear conventional, but often women teachers were quite radical in their actions. Crocco, Munro, and Weiler (1999) describe women teachers in *Pedagogies of Resistance* who acted as agents of change for themselves, their students, their schools, and the society at large. During the zenith of normal schools, during the late 1800s and early 1900s, women teachers comprised many of the suffragists who organized and advocated for the right to vote. Indeed, Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, and Carrie Chapman Catt had been teachers. The discrimination they faced in the work place served as a catalyst for their recognition of the need for women's political rights (Carter, 2002). Discrimination in the school work place acquired many forms, but most prominent was the discrepancy in salaries for male and female teachers. Women teachers in many cities earned one-third to one-fourth the pay as their male counterparts in the same job (Carter, 2002). Although teachers comprised the largest profession in the suffrage movement, school administrators often did not support teacher involvement in the cause. Even some elite higher education institutions, such as Vassar College, in the early 1900s imposed bans on discussing and organizing suffrage activities on campus. Lucy M. Salmon, a progressive historian at Vassar, faced reprimand from the school's administration for her involvement with the suffrage movement (Bohan, 2004; Crocco & Davis, 1999). Furthermore, some teachers confronted the genuine threat of losing their jobs because of suffrage activities. In 1912, Catholic teacher Aimee Hutchinson was fired because of her

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

participation in a suffrage parade (Carter, 2002). As Carter (2002) notes, teacher advocacy did not end in 1920 with the passage of the 19th Amendment. Succeeding generations of teachers fought for an end to marriage bans, and later struggled to gain maternity rights (Carter, 2002).

In addition to examining curricula at particular normal schools in the Southwest, which partakes in the top-down approach to historical investigation, student and faculty voices are heard through their participation in school newspapers, yearbooks, oral histories, and letters. Examination of the extra curriculum is critical as well, as Frederick Rudolph has explained. Student creativity and extracurricular learning serve as powerful forces in the life of the university (Dennis & Kauffman, 1966; Rudolph, 1962). Furthermore, as Ogren (2005) suggests, race and class were more diverse at normal schools because of the non-elite, “people’s college” status of normal schools in American society. Normal school students were not the privileged young women in Barbara Solomon’s (1985) *In the Company of Educated Women*, but more typical, ordinary female students. Of course, Solomon’s work is considered a classic, but as Linda Eisenmann (1997) notes, Solomon’s (1985) analysis is limited in certain aspects. For example, she notes an absence of discussion about how the federal government influenced higher education (Eisenmann, 1997). Often normal schools were viewed as especially accessible to large numbers of students because of convenient locations and affordable expense. For example, in Texas during the early 1900s, state normal school tuition was free, because it was subsidized by the state government.

Of course, state regulation of normal schools meant that an important avenue for educating women was influenced by the government. Michael Apple (1986) has suggested that strong controls existed precisely because teachers were predominantly female. In Texas, normal school enrollments by gender reflected national trends, and the majority of normal school students in the state were female. Single sex female colleges did not flourish in the Southwest, as they did in the Northeast and Midwest where elite institutions of higher education developed, for example the seven sister colleges. Therefore, normal schools were integral to the education of the majority of females in the region. Enrollments by gender at different institutions varied over the years; nevertheless, the majority of students at normal schools were female during the 1880-1930 time period. For example, at Southwest Texas State Normal School, women comprised approximately 64 percent of the student body in 1904-05, almost 76 percent in 1909-1910, and 73 percent in 1919-1920 (Ogren, 2005; *Southwest Texas State Normal School Bulletin* [STSNSB], 1919-29). In California, the normal school in Los Angeles, which became the University of California at Los Angeles, was similarly comprised of a largely female student body. In 1930, 72 percent of the graduates were female and 28 percent were male.

State Context: Texas

In Texas, debates raged on with regard to the appropriate curriculum for pro-

spective teachers. Like other Southern and Western states in the union, the rise of teacher education in Texas corresponded with the creation of a public school system. During Reconstruction, many Northern politicians moved to Texas to enact laws they perceived to be necessary for the further development of education. One of these laws was what educational historian Frederick Eby (1925) termed the “Radical School Law” of 1878. This law mandated a highly centralized system of public education for the state. Although the legislature had passed a law in 1854 that created *de jure* public education in the state, no system of public education in Texas was established *de facto* until Reconstruction. Following the passage of the “Radical School Law” in 1878, normal schools became necessary across the state. The new public schools needed teachers. Sam Houston State Normal Institute, founded with money from the George Peabody foundation in 1879, was the first of these institutions. The same year, the State Normal of Texas for Colored Students in Prairie View, Texas, which had been established originally as an Agricultural and Mechanical College, was converted to a normal school (Ogren, 1996; Wilson, 1986). The Peabody fund, established by wealthy New England merchant George Peabody (1795-1869), was the most influential force in helping to establish normal schools in Texas. An initial endowment of one million dollars eventually grew to a three and one-half million dollar fund (Wilson, 1986). As public education flowered in Texas, more teachers were necessary. Thus, other normal schools were founded (Ogren, 2005).

Texas was late, compared with other states in the U.S., to establish normal schools. In his 1851 seminal work on normal schools, Henry Barnard traced the origin of normal schools in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Michigan. These states founded normal schools for the education of “the female teachers of all her schools” so they could be trained to provide an education “which is free to all and practically enjoyed by the children of the rich and the poor” (Barnard, 1851, p. 3-5). Texas suffered from a serious lack of qualified and licensed teachers in the mid to late 1800s. However, when the general agent of the Peabody fund, Dr. Barnas Sears, visited Texas in 1869, he found political chaos and controversy surrounding the school system. Thus, he advised against investment. By 1879, despite Texas Governor Roberts’ veto of a bill to appropriate funds for the schools because they were in such bad condition (he viewed spending money on the schools as wasteful), Sears was able to garner support for the establishment of a normal school (Eby, 1925; Wilson, 1986). After Sam Houston State and Prairie View, the next *public* normal school was not established until 1901. In 1899, the state had authorized support for two more normal schools at Denton and San Marcos. In 1901, the state appropriated funds for North Texas State Normal College (at Denton), and Southwest Texas State Normal College (at San Marcos). By the early 1900s, normal schools were budding across the state.

