

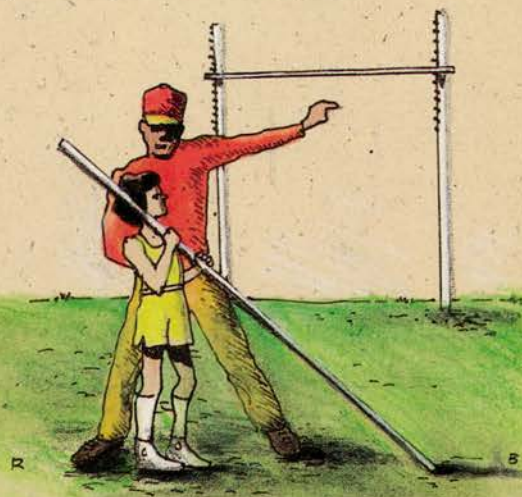
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
SUMMER 1994

AMERICAN Educator

“**F**or more than half a century, educational policy makers have made decisions based on the presumption that tougher course requirements automatically increase the dropout rate, especially among poor and minority students....However, the recent process of raising academic standards in high school by strengthening graduation requirements and reducing the number of electives that students may take has moved us closer to the goal of equal educational opportunity for larger numbers of students than ever before in our history. No group has responded more positively to these changes than African-American students who have increased their proportion of academic course-taking more dramatically than whites. Equally striking is the fact that during the very time that high school standards were being raised, the dropout rate fell, particularly among black students....This should put to rest the ritualized invocation of the threat of increased dropouts every time someone suggests that U.S. schools demand more from their students.”

High Standards for All

By Jeffrey Mirel and David Angus



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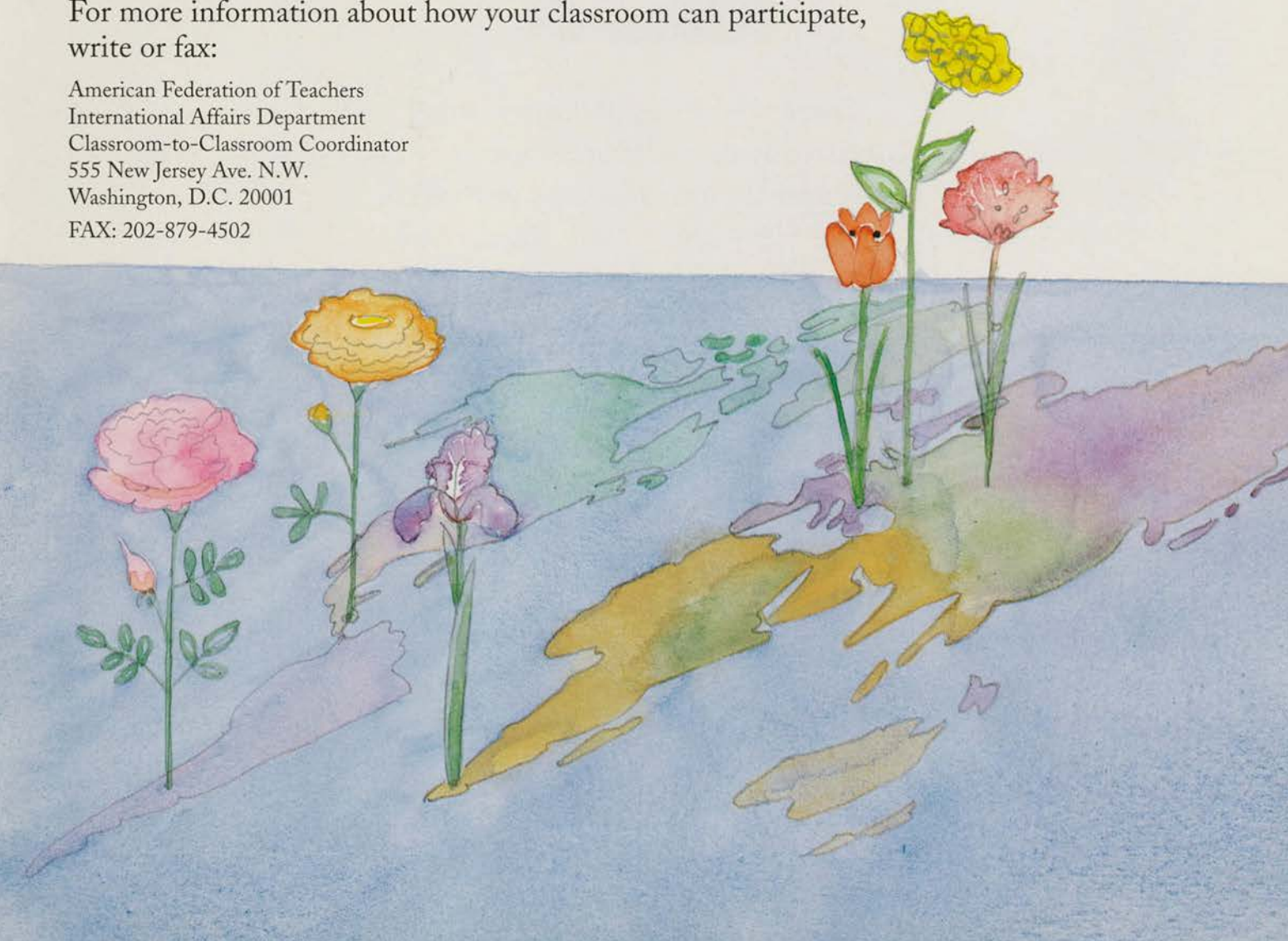
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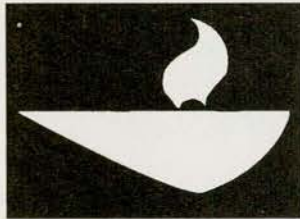
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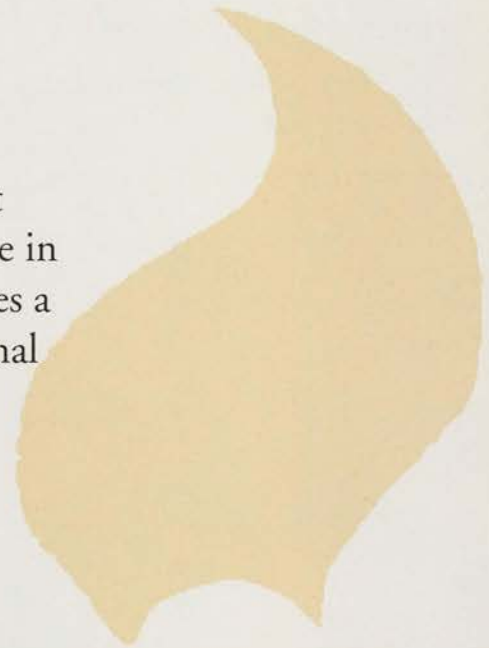
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The Professional Journal
of the American
Federation of Teachers
Volume 18, No. 2
Summer 1994

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The *American Educator* (USPS 130-610) is published quarterly by the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001-2079. Telephone: 202-879-4420.

American Educator is mailed to all AFT teacher, higher education and other school-related professional members. Annual subscription price: \$1.75 (included in membership dues) and available only as a part of membership. Subscription for others: \$8.

Signed articles and advertisements do not necessarily represent the viewpoints or policies of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

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Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *American Educator*, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001-2079.

General advertising office
555 New Jersey Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20001
Telephone: 202-879-4420

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Fax # 312-337-7685

American Educator is produced with the assistance of members of Local 2, Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, and members of AFT Staff Union. Composition and printing are done in 100 percent union shops.

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HIGH STANDARDS FOR ALL

By Jeffrey Mirel and David Angus

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Between 1982 and 1990, the percentage of minority students taking three years of high school math and science rose dramatically, from 10 percent to 41 percent of black students and from 6 percent to a third of Hispanic students. And the dire predictions that higher academic standards would lead to an increase in the dropout rate were turned upside down.

WARRIORS DON'T CRY

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In 1957, when the author was 15 years old, she and eight other black teenagers were the first to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Ark. In this excerpt from her powerful new book, Beals gives a first-person account of the segregationists' brutal campaign of taunts, threats, and violence—and the incredible courage and determination of these heroic youngsters.

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HIGH STANDARDS FOR ALL?

The Struggle for Equality in the American High School Curriculum, 1890-1990

BY JEFFREY MIREL AND DAVID ANGUS

All children, like all men, rise easily to the common level. There the mass stop; strong minds only ascend higher. But raise the standard, and, by a spontaneous movement, the mass will rise again and reach it.