The legislature played an important role in the growth of the normal school movement in Texas; thus, the movement was perhaps more centralized than in other states. In response to a severe teacher shortage in the state, the Texas legislature appropriated funds to build more normal schools (Eby, 1925). Despite the three

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

extent normal schools and the few private colleges that offered programs to prepare teachers, there still were not enough teachers to meet the demand. In 1903, Southwest Texas State Normal School in San Marcos opened officially. In 1910, West Texas State Normal School was founded in Canyon. In 1917, East Texas State Normal College in Commerce was established, and, in 1920, Sul Ross State Normal School in Alpine was created. These normal schools remain in business today, and all have transitioned to large state or regional universities.

Certainly, other normal schools were created that subsequently were forced to close their doors. In 1896, for example, *The Texas School Journal* advertised for Central Texas Normal College in Temple (Advertisement, p. 156). Central Texas announced that students could “enter at any time and select” their own studies. The curriculum at such small schools was often paltry and lacking in academic rigor. For example, Central Texas offered courses that focused on business studies more than teacher preparation. Courses included elocution, music, short-hand, typewriting, business and literary studies. East Texas State Normal in Commerce (1889) had been a private enterprise, but was taken over by the state in 1917 to avoid closure. Not surprisingly, some normal schools were forced to close their doors indefinitely. Those with state support were more likely to survive.

State control and centralization of teaching was not without controversy in Texas. State authorization of teaching certificates meant that county boards of examiners would lose authority over the licensing process for teachers. State licensure meant that the teacher education curriculum, even at private institutions, would be affected. In 1896, a proponent of state control, A. S. Wertheim, advocated abolishing the county board system and instituting a state board of examiners. He found many irregularities and problems with the county system. A state system, he believed, would have many benefits. One advantage would be increased accessibility and mobility of teachers throughout the state. Another would be uniform academic requirements for teachers in the public school system. A third advantage related to cost and the increased need for teachers. If the examinations could be paid for out of the state’s general fund, thereby making the exam cost free of charge to applicants, more prospective teachers could be attracted to the profession. Writing in response to Wertheim, Joe Shelby Riley (1896) claimed that if Wertheim’s assertions about the problems with the county system were true, “then a majority of our teachers, county boards, and county judges are liars, drunkards, and perjurers” (p. 162-163). Riley (1896), however, believed that a large majority of teachers in Texas “are upright Christian men and women and are well qualified for their respective positions” (p. 162-163). Riley’s arguments were in vain, however, as the teacher shortage intensified, particularly in rural areas of the state, demands on the state legislature to solve the education problems increased.¹

State Certification Examinations

The Texas state government clearly gained control over the certification of teachers by the early 1900s. Even in the late 1890s, the state created examination

questions that were to be used in county exams. These questions were rigorous. They belie assertions that the education of teachers lacked thoroughness. In his analysis of teacher education in America, Christopher Lucas noted that normal schools were objects of “derision, suspicion, and distrust” due to poor teaching and intellectually meager curriculum (Lucas, 1999, p. 30). Some of the subject matter questions on the Texas teacher certification examination covered material taught in high schools, as teachers were expected to demonstrate broad knowledge of material to be taught. Other questions demanded higher levels of thinking more typical of current university education. Different questions were asked of teacher candidates depending on the level of certification sought. The three levels of certification were called second grade (lowest level), first grade (intermediate level), and permanent (highest level).

State examination questions in February, 1896, included questions on methods and management, grammar, arithmetic, state history, spelling, writing, geography, physiology, composition, physical geography, civil government, United States history, geometry, physics, mental science, moral science, algebra, history of education, American literature, English literature, general history, chemistry, bookkeeping, solid geometry, and trigonometry. Sample questions reveal the breadth of learning, and the high level of thinking demanded of teacher candidates. For example, in the section on methods and management required of all certification levels, students were asked:

1. State briefly the real aims and purposes of education.
 2. Name four good qualities of the successful teacher. Explain the value of each.
 3. State reasons for or against corporal punishment.
 4. Is formal grammar a proper study for young children? Give reasons for your answer.
- (*Texas School Journal* [TSJ], 1896, p. 168)

The section on writing demonstrated both the higher level and lower level knowledge expected of teacher candidates. In the section on grammar, the future teachers were asked to name the different classes of pronouns and to give examples of each class (TSJ, 1896, p. 168). Students were asked to explain the essentials of good writing, and they also had to provide a specimen of penmanship. Considerable factual recall of information was expected, in addition to analysis, evaluation, and judgment. The United States history questions demonstrate the vast amount of information to be recited and then analyzed:

1. Name five of the most important political parties that have existed in the United States since the Declaration of Independence. Name one of the leading principles or purposes of each.
2. Name and locate three of the most important battles of the Revolution. Why are these regarded as important battles?
3. Discuss briefly the Kansas-Nebraska bill.
4. When was the battle of Manassas Junction, or Bull Run fought? What was the result? (TSJ, 1896, p. 169)

In science and mathematics, students were given problems to solve, terms to define,

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

and principles to explain. For example, the physics questions required for the first grade certificate asked prospective teachers to do the following:

1. Define physics, matter, molecule, atom, physical change.
2. State the laws of falling bodies. How far will a body fall in 12 seconds? How far will it fall in the 8th second?
3. A body on the surface of the earth weighs 3600 pounds. Would a different weight in the same body be shown if weighted with a pair of platform scales on a mountain six miles high? Why? (TSJ, 1896, p. 170)