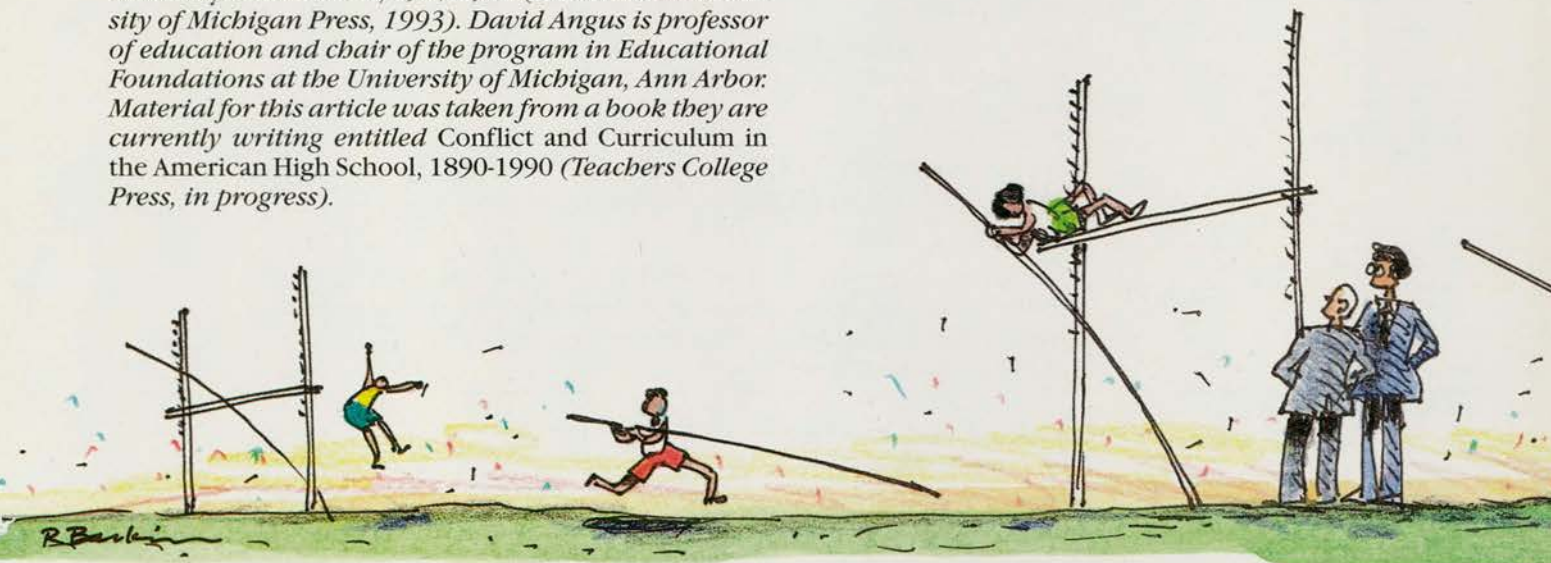
—from Horace Mann's *First Annual Report* (1837)

FOR MOST of this century the people who shaped the curriculum of the American high school were philosophically in line with many of the critics of national goals and standards today. They wholeheartedly believed that blanketly imposing high academic standards on all high school students would create greater educational inequality, arguing that such standards would reinforce and accentuate educational disparities between socioeconomic and racial groups. Close investigation of actual trends in high school student course-taking since the 1920s, however, does not validate that belief. To the contrary, our analysis of data shows that it was curricular differentiation that had a profoundly negative effect on the

*Jeffrey Mirel is associate professor of leadership and educational policy studies and a fellow at the Social Science Research Institute, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb. He is the author of *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System: Detroit, 1907-1981* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993). David Angus is professor of education and chair of the program in Educational Foundations at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Material for this article was taken from a book they are currently writing entitled *Conflict and Curriculum in the American High School, 1890-1990* (Teachers College Press, in progress).*

education of large numbers of American young people, particularly working class and black students. We focus on these trends in 20th-century American high schools in order to provide some insights into the current debate about national goals and standards. Our study leads us to believe that national goals and standards, wisely developed and applied, can greatly benefit American education. Such measures could constitute major steps toward equalizing educational quality and ensuring that all American students, particularly poor and minority students, have access to the same challenging programs and courses that students in the nation's best schools now receive.

This essay is based on findings from a study of high school course-taking that we conducted for the U.S. Department of Education.¹ In that study we analyzed a series of national surveys of high school course-taking conducted by the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) from 1928, 1934, 1949, 1961, and 1973. These surveys grew out of a group of USOE studies beginning in the 1890s. While some of the earlier studies focused on specific courses such as Latin and Greek or on a limited range of subjects, by 1922 the studies were national in scope and comprehensive enough to provide a national perspec-



tive on curriculum change over time. For example, we found that between 1922 and 1973 the number of distinct courses reported to the USOE rose from about 175 titles to more than 2,100. It is impossible to sort out the extent to which this increase represented new courses or merely variations or elaborations on older themes, but its magnitude makes it difficult to avoid the impression of curricular expansion running amok.

These surveys provide historians of the American high school with a series of increasingly detailed and trustworthy snapshots of high school course enrollments spanning the years from 1890 to 1973. In addition, researchers under contract to the National Center for Education Statistics have gathered similar data in 1982, 1987, and 1990, usually from student transcripts, which we linked to the earlier studies. All combined, the USOE surveys and the recent transcript studies provide a sweeping picture of high school curriculum development in the 20th century. Unfortunately, these data have rarely been utilized by scholars in describing the modern history of secondary education generally or the high school curriculum specifically.²

As rich as these data are, there are some limits to what they can show. Our study of course-taking and tran-

scripts investigated only the courses that students took, not the content of courses nor the effectiveness of teaching and learning in these courses. Yet despite these limitations, our study highlights several important developments and trends in American secondary education.

■ Since the 1890s, educators and scholars have engaged in impassioned debate over whether all students should follow essentially an academic program or a differentiated program that included vocational and general tracks; both sides in the debate believed their



approach would increase equal educational opportunity.

■ During the Great Depression, that debate was largely settled in favor of the advocates of curricular differentiation; as a consequence, between the 1930s and the 1970s the proportion of academic course-taking by American students fell steadily.

■ The "excellence" reforms of the late 1970s and early 1980s appear to have reversed the decline in academic course-taking; by 1990, more students and a greater percentage of students were taking academic courses than at any time since the late 1920s.

■ In the past decade, minority students have increased their amount of academic course-taking at a faster rate than white students. At the same time, the high school dropout rate has fallen, particularly among black students. These positive trends, however, have not been accompanied by increasing college enrollments by blacks.

We will discuss each of these findings in turn.

The Great Debate About the High School Curriculum

From their inception in the first half of the 19th century, high schools in the United States have been flashpoints of controversy about who would use them and what courses students would take. In 1893, these controversies coalesced around a report issued by the Committee of Ten, a group composed largely of college presidents who had been asked by the National Education Association to investigate the condition of high school education and recommend improvements. Chaired by Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard, the committee argued that all high school students should receive an academic education. The Committee concluded that curricular standards must be high and, most importantly, they must be the same for all students regardless of whether these students drop out of school after only a few years, graduate from high school but do not seek further education, or go on to college.

As the Committee put it, "every subject which is taught at all in a secondary school should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil so long as he pursues it, no matter what the probable destination of the pupil may be, or at what point his education is to cease.... Not that all the pupils should pursue every subject for the same number of years; but so long as they do pursue it, they should all be treated alike."³ Equal educational opportunity, in this report, primarily refers to the *means* of education, the courses that students take, as they move toward graduation. Schools fulfill the promise of equal educational opportunity by insisting that all students take essentially the same rigorous academic courses. Anticipating the accusation that this academic program of study would appeal mainly to the small number of high school students planning to go to college, the Committee argued simply that academic education was the best preparation for life regardless of students' future plans. Needless to say, such a program of study was also the best preparation for college.

Over the next quarter of a century, educators and scholars debated the appropriateness of the Committee of Ten's recommendations for the rapidly growing high school population. Between 1890 and 1930, the number

of 14- to 17-year-olds attending high school soared from 359,949, under 7 percent of the age group, to 4,804,255, over 51 percent of the age group.⁴ Educators widely believed that many of these new students pouring into high schools were less academically talented than previous generations of pupils. Based on this belief, critics of the Committee of Ten argued that the new students had neither the ability, interest, nor need for the rigorous academic program proposed by the Committee.