To earn a permanent certificate, students were asked rigorous questions about the history of education, American literature, British literature, chemistry, geometry, and trigonometry. Students were expected to trace the development of the common school system and normal schools in the United States, to discuss the character and work of Horace Mann and Pestalozzi, and to explain Rousseau's ideas on education. Candidates also discussed the writings of Cotton Mather, Washington Irving, John Lathrop Matley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Geoffrey Chaucer, Robert Browning, Samuel Johnson, and Lord Tennyson. Finally, in geometry and trigonometry, students had to demonstrate their ability to solve problems such as:

1. In a triedral angle the sum of any two of the plane angles is greater than the third angle. Demonstrate.
2. Two parallelepipeds which have the same base and same altitude are equivalent. Demonstrate.
3. Construct the functions of an angle in Quadrant III. Give all the signs. How many angles less than 360° have the value cosine equal to $+\frac{7}{8}$, and in what quadrants do they lie? (TSJ, 1896, p. 171)

Certainly, the state examination questions reveal that teacher candidates were expected to have a broad range of knowledge. These examinations also forced prospective teachers to master lower level and higher level thinking—the range of Bloom's taxonomy—factual recall, explanation, analysis, evaluation, and judgment.

State Normal Schools Flourish

In many respects, the normal schools under study reflected broader nation-wide changes in normal school education. Indeed, bureaucratization, standardization, and gender played a similarly significant role in teacher education throughout the United States. A comparison to teacher education in California is illustrative (Crocco, Munro, & Weiler, 1999). In her study of California educators, Corinne Seeds and Helen Heffernan, Weiler found that these women educators, who worked within the confines of traditional male-dominated education bureaucracies, were able to promote educational reform. Reforms included the establishment of kindergartens, playgrounds, and teacher training schools. In addition, normal schools in California experienced similar transition in names, degrees offered, and status. For example, Los Angeles Normal School, founded in 1882, became the Southern Branch of the University of California in 1919, and eventually the University of California

at Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1933. The expansion of degrees corresponded with the transformation from normal school to university. The teachers course was extended to four years, and the first bachelors degree was granted in 1923 (Crocco, Munro, & Weiler, 1999). A gendered hierarchy developed as the normal school became part of the university, and many professors, including the president of UCLA, disdained teacher education. According to Ogren (2005), reforms to teacher education began in the Northeast and Midwest, and then were followed in the West and South. The Southwest may have been last to develop teacher education reforms. Arizona, the 48th state, officially gained statehood in 1912, and Texas, although the 28th state in 1845, had the legacy of being an independent republic.

Despite a protracted transition in teacher education, normal schools in Texas began to flourish. In the 1880s, the success of Sam Houston State led state authorities to organize summer normal institutes for teachers already working to increase their knowledge (Wilson, 1986). The curricula offered at the summer normals was approved by the State Department of Education. Instruction was offered in subjects tested on the state teacher certification examinations. The summer normals continued for fifty years. Both private universities, such as Baylor University, and public institutions, such as Sam Houston State, held summer normal institutes.

By the early 1900s, state control over the teacher certification process increased. In 1911, the 32nd legislature of Texas established the State Board of Normal Regents, which was vested with the power of complete control over the normal schools of Texas (STSNSB, 1921). The Board of Normal Regents included the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and four other regents appointed by the Texas governor. Not only did state control over the certification of teachers increase, but the state was instrumental in raising the standards for the educational attainment of teachers. Entrance requirements were made uniform for all the Texas normal schools, the course of study was standardized and raised from three to four years, and five distinct curricula for teacher education were implemented (Eby, 1925; Wilson, 1986). The five areas of specialization included agriculture, industrial arts, language, sciences, primary studies, and art. Clearly, the state exerted strong control over the Texas' teacher education curriculum.

In 1913, the 33rd legislature turned normal schools into junior colleges by authorizing the addition of two years of work of college rank. In 1917, the Board of Normal Regents raised the standards of state normal schools, once again, by endorsing two additional years of college work, thereby elevating normal schools to standard senior colleges with four year degree programs. The expansion of the normal school curriculum and course offerings to four year college equivalency enabled students at normal schools to earn bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degrees in education. In 1917, the 35th legislature authorized the establishment of four more normal schools: Sul Ross State Normal College in Alpine, East Texas Normal College in Commerce, Stephen F. Austin Normal College in Nacogdoches, and South Texas State Normal College at Kingsville (Wilson, 1986). The official opening dates for some of these later normal schools was delayed due to U.S. entry

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

into World War One. The establishment of Stephen F. Austin marked the end of the normal school movement in Texas, and the beginning of the transition to the teachers college era. Stephen F. Austin, in fact, was opened as a Teachers College. It never offered the hybrid high school/college curricula representative of earlier Texas normal schools.

Normal schools offered opportunities for female students to study and learn. These possibilities were not available at single-sex male institutions. Moreover, in general, normal schools included more women on their faculty (Cotrell, 1993). For example, Annie Web Blanton, who became the first woman state superintendent in Texas in 1918, had been on the North Texas faculty in the early 1900s. When Blanton arrived in Denton, eight of her 14 colleagues were women. To be sure, as Mary Ann Dzuback (2003) noted in her presidential address to the History of Education society, “The story of higher education in the United States is a story that cannot be understood without thorough attention to gender as the fundamental defining characteristic of American educational institutions, ideas, and practices” (p. 174).

The feminization of the teaching workforce was critical to the evolution and growth of teacher education curriculum. In addition, states played a central role in the standardization and bureaucratization of teacher education, thus reducing the autonomy and decision-making abilities of teacher educators. These issues will serve as the analytical centerpiece for this research that examines the particular teacher education curriculum and the role of gender at two specific institutions that educated teachers in Texas. Both Southwest Texas State Normal School and North Texas Normal School were public normal schools founded near the turn of the century.

Texas Normal College and Teachers’ Training Institute

The institution known today as the University of North Texas at Denton serves as a noteworthy example of the myriad ways that gender impacted the evolution of teacher education curriculum in the early 20th century. Founded in 1890 as Texas Normal College and Teachers’ Training Institute, North Texas had humble origins (Rogers, 2002). The first classes were taught in the upstairs rooms of a hardware store. Joshua C. Chilton was the man responsible for bringing a college to Denton, Texas, a remote southwestern locale with town boosters who sought to accommodate the increasing population. Chilton had been a public school teacher in Indiana (LaForte & Himmel, 1989; Cotrell, 1993).²

In its early history, North Texas was popularly referred to as “Texas Normal College.” The institution’s formal, original name was Texas Normal College and Teacher Training Institute. In some respects, the institution was divided with regard to its purpose from the day it was founded, or at least during its early life as a private institution from 1890-1901. The first degrees offered at North Texas were a Bachelor of Science degree, a Bachelor of Arts degree, and a Bachelor of Pedagogy degree. Individuals who took these degrees planned either to teach in local elementary public schools or serve as country superintendents or perhaps even as

high school teachers. Students who did not wish to remain at the institution for an extended period of time could stay for a shorter duration, for example one year or even one semester, to earn a teaching certificate rather than a degree. Despite the emphasis on the Texas Normal College rather than the Teacher Training Institute aspect of the institution, an emphasis on teacher education curriculum was evident in North Texas' early history.

Like many early institutions that focused on teacher education, North Texas prided itself on being "more accessible, more democratic, and more inclusive" (LaForte, 1989, p. vii). The school also was more affordable than other state and private universities of the time. An 1892 advertisement for the school boasted "Expenses Lower than Elsewhere" (LaForte, 1989, p. 33). Tuition for a four week program was five dollars. The six week cost was seven dollars and fifty cents. When the state took over the institution, tuition became free. In order to attract students, a variety of coursework was offered, which included Optional or Preparatory class, Teachers' Training Course, Scientific Course, Full Classical Course, Engineering Course, Course in Elocution and Literature, Business College Course, Conservatory Music Course, and Fine Arts (Rogers, 2002).

Because of the popularity of teacher education and the shortage of teachers in the state, the school grew quickly. At its founding, 185 students enrolled. By 1901 the school had 781 students. In 1915, there were 1,883 students, and, in 1923, when the school officially changed its name to North Texas State Teachers College, 4,736 were students enrolled (LaForte, 1989). In the early 1900s, teaching was one of the few professions open to women (Gordon, 1990; Solomon, 1985). Between two-thirds and three-fourths of North Texas's enrollment consisted of women in 1923. Moreover, two-thirds of the school's student body attended in the summer, when most teachers were relieved from their professional duties.

Despite the preponderance of female students, North Texas never sought to be a single-sex educational institution, similar to the seven sister colleges, for example Wellesley, Vassar, or Mount Holyoke (see, Crocco & Davis, 1999; Miller-Bernal, 2000; Palmieri, 1995). Indeed, the growth of women's colleges did not impede the increase in co-educational institutions, as well (Solomon, 1985). In an 1890-91 announcement for its course of study, the administration at North Texas stated that single-sex institutions were a "relic of monasticism," and that "it is obvious that the friends of co-education are increasing" (LaForte, 1989, p. 31). North Texas remained committed to co-education, and its curriculum reflected this promise. An 1892 advertisement for the Teachers Course, for example, boasted that the subjects embraced included, "Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Rhetoric, Philology, Elements of Latin, Physiology, Physical Geography, Botany, Zoology, Physics, Elementary Chemistry, U.S. History, Texas History, Psychology, School Management, Civil Government, and Men of Letters" (LaForte, 1989, p. 33).

During its first eleven years, Texas Normal College and Teacher Training Institute was a private, Christian institution. All faculty members were Christian, and the administration required chapel exercises five days per week for all students.

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

Texas Normal College's teacher education curriculum can best be described during these years as incompletely developed. Because the institution had difficulty attracting enough students during its early years as a private entity, the school advertised an extremely wide variety of courses and options for students. In other words, not everyone who attended Texas Normal College during the 1890s planned to become a teacher, although teacher education served as a major component of the institution.

To address the problem of declining enrollment and struggling finances, Texas Normal College teamed up with the state of Texas in 1901. In short, the state government took over the institution in order to help it survive. Residents of Denton prided themselves in their recently created institution of higher education, and they were determined to find a way to help it thrive. Political and financial support from the state government in the form of persuasion and student scholarships helped the school continue. With this change in power, however, state officials both changed the name of the institution, and expected the school's mission to focus exclusively on the education of teachers. The change from "Texas Normal College and Teacher Training Institute" to "North Texas State Normal College" in 1901 brought many changes to the institution, including the creation of a fully developed teacher education curriculum.