Leading this attack was the eminent psychologist G. Stanley Hall. As early as 1904, Hall denounced the idea that all students should follow the same academic program. Distorting the Committee's argument by reversing its terms, Hall chastised the Committee for assuming that the best preparation for college was also the best preparation for life. Moreover, he argued that such an academic program would inevitably be diluted in order to accommodate the flood of new students who were entering the high school. He deemed the new students a "great army of incapables . . . who should be in schools for the dullards or subnormal children." For this diverse and increasingly large group of students, Hall proposed a wide-ranging program of instruction that would not be dominated by academic courses.⁵

Hall's critique of the Committee of Ten contained a number of assumptions that became central to the debate about standards and equality in the American high school. First, he assumed that a uniform, academic program stifled adolescents' needs to spontaneously explore the world around them. Second, he maintained that holding all pupils to high academic standards favored the small number of students planning to go to college. From this perspective the Committee's report became an elitist document representing the biases of the college presidents who helped draft it. Third, Hall presumed that the majority of young people entering high schools in this era were inferior students. Supported by this belief, Hall and other critics of the Committee of Ten contended that it had totally ignored the different needs and aspirations of these students.

Eventually, opponents of the Committee added a fourth assumption: that a rigorous, uniform academic program significantly contributed to high rates of student dropouts. In this line of reasoning, students were essentially forced out of school by difficult academic classes that were irrelevant to their lives, boring, and damaging to their self-esteem. Advocating curricular differentiation as the solution to these problems, critics of the Committee maintained that a uniform academic course of study actually violated the principle of equal educational opportunity because it increased the dropout rate and stratified society more rigidly along the lines of high school graduates and dropouts.

In 1918, another National Education Association report, *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*, captured these critics' sentiments precisely. Thoroughly rejecting the uniform, academic approach of the Committee of Ten, *Cardinal Principles* instead proposed a multifaceted high school offering students choices among distinct courses of study. The report declared, "The work of the senior high school should be organized into differentiated curriculums [sic].... The basis of differentiation should be, in the broad sense of the term, vocational, thus justifying the names commonly given,

The period from the 1920s to the 1970s was marked by an unbroken decline in the percentage of courses that high school students took in such core academic areas as English, foreign language, math, science, and social studies.

such as agricultural, business, clerical, industrial, fine-arts, and household-arts curriculums. Provisions should be made also for those having distinctively academic needs and interests.”⁶

Supporters of these multifaceted or, as the report labeled them, “comprehensive,” high schools defined equal educational opportunity as equal access to different programs for different students. In this definition, equality was assured by permitting young people to choose from an array of courses suited to their individual needs, abilities, and interests. Although the reality of curricular tracking, which was well established in the nation’s leading urban school districts by the 1930s, often belied this egalitarian rhetoric, educators hailed differentiated high school programs as the key to democratizing the high school. Specifically, they argued that relevant and practical curricular options would encourage larger and larger numbers of students to stay in school and ultimately graduate. This view of equal educational opportunity referred primarily to the diploma that students received upon graduation, not to the actual education they had received. All graduates would receive the same ultimate credential despite having taken very different courses and having met very different standards along the way.⁷

For over a century, supporters of the Committee of Ten and *Cardinal Principles* have been debating these different definitions of equality of educational opportunity and the value of their respective curricular manifestations. It has become routine for historians to figuratively describe 20th century educational reform as a series of pendulum swings between these two distinct philosophical and curricular programs. Educational historians, for example, portray the 1950s as a period in which the curriculum swung away from the relevance-based Life-Adjustment Movement (a movement that drew heavily from the philosophy of *Cardinal Principles*) toward the more academic (and thus Committee of Ten-style) demands of the post-Sputnik era. During the 1960s, the pendulum then returned to a curriculum aimed at greater relevance, often implemented in “open classrooms.” Finally in the 1970s, the pendulum swung once again toward academics in the back-to-basics movement.

Our study finds little evidence that these pendulum-like swings of curricular reform actually typify historical trends in secondary education. The rhetoric of curricular reform does not coincide with the reality of student course-taking. Rhetorically, 20th-century school reform *has* swung between the curricular options noted above with the ideas and language of “relevance” alternating with those of “academic rigor.” Our data, however, demonstrate that until the late-1970s *these rhetorical swings did not correspond with student course-taking in high schools*. Rather, what occurred from the 1920s to the 1970s was the steady triumph of the philosophy embodied in *Cardinal Principles*. This triumph was marked by an unbroken decline in the percentage of courses that high school students took in such core academic areas as English, foreign language, math, science, and social studies. Instead, students took increasing percentages of less demanding, non-academic courses including physical education, health, and vocational education.

The crucial period of change was the Great Depres-



sion and the immediate post-World War II years. Prior to this time, high schools across the nation appeared to have followed a middle path in regard to the Committee of Ten-*Cardinal Principles* debate. Most schools strongly stressed an academic program but, by 1930, offered an increasing number and variety of vocational and elective courses to meet the more "practical" needs of youth. The situation, however, changed drastically in the 1930s when the national economic collapse sent a huge wave of new students into high schools. By 1940, 7,123,009 students between the ages of 14 to 17 were in high school, over 73 percent of the age group.⁸

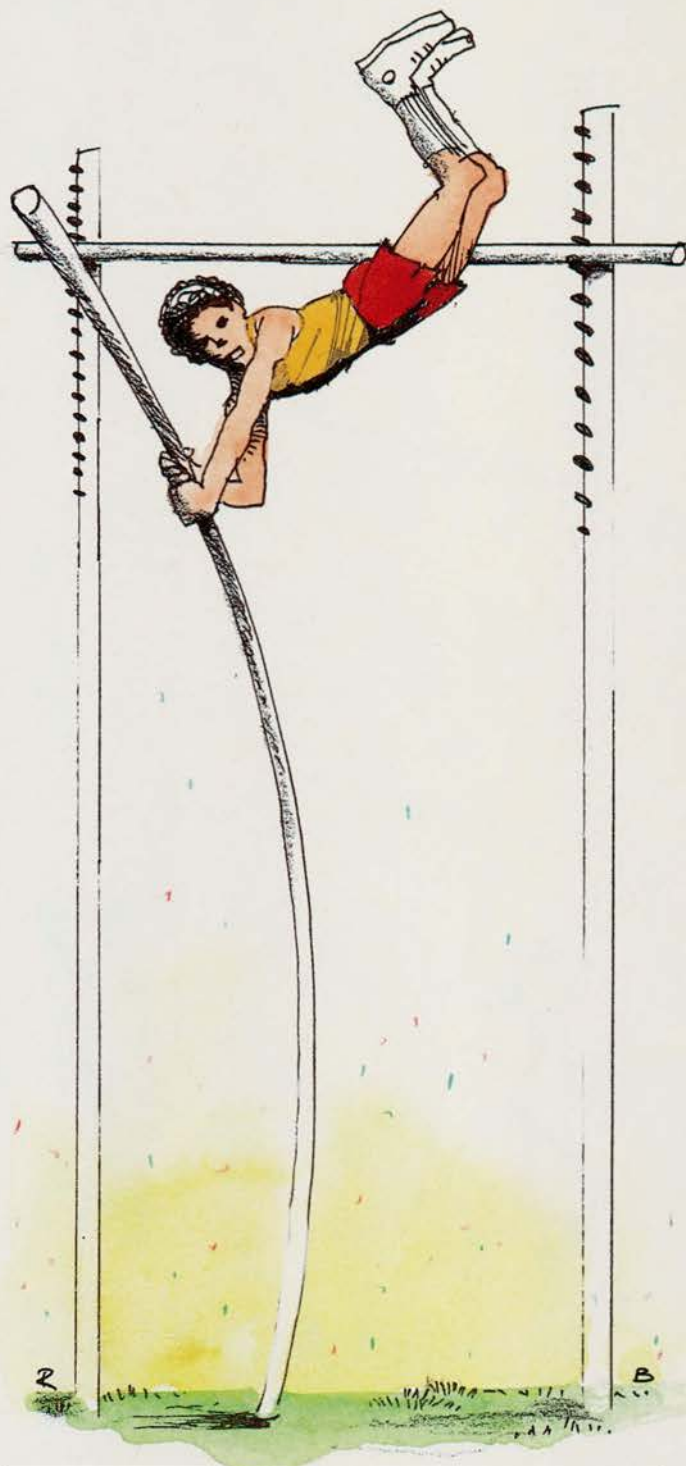
This unprecedented flood of new pupils reinforced two key assumptions about high school students noted earlier. First, educational leaders believed that most of these students were even less academically talented (and therefore less worthy of a strong academic program) than previous generations of students. As a 1934 National Education Association report stated, "a very considerable portion of the new enrollment is comprised of pupils of a different sort—boys and girls who are almost mature physically, who are normal mentally, in the sense that they are capable of holding their own with the ordinary adult, but who are unwilling to deal successfully with continued study under the type of program which the secondary school is accustomed to provide [i.e., the traditional academic program]."⁹

Second, educational leaders assumed and feared that a regimen of tough academic courses would force many of these students to drop out, a particularly awful prospect in the 1930s given the desperate shortage of jobs. As a result, educators channeled increasing numbers of these students into undemanding, non-academic courses. In addition, we found in an earlier study, that in keeping with their definition of equal educational opportunity (holding students in school long enough to obtain a diploma), educational leaders diluted content and lowered standards in the remaining academic courses that these students were required to take. While these curricular decisions sought to promote equal educational opportunity, in reality they had a grossly *unequal* impact on working-class and black children who were beginning to attend high school in greater numbers during this time. Beginning in the 1930s, these students were disproportionately assigned to non-academic tracks and courses and to academic classes that had lower standards and less rigorous content.¹⁰

These Depression-era developments received an additional boost in the post-World War II years with the creation of the Life Adjustment Movement, a federally sponsored curricular reform effort that both justified and encouraged these anti-academic trends in American high schools.¹¹ These trends had a profound impact on the course-taking patterns of students for much of this century. In 1928, over 67 percent of the courses taken by American students were academic. Six years later, the amount of academic course-taking had dropped to slightly more than 62 percent. Over the next two decades the percentage of academic courses taken by U.S. high school students continued to fall from just over 59 percent in 1949 to 57 percent in 1961 and then returned to 59 percent in 1973.