An 1898-99 course catalog advertised a special philosophical approach evident in the teacher education curriculum at North Texas. The catalog explained, "Much of method in normal teaching is obtained in the regular class, indeed *this is the life and genius of normal training* . . . Constant effort is made to reveal, impress and inculcate the spirit and principle of approved normal methods. Some of our best teachers devote their attention to this department" (*Texas Normal College Course Catalog*, 1898-99, p. 8). The catalog's discussion of this "life and genius" and spirit of the institution reveals that faculty rejected the idea that "what to teach" should be separated from "how to teach" within the teacher education curriculum. Indeed, this language indicates that many faculty at North Texas espoused the integrationist pedagogical philosophy that was prevalent in many normal schools of the time.³

This integrationist philosophy remained with the institution as it focused its efforts on the education of teachers beginning in 1901. With state political and financial support, the new North Texas State Normal College described its purpose as a "school maintained for the exclusive purpose of training and educating persons in the science and art of teaching. The distinguishing characteristic of a normal school is the fact that, in addition to an academic course, it offers instruction in the principles that underlie all education" (*North Texas State Normal College, Course Catalog* [NTSNCCC] 1901-02). Beginning in 1901, the stated supposition of the institution was that everyone who attended planned to be a teacher. Other normal schools, such as Southwest Texas State, had similar missions. North Texas' curriculum included coursework of the liberal and professional types, but experiential courses in practice teaching would not be developed until the early 1910s.

The school opened in September of 1901 with 782 students (NTSNCCC, 1902-03). All students completed general education courses that included Gram-

mar and Composition, U.S. History, Algebra, Geometry, and School Management. Those who planned to become language teachers of one type or another completed additional coursework in Latin, German, Ancient History, History of English Literature, Shakespeare, History of Education, English History, Civics, Virgil, Cicero, and German Composition and Classics. Students who wanted to teach science completed the general requirements as well as Physical Geography, Physiology, Psychology, and Physics (NTSNCCC, 1902-03). Other available courses for prospective teachers included Primary and Art, Agriculture, Home Economics, and Manual Training. The purpose of the teacher education curriculum was to provide students with knowledge of general subjects like grammar, composition, and U.S. history, and then allow them to specialize in the various subjects they planned to teach upon graduation. As the “life and genius” advertisement described, methods of teaching these various subjects were taught at the same time as the subjects themselves. There was no distinction between liberal and professional aspects of the teacher education curriculum. This pattern of integration remained with the institution throughout the 1890 to 1920 time period.

Of the 782 students who enrolled for the 1901-02 regular academic year at North Texas, 503 of them were women, which meant that the percentage of female students was 64 percent, and the male student percentage was 36 percent (NTSNCCC, 1902-03). The number of females rose steadily during the next 10 years as the institution focused its efforts increasingly on the education of teachers. During the 1910-1911 regular academic year, 460 of the 613 North Texas Students were women. The percentage of women had risen from 64 percent in 1902 to 75 percent in 1911 (NTSNCCC, 1911-12). Clearly, the decision to focus the institution specifically on the education of teachers had attracted more and more female students.

Despite this overwhelmingly female-dominated student body, however, the administration of the faculty at North Texas was managed by men, although a number of women did teach on the faculty. During the 1901-02 school year, for example, the faculty included 14 members, eight of whom were women. Most of the men taught courses that reasonably might be identified as typically male-dominated subjects, for example Latin, physics, chemistry, physiology, natural history, mathematics, and civics. Evidence of gender also can be found in the courses taught by the women, with most of them focusing on courses such as vocal music, primary methods, elocution, literature, and drawing. Despite their strong presence on the faculty and the overwhelmingly female-dominated student body, however, women never held leadership roles in the higher administration of North Texas throughout the period under study.

The Practice School

During the first 20 years of its existence, facilities for practice teaching did not exist at North Texas. In the battle that ensued between 1890 and 1920 over teacher education curriculum, however, the establishment of practice schools became an important tool for normal schools to use as they advertised that one program was

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

better than another. Many northeastern normal schools throughout the 19th century had created practice schools in order to provide their prospective teachers with the opportunity to “try out” some of their lessons before beginning their careers as teachers. Practice schools, however, were expensive to establish and run, so many state legislatures were reluctant to create them unless they were deemed absolutely necessary.

By 1912, two other normal schools in the state, West Texas State Normal in Canyon and Southwest Texas State Normal in San Marcos, already had founded practice schools on their campuses. Many faculty, administrators, and students viewed the North Texas teacher education curriculum as outdated because of the lack of a practice school, so the argument in support of the establishment of a practice school had considerable power by the early 1910s (Rogers, 2002).

President W. H. Bruce argued in front of a State Senate education committee in 1913 for funds to institute the College’s first practice school. Despite opposition from legislators who thought he was asking for an addition to the teacher education curriculum that was superfluous, Bruce was successful. The legislature authorized the use of approximately \$5,000 to build the school, which Bruce and others designed to include nine grades. In January of 1914, seven of these grades began operation. The school enrolled 100 young children and employed one director and four teachers. The purpose of the practice school was to provide prospective teachers the opportunity to take part in “the organization, conduct, control, instruction, and other details of a model public school, and to give students actual practice and experience in teaching under expert direction” (Rogers, 2002, p. 60). Children who attended the practice school for all nine years, through the 9th grade, could enroll immediately as freshmen at North Texas. Thus, a child growing up in Denton could begin school at the practice school as early as the age of seven and graduate 13 years later from North Texas with a bachelor’s degree without ever leaving the city limits.

Gender and Teacher Education Curriculum at North Texas

The period from 1890 to 1920 was a volatile one for North Texas. The curriculum for the institution prior to its becoming a state institution in 1901 was relatively underdeveloped. With state involvement in 1901, however, the single purpose of the institution gave rise to a teacher education curriculum that emphasized liberal and professional subjects. The further evolution of the curriculum in 1913 to include an experiential component resulted in the creation of a course of study that was similar in structure to other teacher education institutions across the country. Like other normal schools, gender also played a central role in the institution’s development. During the 1901 debate over state involvement, for example, a number of Denton businessmen argued against the idea because they thought bringing a normal school to town only would bring women. Consequently, a female-dominated population, they thought, would not bring the kind of industrial economic development that they sought (Rogers, 2002). The businessmen were so concerned about bringing

economic development to their town (as well as concerned that the proposed state normal school would not do so) that by 1905 they established a separate institution, originally called the College of Industrial Arts. This industrial college did not last, but the desire to bring young men rather than young women to Denton provides a glimpse at how gender affected higher education in Denton during this time.

Even within the largely female population at North Texas State Normal School, a hierarchy of important subjects developed. The institution always included a primary department which sought to graduate primary school teachers, but, like other normal schools as well as schools of education within universities, the evolution of teacher education curriculum marginalized the role of primary teaching. Other courses within the curriculum carried more status and prestige within the larger community. Clearly, upward mobility meant progressing from primary teacher to elementary teacher to high school teacher to principal to county superintendent and, perhaps, all the way to university professor of a respected discipline rather than a professor of pedagogy. Considering this evolution from the perspective of gender illuminates the extent to which teacher education curriculum has been dominated by men for at least 150 years.

Southwest Texas State Normal School

Teacher education curriculum certainly was affected by gender issues and centralized state control at Southwest Texas State Normal School, as well. The 26th legislature had passed an act in 1899 establishing Southwest Texas State Normal School. Not until 1901, when the 27th legislature appropriated \$25,000 in its first session and \$20,000 in its second session, to erect buildings, was the process of creating the state's fourth normal school realized (*Announcement of the Southwest Texas State Normal School, September 9, 1903-May 17, 1904* [ASTSNS], 1903). Ten years earlier, the 23rd legislature had allowed teachers holding diplomas from four normal schools, including Coronal Institute, which was a private institution located in San Marcos, to teach in the state during good behavior. Coronal Institute ceased existence, but San Marcos was established as a superior location for teacher education.

When Southwest Texas State Normal School opened its doors for the first school year in 1903, 17 faculty members were led by Principal Thomas G. Harris. The 17 faculty members at the new normal school in San Marcos taught a variety of subjects including English, Mathematics, Music, History, Physics, Chemistry, Primary Work, Reading, Physical Culture, German, Civics, Geography, Drawing, Latin, Biological Sciences, and Penmanship (ASTSNS, 1903). The faculty sought thoroughness and accuracy of scholarship, but limited the curriculum to the field of normal school work, and gave "no pretense of academic training" (ASTSNS, 1903, p. 10). The stated purpose of the school was written in the first bulletin succinctly. "This is a Normal School, established for the education of teachers" (ASTSNS, 1903, p. 9-10). Students were to remember that the school was "not a university or even a college," and furthermore, the institution did not "hope to give students a university or college education" and while faculty may hope students see the

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

advantages of advanced education, Southwest Texas State Normal School could not undertake such an “endeavor itself”(ASTSNS,1903, p. 10). The objective of the normal school at San Marcos was strikingly similar to the stated purpose established at North Texas, which also declared that the normal was neither a college nor a university, but created for the special training of teachers (Eby, 1925). Lucas (1999) asserts that the “blurry identity” of normal schools and “disputed purpose” plagued teacher education (p. 28). In Texas, however, the normal school mission was deeply powerful, especially at North Texas and Southwest Texas State (Lucas, 1999). Nonetheless, the typical normal school curriculum in the early 1900s remained a hybrid of high school and university level studies.

When Southwest Texas State Normal School opened in 1903, the complete course of study included three years of work. The first year was called freshman, the second was called junior, and the third was called senior. Students could apply to any of the different years depending upon their qualifications and the certification they sought. Completion of the freshman course led to a second grade certificate, valid for teaching in Texas schools for three years, completion of the junior course led to a first grade certificate, valid for six years, and graduation from the senior course led to a teaching certificate that was valid for life (ASTSNS, 1903). Students were required to be 16 years old to gain admission, and they had to pledge to teach in a public school for as many sessions as attended. In addition, Texas residency was mandatory and no tuition was charged. Although Southwest Texas State Normal School did not have dormitories, students resided in nearby boarding houses. The State Board of Normal Regents subsidized the board fee for a prescribed number of scholarship students (two in 1903/04)—an indication of support for teacher education and the desperate need for qualified teachers in the state.

The mission of Southwest Texas State Normal School was to “prepare worthy teachers for the schools of Texas” (ASTSNS, 1903, p. 23; Meyer & Null, 2004). Teachers were expected to possess untiring energy and dedication, as only men and women who welcomed hard work were “worthy to be admitted to ranks of the great brotherhood of teachers” (ASTSNS, 1903, p. 23). In fact, students were told explicitly in writing that they should not enter the normal school if they desired to study law, medicine, theology, or even general education, as the curriculum suited none but those preparing for the profession of teaching.

Over the years, the curriculum broadened. The number of faculty increased to meet the demands of a growing student body. The administration of the school remained male-dominated when C. E. Evans, who had earned a masters degree from the University of Texas at Austin, became the President. By 1912, 30 individuals comprised the faculty (*The Normal School Bulletin*, [NSB], 1913). Most faculty members held bachelors degrees, but some had earned masters degrees. The mission of the school remained similar to that established at its founding:

Efficient teachers are essential to good schools; normal schools are needed to assure an adequate supply of such teachers. Proficiency in teaching requires broad scholarship, insight into schools needs, and professional skill. The excellent

Chara Haeussler Bohan & J. Wesley Null

academic courses of the normal school give thorough and liberal scholarship; the strong pedagogic school gives clear insight into school problems; the training school applies the academic and professional knowledge in the schoolroom so as to give skill in teaching. (NSB, 1912, p. 10)

By 1912, the curriculum offered at Southwest Texas State Normal School comprised four years of study, and after 1914 no three year diplomas were granted. The terminal diploma offered was similar to a present day junior college degree. Completion of the normal school degree allowed a candidate to transfer to the junior class of a university or college. The curriculum, therefore, remained a hybrid between high school and university studies. Students selected from five different groups of courses, similar to picking a major. The five areas of study consisted of (1) Agriculture; (2) Industrial Arts; (3) Languages; (4) Primary, Elementary and Arts; and (5) Science and Mathematics (NSB, 1912). The State Board of Normal Regents fostered changes in degrees and, therefore, the development of a curriculum that equaled “junior college status” was a uniform transformation among the normal schools in the state. Government bureaucracy clearly influenced teacher education curriculum.