The growth of the non-academic share of the curriculum can be gauged by one startling fact: In 1910, the

Beginning in the 1930s, working-class and black children were disproportionately assigned to non-academic tracks and courses and to academic classes that had lower standards and less rigorous content.



share of high school work devoted to *each* of the five basic academic subjects—English, foreign language, mathematics, science, and history—enrolled more students than all of the non-academic courses combined. Moreover, these data do not reveal the more subtle changes within academic subjects in which English courses were reorganized to relate “literature and life,” and history and government courses were transformed into the social studies.¹²

Furthermore, and contrary to recent historical interpretation, the relative decline in academic enrollments was not matched by increases in vocational enrollments, except briefly during World War II. Rather, as noted above, a large proportion of the curricular shift is accounted for by such “personal development” courses as driver’s training, health, and physical education. Behind this development was the generally negative assessment of both the academic *and* vocational abilities of the new waves of students who entered the high school in the 1930s and after the war. What many historians fail to recognize, but our data show quite clearly, is that these students were often tracked away not only from academic courses but from vocational ones as well.

The decline in the percentage of academic course-taking and the rise in less demanding “personal service” courses by American high school students should have given many Americans serious cause for concern. Certainly some critics, most notably Arthur Bestor in 1953, decried the expanding “educational wastelands.”¹³ But many, if not most, Americans—even those deeply concerned about the future of the academic subjects—simply ignored the problem. Why? The simplest explanation lies in the rising number of high school students. Between 1949-50 and 1969-70, the number of students in grades nine through twelve more than doubled from 6,397,000 to 14,322,000.¹⁴ Growing high school enrollments masked the steady decline in the *percentage* of academic course-taking because the absolute number of students in various academic courses was increasing steadily. Between 1928 and 1973, for example, while the share of the total courses devoted to foreign language fell from 9.5 percent to 3.9 percent, the enrollment in such classes rose from 1,377,000 to 3,659,000. Such trends tended to mute criticism by Bestor and others because high school leaders routinely pointed out that more students were taking academic courses than ever before and because the high schools were supplying enough students to fill college classrooms. However, what these defenders of the status quo failed to mention was that at the same time more students than ever before were also enrolling in less rigorous, non-academic courses.

Occasionally, social commentators voiced concern that high school graduates did not seem as well prepared for jobs or higher education as students in the past, which was probably the case. One newspaper exposé in Detroit at this time, for example, found that students in the college preparatory track in 1958 took fewer academic courses than did students in the general track in 1933. In other words, in the late 1950s students in both the college preparatory and non-college tracks received a less rigorous education than did the non-college bound students of the 1930s. Such criticism, however, had little effect on school policy or practice.¹⁵

Over the next two decades a number of policy changes

in schools across the country helped sustain this transformation of the high school curriculum. The first involved a subtle but important shift in the way some academic courses were delivered to students. In 1960, 93 percent of students enrolled in English courses took these courses in a two-semester sequence. Twelve years later, this proportion dropped to only 63 percent. We found the same trend in social studies. These changes indicate that by the early 1970s schools were increasingly offering English and social studies courses in a one-semester rather than two-semester format. Students still had to take two courses to get a year’s credit, but the courses that they took to get that credit did not necessarily have to relate to one another. The one-semester format fit quite nicely into educational programs that placed a high priority on catering to students’ needs, interests, and scheduling demands. However, it reduced the opportunity for students to explore complex topics in a continuous and in-depth manner over the course of an entire year.

In addition, our analysis reveals an expansion in the range of activities that school leaders deem worthy of academic credit, specifically granting Carnegie credits to activities that formerly had been labeled extracurricular. The most notable examples of this trend include giving course credit for working on the school newspaper and yearbook. Undoubtedly students gain important skills and knowledge in these activities. Nonetheless, granting them credit further diminished the role that academic courses play in high school education. Finally, we find evidence of students receiving credit for such courses as Consumer Math and Refresher Math, largely non-academic courses that many school systems use to fulfill graduation requirements in mathematics.

In all, our study finds clear evidence of a decline in academic course-taking beginning in the 1930s. As in economics where bad money drives out good, so in education for much of this century easier and weaker curricula appear to have driven out strong. Until the 1970s, however, few people were disturbed enough about these trends to take action.

The Positive Impact of the “Excellence” Reforms

In the late-1970s, the decline in academic course-taking began to reverse, and high school students increased the percentage of these courses for the first time in almost half a century. Throughout the 1980s, that trend gained momentum, and by 1990 a full-fledged shift toward greater academic course-taking was under way. Between 1973 and 1990, the percentage of academic course-taking jumped from 59 percent to over two-thirds. This substantial increase in the percentage of academic courses taken by American students in the past 20 years is as great as the decline that took place between 1928 and 1961.

The causes of this shift are varied, but they unquestionably include the following: a changing economic situation in which a high school diploma carried less value than previously; demands of parents for higher quality education for their children; alarm about the steady decline in SAT scores; the publication of such manifestos as *A Nation at Risk*; enactment of more stringent high

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WARRIORS DON'T CRY

A Searing Memoir of the Battle To Integrate Little Rock's Central High

BY MELBA PATTILLO BEALS

The following excerpt from Melba Pattillo Beals' powerful new book starts with an opening note by the author; then skips to two chapters taken from roughly the middle of her story (she and eight other black students had first entered Central High School just one week before the incidents described here), and ends with a retrospective by Ms. Beals, as she looks back on her extraordinary experience. —EDITOR

SOME PEOPLE call me a heroine because I was one of nine black teenagers who integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. At the age of fifteen I faced angry mobs, violent enough to compel President Eisenhower to send combat-ready 101st Airborne soldiers to quell the violence. I endured a year of school days filled with events unlike any others in the history of this country.

Although this happened over thirty-five years ago, I remember being inside Central High School as though it were yesterday. Memories leap out in a heartbeat, summoned by the sound of a helicopter, the wrath in a shouting voice, or the expression on a scowling face.

From the beginning I kept a diary, and my mother, Dr. Lois Pattillo, a high school English teacher, kept copious notes and clipped a sea of newspaper articles. I began the first draft of this book when I was eighteen, but in the ensuing years, I could not face the ghosts that its pages called up. During intervals of renewed strength and commitment, I would find myself compelled to return to the manuscript, only to have the pain of reliving my past undo my good intentions. Now enough time has elapsed to allow healing to take place, enabling me to tell my story without bitterness.

In some instances I have changed people's names to

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protect their identities. But all the incidents recounted here are based on the diary I kept, on news clippings, and on the recollections of my family and myself. While some of the conversations have been re-created, the story is accurate and conveys my truth of what it was like to live in the midst of a civil rights firestorm.