By 1917-1918, further significant changes in the life of the Southwest Texas State Normal School were apparent. First and foremost, the normal *school* at San Marcos became a normal *college*. Administrative officers, faculty, and student body all increased in number. C. E. Evans remained the President, but assisting him in administration were a Dean of Women, Mrs. Lillie T. Shaver, a Superintendent of the Training School, two librarians, and a secretary. The addition of a Dean of Women position achieved administrative leadership for a female for the first time at Southwest Texas State, and also revealed a concern for the largely female student body. The opening of school leadership positions in the early decades of the 20th century occurred throughout the U.S. to such a remarkable extent that the decade has been called a “golden age” for women school administrators (Blount, 1998). Unfortunately, the rise of women in educational leadership roles was fleeting, as subsequent decades have witnessed decline in the percentage of female educational administrators.

The number of faculty at Southwest Texas State continued to rise. Of the 43 faculty members, 12 held master’s degrees, 13 held bachelor’s degrees, and all six faculty who worked at the Training School earned degrees from normal schools or teachers colleges (NSB, 1917). The faculty had become increasingly better educated, at least with respect to the degrees they held. Moreover, a hierarchy of subjects became evident, and some courses were taught typically by females and others remained male-dominated. For example, in 1917, the home economics department comprised of three women faculty, whereas the mathematics faculty included three males and one female.

The broadening of the curriculum and enhancement of degree offerings continued. Diplomas were offered in seven areas, as Home Economics and History/English had been added. Beginning with the 1917-1918 school year, the first four year college degree was offered, which led to a bachelor’s degree in education.

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

Again, the state was critical to the transformation of the curriculum. In 1917, the Board of Normal Regents raised the standards of all state normals by authorizing two extra years of college studies, thereby making normal schools equivalent to standard senior colleges throughout the state and nation (NSB, 1921). Once again, state authority reduced teacher autonomy with respect to the teacher education curriculum. The state exerted further influence over the normals because all teaching certificates were issued by the State Department of Education.

The Training School

The training school at Southwest Texas was one of the earliest in the state. By 1918, the San Marcos campus comprised six buildings, including a newly erected Training School facility at a cost of \$85,000. Tuition and books remained essentially free (NSB, 1919). The faculty believed that a training school was critical to student success in teaching, and its establishment meant that the teacher education curriculum at Southwest Texas included liberal education, professional education, and an experiential component. The catalog stated that the training school “bears the same relation to the professional training of teachers as a laboratory bears to the training of scientists...” (NSB, 1917, p. 94). The school was organized with six grades, three in the Elementary Department and three in the Junior High School. In addition, a model rural school was housed within the training school. Supervisors guided the work of student teachers, who were required to submit lesson plans to teachers in advance of teaching lessons. Each grade in the training school had specific learning goals. For example, in third grade arithmetic, “students are drilled to count by twos, threes, fours, sixes, and sevens; also in the multiplication and division tables, including the sevens. Long division is not attempted until the latter part of the year” (NSB, 1917, p. 98).

Gender and the Southwest Texas State Curriculum

Despite an intense emphasis on the education of teachers, by the 1919-1920 academic year, the school offered its first studies outside of the education profession. A business administration curriculum was added, which included courses in shorthand, bookkeeping, accounting, auditing, and commercial law (NSB, 1919). Offering courses outside the realm of education studies clearly sowed the seeds for an eventual transition in the focus of the university. Furthermore, such curriculum changes ultimately contributed to significant changes in gender composition in the long term. As the school transitioned, curriculum offerings broadened, and the institution ceased to be a place that primarily educated females.

The importance of educating women in a normal school environment should not be underestimated. As Ogren (1996) notes, normal schools “fostered a professional spirit in women” (p. 192). Although some of the early teacher training curricula at normal schools throughout the U.S. may have deserved criticism, by the time Texas created normal schools the curricula was well-established and highly centralized.

Despite state encroachment on the autonomy of teacher educators and teachers, many female students clearly were taught to be reflective, thoughtful, and activist teachers, even if most students did not view themselves as radical. Ogren (1996) found a poem that Southwest Texas State Normal School student Carrie Hughston wrote in 1905 which evidenced contemplative and radical thought. Hughston wrote, “For in every teachers’ field of battle, In the busy work of life, We of the hardships must not prattle, But be *Normals in the strife!*” (Ogren, 1996, p. 192).

Yet, in 1920 the avowed purpose of the San Marcos normal school remained steadfastly the education of teachers. Calling itself “A School for Teachers,” the bulletin proclaimed that “the atmosphere of the normal school is charged with professional spirit; the normal school magnifies the calling of the teacher” (NSB, 1917, p. 10). The 1921-1922 bulletin stated that it was “the primary function of a normal school to train teachers for service in the public schools of a State” (*Normal College Bulletin*, 1921, p. 9). Enrollment figures from the time period reflect the fact that the majority of students were female, and course offerings also reflect these circumstances. For example, in 1919-1920 of the 567 students enrolled at San Marcos, only 154 were male. That same year, the State Board of Normal Regents, with the approval of the State Department of Education, approved a course of study in vocational home economics which had been authorized by the Smith-Hughes Act. The Home Economics department clearly attracted almost all female students, as evidenced from photographs of home economics students working in domestic science kitchens and standing outside their home economics building (NSB, 1917; NSB, 1913). The creation of a home economics curriculum for teachers reveals that even the federal government exerted influence over the curriculum offerings at normal schools, in a manner that also impacted gender composition.