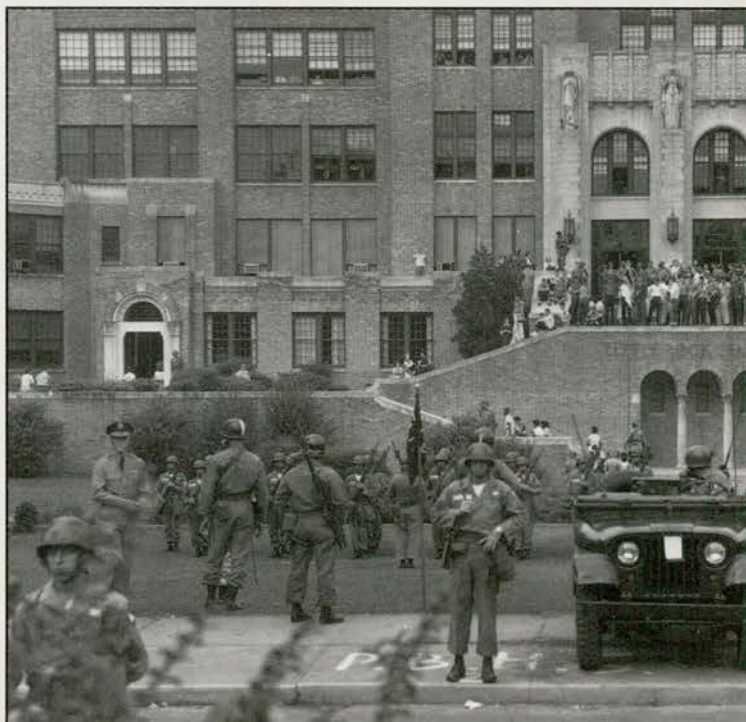


GUARD TAKES OVER AT SCHOOL

—ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT, Tuesday, October 1, 1957

I ARRIVED at school Tuesday morning, fully expecting that I would be greeted by the 101st soldiers and escorted to the top of the stairs. Instead, we were left at the curb to fend for ourselves. As we approached the stairs, we were greeted by taunting catcalls and the kind of behavior students had not dared to exhibit in the face of the 101st.

Where were the disciplined ranks we had come to count on? I looked all around, but sure enough, there





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were no 101st guards in sight. Just then a boy blocked our way. What were we to do? My first thought was to retreat, to turn and go back down the stairs and detour around to the side door. But that escape route was blocked by those stalking us. A large crowd of jeering, pencil-throwing students hovered around us menacingly. We had no choice but to go forward.

"Where are your pretty little soldier boys today?" someone cried out.

"You niggers ready to die just to be in this school?" asked another.

Squeezing our way through the hostile group gathered at the front door, we were blasted by shouts of "Nigger, go home. Go back to where you belong." At every turn, we were faced with more taunts and blows. There were no 101st soldiers at their usual posts along the corridors.

And then I saw them. Slouching against the wall were members of the Arkansas National Guard, looking on like spectators at a sports event—certainly not like men sent to guard our safety.

I wanted to turn and run away, but I thought about what Danny [a soldier in the 101st Airborne, who had been assigned to protect the author] had said: "Warriors survive." I tried to remember his stance, his attitude, and the courage of the 101st on the battlefield. Comparing my tiny challenge with what he must have faced made me feel more confident. I told myself I could handle whatever the segregationists had in store for me. But I underestimated them.

Early that morning, a boy began to taunt me as though he had been assigned that task. First he greeted me in the hall outside my shorthand class and began pelting me with bottlecap openers, the kind with the sharp claw at the end. He was also a master at walking on my heels. He hurt me until I wanted to scream for help.

By lunchtime, I was nearly hysterical and ready to call it quits, until I thought of having to face Grandma when I arrived home. During the afternoon, when I went into the principal's office several times to report being sprayed with ink, kicked in the shin, and heel-walked

At left: the author; at fifteen, the year she entered the battlefield of Little Rock Central High.

At far left: troops at Little Rock's Central High.

until the backs of my feet bled, as well as to report the name of my constant tormentor, the clerks asked why I was reporting petty stuff. With unsympathetic scowls and hostile attitudes, they accused me of making mountains out of molehills.

Not long before the end of the school day, I entered a dimly lit rest room. The three girls standing near the door seemed to ignore me. Their passive, silent, almost pleasant greeting made me uncomfortable, and the more I thought about their attitude, the more it concerned me. At least when students were treating me harshly, I knew what to expect.

Once inside the stall, I was even more alarmed at all the movement, the feet shuffling, the voices whispering. It sounded as though more people were entering the room.

"Bombs away!" someone shouted above me. I looked up to see a flaming paper wad coming right down on me. Girls were leaning over the top of the stalls on either side of me. Flaming paper floated down and landed on my hair and shoulders. I jumped up, trying to pull myself together and at the same time duck the flames and stamp them out. I brushed the singeing ashes away from my face as I frantically grabbed for the door to open it.

"Help!" I shouted. "Help!" The door wouldn't open. Someone was holding it—someone strong, perhaps more than one person. I was trapped.

"Did you think we were gonna let niggers use our toilets? We'll burn you alive, girl," a voice shouted through the door. "There won't be enough of you left to worry about."

I felt the kind of panic that stopped me from thinking clearly. My right arm was singed. The flaming wads of paper were coming at me faster and faster. I could feel my chest muscles tightening. I felt as though I would die any moment. The more I yelled for help, the more I inhaled smoke and the more I coughed.

I told myself I had to stop screaming so I wouldn't take in so much smoke. My throat hurt—I was choking. I remembered Grandmother telling me all I had to do was say the name of God and ask for help. Once more I looked up to see those grinning, jeering faces as flaming paper rained down on me. Please, God, help me, I silently implored. I had to hurry. I might not be able to swat the next one and put it out with my hands. Then what? Would my hair catch fire? I had to stop them. I picked up my books and tossed one upward as hard as I could, in a blind aim to hit my attackers.

I heard a big thud, then a voice cry out in pain and several people scuffle about. I tossed another and then another book as fast and as hard as I could. One more of their number cursed at me. I had hit my target.

"Let's get out of here," someone shouted as the group hurried out the door. In a flash, I leaped out of the stall, trying to find my things. I decided I wouldn't even bother reporting my problem. I just wanted to go home. I didn't care that I smelled of smoke or that my blouse was singed. Later when my friends asked what happened, I didn't even bother to explain.

Much worse than the fear and any physical pain I had endured, was the hurt deep down inside my heart, because no part of me understood why people would do those kinds of things to one another. I was so stunned by my experience that during the ride home I sat silent and



listened to reports from the others. They, too, seemed to have had a bigger problem that day with hecklers and hooligans.

The experiment of doing without the 101st had apparently been a fiasco. By the end of the day more than one of us had heard talk that the 101st had been brought back.

Still, despite all our complaints, there were a few students who tried to reach out to us with smiles or offers to sit at our cafeteria tables; some even accompanied us along the halls. Each of us noticed, however, that those instances of friendship were shrinking rather than growing. There was no doubt that the hard-core troublemakers were increasing their activities, and without the men of the 101st, they increased a hundredfold.

President Eisenhower says he will remove the 101st soldiers if Governor Faubus agrees to protect the nine Negro children with federalized Arkansas National Guardsmen.

Those words from the radio announcer sent a chill down my spine as I sat doing my homework on Tuesday evening. I had hoped the rumors of the return of the 101st were true. But according to the report, the same Arkansas soldiers who had been dispatched by Governor Faubus to keep us *out* of Central High would become totally responsible for keeping us *in* school and protecting our lives.

"Sounds like the wolf guarding the henhouse to me," Grandma said. "Thank God you know who your real protector is, 'cause you certainly won't be able to count on those boys for help." She was peeking at me over the



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Above: The nine students involved in the integration of Central High School became a closely knit family with one goal—to survive. Front row: Thelma Mothersbed, Elizabeth Eckford, and the author. Back row: Jefferson Thomas, Ernest Green, Minnijean Brown, Carlotta Walls, Terrence Roberts, and Gloria Ray.

pages of the newspaper.

I didn't know how to tell her how right she was. But then I couldn't tell her I had had the kind of day that was making me think about running away where nobody could find me.

"Did you see where Judge Ronald Davies will be going back to North Dakota?" Grandma continued. "He will still retain jurisdiction over your case, though."

"That really frightens me," I said. "I feel safer with Davies being here."

"He is being replaced by Judge Harper from St. Louis, it says."

"Bad news," I replied. I didn't know bad things about Harper, but I had come to trust Davies as an honest and fair man with the courage of his convictions. St. Louis bordered the South; that Judge Harper might not be as open-minded.

"Of course, there is good news here," Grandma said, rattling the newspaper. "Seems as if some moderate white businessmen are getting together to oppose that special session of the legislature Faubus wants to call."

"The one to enact laws that would make integration illegal?" I asked.

"Yes, I hope they can do something to slow him down."

IKE REJECTS FAUBUS'S STATEMENT AND AGREEMENT FALLS THROUGH

—ARKANSAS GAZETTE, Wednesday, October 2, 1957

The Wednesday morning *Gazette* reported that Governor Faubus and the President had come to the brink of an agreement to remove the federal troops from Little Rock the day before, but at the last minute the President called it off because he didn't believe the governor would act in good faith.

As we walked toward Central that day, I was looking forward to having the 101st come back to make my life inside school at least tolerable. But right away my hopes for a more peaceful day were dashed. Showers of loud insults greeted us. Straight ahead, in front of the school, I could see a group of about fifty boys waiting at the top of the stairs as they had the day before. This time, however, they descended on us like locusts.

"Get the coons! Get the coons!" The boys were brash and bold, behaving as though they feared no consequences. There were no parading 101st soldiers to stop them. Frantically, we looked around for someone in authority, but none was in sight.

Minnijean, Ernie, and I decided to retreat, but just then, vice-principal Huckaby made her presence known at the bottom of the stairs. Tiny, erect, and determined, she stood there all alone between us and our attackers, demanding they leave us alone. One by one she challenged the leaders, calling them by name, telling them to get to class or there would be hell to pay. I had to respect her for what she did. Whether or not she favored integration, she had a heck of a lot of guts.

We circled around to the Sixteenth and Park Street entrance. As I climbed the stairs, there was no sign of Danny—or the other 101st guards I knew. In fact, I didn't see any uniformed soldiers. Just inside of the front entrance, where Danny usually stood, I saw some of the same hooligans who had tried to block our entrance only moments before. They moved toward me, and I circled away from them and walked quickly down the hall. I was desperately trying to figure out why there weren't any teachers or school officials guarding the halls the way there usually were.

I panicked; I couldn't decide where to go or what to do next. I was being pounded on my arms, my back, and my legs by angry students. Their blows hurt so much that my desire to stop the pain and survive overpowered the fear that paralyzed me. I got hold of myself. No matter what, I knew I had to stand up to them even if I got kicked out of school for doing it.

"Dead niggers don't go to school," someone said, hitting me hard in the stomach. My first instinct was to double over. The pain burned my insides. But I stood still and stared at my attacker without flinching. He taunted me: "You ain't thinking of hitting me back?"

"I'm gonna cut your guts out," I said, standing my ground. There was a long pause while we stared each other down. It was a bluff, but it worked. Looking almost frightened and mumbling under his breath, he backed off.

Just then, I noticed the members of the Arkansas National Guard lounging against the walls like cats in sunlight. Gathered in small clusters with smug, grinning expressions on their faces, they had been watching my

confrontation all along. I couldn't get used to the fact that our safety now depended on nonchalant, tobacco-chewing adolescents who were most likely wearing white sheets and burning crosses on the lawns of our neighbors after sundown.

I had walked only a few steps before I was knocked to the floor. I called out for help. Three men from the Guard gave further substance to my suspicions by taking their time to respond, moving toward me in slow motion. I scrambled to my feet.

How I longed to see Danny, standing on guard in his starched uniform, and hear the swift steps of the 101st. As I felt hot tears stinging my eyes, I heard Grandmother India's voice say, "You're on the battlefield for your Lord."

I was as frightened by the ineptness of the Arkansas soldiers as by the viciousness of the increased attacks on me. If the soldiers had been armed, I was certain they would either have shot me in the back or themselves in the foot. I watched as they stood in giggling clusters while a crowd of thugs attacked Jeff and Terry and kicked them to the floor in the hallway just outside the principal's office. A female teacher finally rescued the two.

Once I was seated in class, I felt I could take a deep breath. For the moment at least I was off the front line of battle in the hallway. But just as I was feeling a snippet of peace, a boy pulled a switchblade knife and pressed the point of the blade against my forearm. In a heartbeat, without even thinking about it, I leaped up and picked up my books as a shield to fend him off.

He responded to a half-hearted reprimand from the teacher but whispered that he would get me later. At the very first sound of the bell ending class, I ran for my life, only to encounter a group of students who knocked me down and hit me with their books. As I felt rage overtake me I recalled what Danny had told me: "When you're angry, you can't think. You gotta keep alert to keep alive."

It was still early in the day, and things were so bad that I decided I had no choice: I had to find somebody in authority who would listen to me. Outside the principal's office I found Minnijean looking as abused and angry as I was.

"We gotta get out of here!" she said breathlessly.

"You're right. They're gonna kill us today," I replied.

"Let's call our folks."

"Let's call Mrs. Bates. Maybe she can talk to the army or reporters or the President." I assumed calling the head of the NAACP would at least get some response. Merely reporting this kind of trouble to school officials might not get anything except more of the same denial that there was trouble, or perhaps reprimands for being "tattletales."

Since neither of us had change for a call, we reluctantly decided to go to Mrs. Huckaby, although we were afraid she would try and convince us to stick it out. Mrs. Huckaby greeted us in a matter-of-fact way until it dawned on her that we might be using the change we asked for to call for outside help.

"Wait a minute. What's going on?" she asked, trailing behind us.

"We're calling Mrs. Bates. We need help. Maybe she can talk to the reporters and get us some protection."

Just as we suspected, Mrs. Huckaby insisted we go to the principal's office to give him a chance to solve the

problem. She assured us that he would be fair.

Principal Matthews began to speak in his slow plodding way, wearing his usual nervous smile. It was apparent he only wanted to stop us from making the call. I was in no mood to have him tell me I was imagining things, not with my leg aching and the steel flash of that switchblade knife fresh in my mind.

"Either you give us some protection so we can function without getting killed, or we go home." I heard the words come out of my mouth, but I could hardly believe it was me speaking. My knees were shaking. It was the first time in my life I had ever stood up to any adult—certainly to any white adult. But I was on the edge, ready to take the risk, because how could anything the adults might do to me be worse than the abuse I was already enduring?

"Wait here," the principal said, his tone of voice leaving no doubt he was annoyed with us. Shortly afterward, we saw the brass approaching: General Clinger and Colonel McDaniel of the Arkansas National Guard, and a third military man I did not recognize.

Clinger pointed to the two of us, most especially to me, and said, "You'll sit over there where I can look you in the face." Right away, I didn't like him, but I was ready to deal with him.

The rest of our group was summoned to the office. Everyone was vocal about the severity of the attacks during the morning. Each one had a story about how the physical abuse had increased significantly. We told Clinger that his men were not protecting us, that they stood by, socializing and flirting while we were being beaten within an inch of our lives. "Those guards are turning their backs to attacks on us, and we demand you do something about it," I insisted.

Clinger didn't deny the charges. He explained that his men had to live in the community.

"We just wanna keep living ... period," I said.

"Don't talk directly to the guards. Go to the office and report incidents," we were told.

I said, "With all due respect, sir, how can we run to the office every time we want help. Somebody could be beating one of us at the far end of the hall, and we'd have to wait until they finished and let us up so we could come here to report it."

I felt something inside me change that day. I felt a new will to live rise up in me. I knew I wasn't just going to roll over and die. I could take care of myself and speak up to white folks, even if my mother and father sometimes feared doing so. I discovered I had infinitely more guts than I had started the school year with. I had no choice. It was my life I was dickering for. I knew that Clinger didn't care about our welfare—not even a tiny bit.

"Young lady," Clinger said, eyeballing me, "you are turning our words. I didn't say—"

But I cut him off. "My friends and I will leave school if we don't get adequate protection. It's as simple as that," I told him. The others were obviously as angry as I was as they chimed in with their complaints. They voiced their agreement that something had to be done immediately.

"You'll have bodyguards." Clinger spoke with a definite edge to his voice. He summoned another soldier and told him to select eighteen men while we waited there. Those Arkansas guardsmen were the biggest, dumbest, most



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The NAACP chief counsel, Justice Thurgood Marshall, visited with the students on the steps of the Supreme Court. From left to right, the author; Jefferson Thomas; Gloria Ray; Mrs. C. Bates, president of the NAACP in Little Rock; Thurgood Marshall; Carlotta Walls; Minniejean Brown, and Elizabeth Eckford.

disheveled hayseeds I'd ever seen. They looked as if they had slept in their rumpled uniforms. We stood there not believing our eyes, dumbfounded by the sight of them.

"These clods will trip over their own shoelaces," I whispered to Minniejean.

"Or worse yet, get us in some dark corner and beat the living daylights out of us," she replied.

After about fifteen minutes we "moved out," or in their case, shuffled out. It was a sight to behold. There we were, followed by an absurd wall of not so mighty military green trailing us like a ridiculous wagging tail.

We found ourselves laughing aloud, and the white students were laughing with us. For just one minute we all realized the ridiculous situation we were caught up in.

Four of us went to our usual table in the cafeteria; the guards took up their posts, leaning against a nearby wall. When I got up to get in line for a sandwich, they fell over each other trying to see where I was going and which of them would follow me. Two stood in line with me, arms folded, tummies out, and shoulders rounded. Each time one of us rose to get anything, two of those clowns stumbled up to follow. It was a comedy of errors.

As we moved through the halls in our oddball group, I saw, just a few feet away, the boy who had pulled the knife on me earlier. The momentary terror I felt reminded me our situation wasn't funny after all.

I missed Danny. That was another feeling taking me over. Rumor had it that the 101st waited at Camp Robinson, just outside Little Rock. But I knew that even if he came back again and again, there would come the day when he would be gone for good.