The ascendancy of domestic science, as well as manual training, in the teacher education curriculum had important, if unintended consequences. Indeed, Tyack, Lowe, and Hansot (1984) claim that although schools may appear “more egalitarian than any other major institution” upon careful examination one may find “many subtle discriminations within the classroom and the school but also a set of largely unintended consequences of regarding public schooling as a class-blind enterprise” (p. 172). Clearly, the rise of domestic science curriculum was a “step backward” as “state normal schools began to move away from fostering intellectualism in female students” (Ogren, 1996, p. 284).

By 1920, educational historian Frederick Eby observed that normal schools had broadened the scope of their work and had become regular colleges for the training of teachers. Yet, in becoming colleges, the original mission of normal schools eroded gradually. No longer was the normal school curricula limited strictly to teacher education. A hierarchy of course offerings developed. Furthermore, the expansion of the curricula ultimately led to a change in gender composition at Southwest Texas State. As normal schools transformed into teachers colleges and later into large state/regional universities, they ceased to be institutions that primarily educated females or that primarily educated teachers. While these former normal schools

Gender and the Evolution of Normal School Education

retain some of their populist origins today, the slow escalation in tuition over the 20th century also has made these institutions more elitist than they had been in their formative years. Yet, these normal schools were the foundation of many institutions of higher education across the nation. They had begun to imitate other institutions that never held up the education of teachers as their only purpose.

Conclusion

The examination of normal school curricula with a particular focus on the issue of gender raises significant questions for educational historians as well as for those who educate teachers. One point that becomes evident when comparing these stories is the influence of the expansion of public education on teacher education curriculum. Without the Progressive-era public-spiritedness that gave rise to the creation of common schools, the creation of normal school curriculum probably would never have occurred. Moreover, as the demand for public education increased, the need for teachers, obviously, increased as well. A reasonable conclusion to draw from this phenomenon is that a strong connection exists between concerns for the common good within society as a whole and the extent to which institutions emphasize teacher education curriculum. Stated another way, increased individualism, privatization, and destruction of public education, as well as public institutions generally, only can produce a negative affect on curricula for the education of teachers. If education is not viewed as a public good, then the establishment and perpetuation of teacher education curriculum is seriously troubled.

In addition, gender influenced the development of teacher education. The institutions of higher education in this study ultimately had little incentive to teach those students who were viewed to be lowest on the rung of prestige, specifically the future teachers of primary and elementary school children. The institutions in this study eventually marginalized their curricula for the education of primary and elementary students. The movement to garner prestige required these institutions to move toward the education of high school teachers, to encourage educational research, and ultimately to broaden the curriculum to include areas of study not related to education. Consequently, the institutions began to move away from the education of primary and elementary school teachers.

The power and prestige, both within these institutions and beyond, only could be found during this time by following more male-dominated fields such as educational psychology, business, science, and administration. As a result, higher education de-emphasized societal roles that were dominated by women. The least popular concern was the teaching of women, more specifically the teaching of women who wanted to teach young children. There was no power in emphasizing this virtue. According to Crocco, Munro, and Weiler (1999), the history of women and education has paralleled that of men in many respects because both were subjected to the increased bureaucratization resulting from licensing, certification, hierarchical working conditions, and standardized teacher education curriculum. Yet, they note that "As specialization proceeded, women were typically relegated to lower rungs

of the occupational ladder... increasingly working *for* men in subsidiary capacities that allowed less scope for decision making and autonomy”(Crocco, Munro, & Weiler, 1999, p. 1). In the Southwest, the influence of gender upon the teacher education curriculum was profound. Until the “golden era,” only males served as administrators at the normal schools and departments of pedagogy included in this study. The success of female educational leadership in the 1910s was terribly short-lived, as males continued to hold most administrative roles in education throughout the 20th century.

Furthermore, the nature of the curriculum offered reflected the impact of gender. The early teacher education curriculum was intellectually rigorous, despite the hybrid nature of high school and university offerings. However, state licensing of teachers forced curriculum changes. A hierarchical structure intensified in courses of study during the time period. As a technician approach to educational study expanded, courses such as manual training and domestic science entered the curriculum. Separation by gender intensified with the development of such course offerings. Furthermore, the integration of educational studies with the various other disciplines disappeared. Today, teacher education institutions are overwhelming female, just as normal schools had been in the late 1800s and early 1900s. However, teacher education is often a small, marginalized component of a larger research university. The single-purpose of educating teachers and the fostering of a professional spirit in women has been lost. The populist origins and democratic sentiments have disappeared, just as free tuition has become a relic of the past. Only by recapturing this spirit can the education of teachers for the children of America once again thrive within the rapidly changing context of higher education.

Notes

¹ Interestingly, a similar teacher shortage problem exists in the state of Texas at present, and once again controversy over the licensing of teachers is a central point of debate as a means to solve the shortage. Indeed, recent proposals to change the licensing requirements of teachers have been the focus of intense statewide debate. The State Board for Educator Certification has considered a proposal to eliminate education course requirements and allow candidates with bachelor’s degrees simply take the state examination in order to become certified teachers. Rather than address the true causes of the current state teacher shortage, such as low pay and difficult working conditions, the legislature has considered reducing teacher certification requirements as a means to alleviate the current teacher shortage.

² Cotrell identifies Chilton as a Michigan educator. He was from Michigan, but had taught in Indiana.

³ For a rich discussion of integrationist pedagogical philosophy as it related to normal schools and teachers colleges, see William S. Learned, William C. Bagley, et al., *The Professional Preparation of Teachers for American Public Schools* (New York: Carnegie Foundation Bulletin No. 14, 1920), 128-247.

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Chara Haeussler Bohan & J. Wesley Null

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