Still, I was overjoyed when on Thursday we once again had our 101st bodyguards. Maybe they were forced to come back because the morning *Gazette* had reported

the story of Terry and Jeff being kicked while Arkansas National Guardsmen looked on.

As we arrived at school that morning, I noticed right away that there was a different kind of tension, as though everyone was waiting for something awful to happen, only we didn't know what. We had heard rumors of a planned student protest. I could see groups of students standing in the halls instead of in class where they would normally have been.

Just before first period, more students began walking out of classes. Rumors about a big event reverberated throughout the school. I could see and feel a new level of restlessness and a deepening sense of hostility. I was on edge, waiting for disaster any moment, like dynamite or a group attack or I didn't know what. "They're hangin' a nigger, just like we're gonna hang you," someone muttered. That's when I learned that some of those who walked out had assembled at the vacant lot at Sixteenth and Park across from the school, where they hanged and burned a straw figure.

That demonstration set the tone of the day. Belligerent student protests were firing up the already hostile attitude inside the school. Danny broke the rules by coming closer and talking to me—warning that we had to stay alert, no matter what.

Near the end of the day I was walking down a dimly lit hallway, with Danny following, when I spotted a boy coming directly toward me on a collision course. I tried to move aside, but he moved with me. I didn't even have time to call for help.

The boy flashed a shiny black object in my face. The sudden pain in my eyes was so intense, so sharp, I thought I'd die. It was like nothing I'd ever felt before. I couldn't hear or see or feel anything except that throbbing, searing fire centered in my eyes. I heard myself cry out as I let go of everything to clutch at my face.

Someone grabbed me by my ponytail and pulled me along very fast, so fast I didn't have time to resist. The pain of being dragged along by my hair was almost as intense as that in my eyes. Hands grabbed my wrists and pried my hands from my face, compelling me to bend over. Then cold, cold liquid was splashed in my eyes. The water felt so good. My God, thank you! The pain was subsiding.

"Easy, girl, easy. You're gonna be fine." It was Danny's voice, his hands holding my head and dousing my eyes with water.

"I can't see," I whispered. "I can't see."

"Hold on. You will."

Over and over again, the cold water flooded my face. Some of it went into my nose and down the front of my blouse. Bit by bit I could see the sleeve of Danny's uniform, see the water, see the floor beneath us. The awful pain in my eyes had turned into a bearable sting. My eyes felt dry, as though there were a film drawn tight over them.

"What was that?"

"I don't know," Danny said, "maybe some kind of alkaline or acid. The few drops that got on your blouse faded the color immediately. Hey, let's get you to the office so we can report this. You gotta get to a doctor."

"No. No," I protested.

"Why not?"

"School's almost over, I wanna go home, right now.

Please, please don't make me...." I felt tears. I knew he hated me to cry, but the thought of going to the office made me crazy. I couldn't handle having some hostile clerk telling me I was making mountains out of molehills.

"Calm down. You can do what you want but—"

"No, home right now." I said, cutting Danny off.

A short time later, an optometrist examined my eyes and studied the spots on my blouse. He put some kind of soothing substance into my eyes and covered them with eye patches. As I sat there in the dark, I heard him say, "Whoever kept that water going in her eyes saved the quality of her sight, if not her sight itself. She'll have to wear the patch overnight. She'll have to be medicated for a while. She'll need to wear glasses for all close work. I'd really like to see her wear them all the time. I'll need to see her once a week until we're certain she's all right."

Glasses, all the time, I thought. No boy wants to date a girl with glasses.

Despite the doctor's instructions to wear an eye patch for twenty-four hours, I had to take it off. I couldn't let the reporters see me with the patch because they would ask questions and make a big deal of it.

By the time we got home it was seven o'clock, and I wasn't very talkative for the waiting reporters. Once inside I fell into bed, too exhausted to eat dinner. "Thank you, God," I whispered, "thank you for saving my eyes. God bless Danny, always."

THE HANGING, STABBING, AND BURNING OF A NEGRO EFFIGY NEAR CENTRAL HIGH

—*Arkansas Gazette*, Friday, October 4, 1957

The newspaper story contained several vivid pictures of Central High students gathered the day before, hanging the effigy, then burning it. They were smiling gleefully as though they were attending a festive party.

"You made it. It's Friday," Danny said, greeting me at the front of Central once more. "Your peepers okay?"

My eyes still felt very dry and tight. There were floating spots before them, but I could see. They only stung when I went too long without putting the drops in.

Later that afternoon there was a movie star—someone I'd never heard of—speaking, before a pep rally: Julie Adams, a former student. She was there to boost spirits because, she said, Central High School's reputation was being tainted.

Over the weekend of October 5th, a great thing happened that took the Little Rock school integration from the front pages of the national news. The Russians launched their 184-pound satellite, Sputnik.

But as the next week began, local radio, television, and newspapers claimed that 101st guards were following us females to the lavatory and harassing white girls. GI'S IN GIRLS' DRESSING ROOMS, FAUBUS SAYS ran as a banner headline in the *Gazette* for Monday, October 7. Of course it wasn't true. However, it made the military tighten up rules about where soldiers could or could not go with us and prompted them to launch a massive internal investigation.

I could see a steady erosion in the quality of security in response to charges of interference by the soldiers. It was evident as the early days of October passed that whenever the 101st troops relaxed their guard or were not clearly visible, we were in great danger.



FAUBUS WANTS SCHOOL RESPITE: STILL SAYS NEGROES MUST BE WITHDRAWN

—*Arkansas Gazette*, Thursday, October 10, 1957

THE GOVERNOR continued to conduct a public campaign, complaining loud and long in a nonstop series of newspaper, radio, and television interviews that integration must be halted. Inspired by his attitude, those who did not want us at Central High were digging in their heels and becoming much better organized in their efforts to get rid of us.

Each day we arrived to find we were facing a different set of circumstances. Officials experimented with ways of protecting our safety that would at the same time please politicians who wanted the troops gone from school and gone from Little Rock. Increasing physical violence brought back the 101st guards on some occasions. We found ourselves spending our days with one personal bodyguard from the 101st, or with varying numbers and kinds of bodyguards, or totally alone.

For example, when one of us had a major problem, they brought in a three-hundred pound 101st guard nicknamed Goggles. With nightsticks and other equipment strapped at his side, he made the kind of shield that fended off even the most hard-core segregationists. We grew to love him because being with Goggles meant a safe day no matter where you went. God bless Goggles and keep him in good health forever, was my prayer.

The beginning of the second week of October brought with it the realization that I would have to settle into some kind of routine that would allow me to cope with day-to-day harassment. Beyond the noise and hoopla of integrating school, beyond the glitter of news conferences, beyond anything else going on in my life, I had to figure out how to make it through seven hours with Central High segregationists each day.

My diary entry for Tuesday, October 8, read:

The ride to school today seemed livelier than ever. The driver of the jeep was friendlier. He finds all this confusion quite amusing.

I like what I wore—my orange blouse and quilted skirt. On my way to the third-period class, someone squirted ink on my blouse. I went to class feeling hurt and angry because I knew it would never come out. In English class, a boy was called on to recite. When he failed to answer the question, I raised my hand to recite. When I gave the right answer, he said, Are you going to believe me or that nigger?

Two days later, on Thursday, October 10, I wrote:

This morning I was given two new guards. This made me feel quite comfortable. I left home without eating breakfast and gee was I hungry. But I couldn't go to lunch in the cafeteria because that room is becoming the main place for them to get me.

On some days I found myself thinking every waking moment about nothing else but my safety—consumed with learning skills that would keep me alive. When



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Elizabeth Eckford, being brave in the face of the mob.

would someone get the best of me, and how could I head them off? By October 11, I had made myself ill with what appeared to be flu but was probably greatly compounded by a real case of fear and exhaustion. On that Friday, I stayed home from Central and snuggled down into my bed where it was safe.

I was well aware that my illness was more sadness and exhaustion than flu. I knew I had to get myself together because the next day I was supposed to meet with some of the eight others and some hard-core segregationist student leaders for a discussion that might lead to an understanding. To insure my speedy recovery, Grandma came after me with castor oil. I protested, but I knew it was no use.

I had tried to explain to her that I was just weary of hostile white students, hurtful deeds, soldiers and army jeeps back and forth to school, and news reporters with their endless questions. "Weary" had always been an older person's complaint. But I knew for certain I was weary. Grandma was having none of it.

"The orange juice will cut the taste—here, drink," she said, leaning in so close that I had no prayer of escape. "Don't make me bend over this way, my back hurts." Her spectacles slid to the end of her nose. I looked into her huge determined eyes, and I knew I was trapped. I gulped it down. The warm oily liquid was oozing across my tongue, down my throat when she popped a peppermint drop into my mouth.

And it wasn't only the castor oil I had to endure with my claim of flu. That was just the beginning of a whole official ceremony that included Grandma's garlic and herb poultice on my chest, which I figured was guaranteed to asphyxiate the germs. If that didn't do it, the inch-thick Vicks salve she smeared over every centimeter of my body would surely send the flu bugs running. Yet as awful as some of her healing treatment was to endure, it

felt better to be there at home with her than at Central High.

"It's too bad you have to miss a day of school." Mother Lois fluffed my pillows and tightened the sheet at the bottom of my bed. Dressed in her tan gabardine teaching suit with black blouse, she was off to school. "Let's hope you'll be well enough to attend tomorrow." She leaned over to kiss my forehead and to fetch her briefcase from the chair where she had left it. "Meeting with those Central High kids could be a first step to some kind of peace-making."

I knew very well I would have to force myself to attend. It would be the first time ever that segregationist student leaders would be coming to talk to us integrating students in a reasonably safe place where we all could speak our minds. It was sponsored by a Norwegian reporter, Mrs. Jorunn Ricketts, who had set it up with Ernie, Minnijean, and me, and the group spotlighted as staunch troublemakers: Sammy Dean Parker, Kaye Bacon, and their crowd. Sammy Dean Parker had been seen in the newspaper embracing Governor Faubus as she thanked him for keeping us out of school.

People referred to the meeting as a possible turning point, a time of coming together. I had thought about nothing else for several days. I even dreamed that we would go to the meeting, and afterward things would calm down considerably at school. After a real heart-to-heart, the white students would see the light, and that would be the beginning of a smooth year.

It was that hope that made me drag myself out of bed on Saturday morning and head for the Parish Hall of St. Andrew's Cathedral. Upon arrival I learned the meeting would be recorded by the National Broadcasting Company for future use on a network radio show. I hoped that wouldn't change our being able to speak our minds.

The meeting room was a stark white setting, with mahogany straight-back chairs. It was the kind of place that could well inspire a deep, honest talk that might help us get along with each other. Mrs. Ricketts, a woman of medium stature with blond hair pulled to the nape of her neck, began asking questions.

Joseph Fox, labeled a Central moderate because he didn't violently oppose our presence, said, "I lay the whole blame for this thing in Governor Faubus's lap. We wouldn't have had nearly so much trouble if he hadn't called out the National Guard."

"That's not so. I think our governor is trying to protect all of us," said Sammy Dean Parker, an avowed segregationist seen embracing the governor on the front page of the newspaper.

"He's trying to prepare us. He said we'd have to integrate, but he has to prepare us."

Ernie said, "All we want is an education and to be able to go to school and back home safely."

When Mrs. Ricketts asked why some of the white children objected to going to school with us, Sammy Dean replied: "Well, it's racial, marrying each other."

"School isn't a marriage bureau," Ernie said.

"We don't have to socialize," I said.

Kaye Bacon said she had heard rumors that we wanted to "rule" over them.

"I don't think you know much about our people. I don't think you ever tried to find out," Minnijean said.

(Continued on page 43)

HOW SCHOOL MATERIALS TEACH ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST

BY BARRY RUBIN

This report is part of a series, The Education for Democracy Papers: How School Materials Teach and Misteach World Affairs, published by the Education for Democracy Project, a joint venture of the American Federation of Teachers and Freedom House. Other papers in the series focus on Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the former Soviet bloc.

The Education for Democracy Papers were inspired by the belief that schools must purposely impart to their students the learning necessary for an informed, reasoned allegiance to the idea of a free society. The values and behaviors upon which democracy rests must all be taught and learned and practiced. They cannot be taken for granted or regarded as merely one set of options against which any other may be accepted as equally worthy. The struggles of people around the globe and across the centuries to win, preserve, and extend their freedom should be a central theme in the study of history and world affairs. Students who learn of the struggles of democrats in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America will be in a better position to understand the worth and fragility of our own democracy

The Education for Democracy Papers series is edited by Joshua Muravchik, resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and author of *Exporting Democracy* and *The Uncertain Crusade*.

Funding for The Education for Democracy Papers was provided by the United States Institute of Peace. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in The Education for Democracy Papers are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Institute of Peace.

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and to recognize and appreciate the principles that underlie it. Students who have seen how difficult it has been throughout history to secure human rights will be less likely to take those rights for granted and more willing to work to preserve and extend them.

Some time ago, the Education for Democracy Project asked Barry Rubin to examine the way the Middle East is presented in the textbooks used by American high schools, with a special eye to how they address the topics of democracy and human rights. We asked him to evaluate whether students who read these textbooks would be prepared to understand events as they unfolded in one of the most complicated regions in the world. His assessment follows.

Mr. Rubin, who teaches at Tel Aviv and Hebrew Universities, is often called upon to help explain events in the Middle East on news and public affairs television programs. He has taught at Georgetown University and Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and is the author of 13 books, including *Cauldron of Turmoil: America in the Middle East*, *Istanbul Intrigues*, and *Revolution Until Victory? The Politics and History of the PLO*.

It should be noted that, while the materials reviewed date from the 1980s and 1990, textbooks have long shelf lives and undergo major revisions only once in a long while. The world having changed dramatically since the last generation of textbooks was published, they are due to be substantially revised. And we at the Education for Democracy Project believe that Mr. Rubin's evaluation will be very helpful for all those involved in textbook preparation, selection, and use—in other words, the entire educational community.



ILLUSTRATED BY GUY SCHUM

A GOOD TEXT about a distant part of the world should give the student a sense of both those things that are familiar and those that seem strange. It will show that all human beings share certain desires, concerns, and rights, but that different cultures often interpret these differently, leading people to behave differently.

A good text will hide the sins and errors of neither the United States nor other governments. It will not shrink from explaining the repressive, often ruthless nature of dictatorships, the horrors of terrorism, or the fanaticism of extreme ideologies. It will not, in the interest of tolerance, ignore the intolerance in other societies.

The textbooks used in most high schools in the United States are careful about giving a fair presentation of the Middle East's religions and cultures and avoiding ethnocentrism, in the traditional sense of the word. These books, examined for this survey, do not view Middle Eastern, Arab, or Islamic cultures as inferior to the West, nor do they portray them in terms of derogatory stereotypes.

Most of the information in the textbooks is accurate and possibly superior to what was available in texts in the past. Each work deals at length with such matters as the origins and nature of Islam; the different economic systems and lifestyles in the desert, village, and town; the origin and location of the different countries; the variety of ethnic and religious communities; and the basic history of the area. Although their focus is concentrated on presenting the Arab world, the texts make a reasonable effort to cover the region's non-Arab states—Iran, Israel, and Turkey.

But when inaccuracies and political biases appear in these texts they tend to be in one direction. This can be summarized as apologizing for, legitimating, or prettifying revolutionary, nationalist, and leftist regimes. There is virtually

no discussion of such democratic rights as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to form independent organizations.

Wallbank's *History and Life*, for example, tells students that from independence until now, "Egypt, Syria and Iraq benefitted from strong leadership" (p. 732), without describing in any meaningful way what "strong leadership" means. Beers' *World History: Patterns of Civilization*, tells students, "In 1971, a Baath military officer, Hafez al-Assad became president [of Syria]." It says not a word about *how* he became president. And it says only this about his domestic rule: "Under Assad, the Syrian economy prospered as both agriculture and industry expanded. The government built a railroad network linking cities, ports, and farming areas" (p. 766). In fact, Assad and other dictators have despoiled their countries, prosecuted ruinous wars, and employed demagoguery, often anti-American, to enhance their own power. But students would gain little appreciation of those facts from their textbooks.

Understanding Middle East Regimes

The texts under review manifest the traditional American political characteristics of naivete and romanticism. They tend, for example, to conflate nationalism, populism, and democracy. They reflect the American conventional wisdom which assumes that nationalism is progressive and implicitly democratic, since "the nation" consists of "the people." A populist government, outspoken on



behalf of the poor and downtrodden, is also commonly thought of as democratic. To this are added the assumptions that political change comes from the bottom up and that each government represents its people, with the exception of monarchies and other conservative governments.

Few positive statements can be found in these texts about conservative regimes which are, it seems, assumed to be anti-nationalist and anti-populist and therefore less "authentic" than the nationalist/populist radical regimes. Rarely are the democratic freedoms of speech, press, and association used as a basis for making judgments. The assumption appears to be that these are completely irrelevant.

Examples of these assumptions can be found throughout the textbooks. Beyer's *Eastern Hemisphere*, for example, begins a section about the fall of the Ottoman Empire with the subhead: "People Wanted Change" (p. 356). It is true that *some* people living under the Sultan's rule wanted change, but an American student is likely to read this as "the people" when in fact the authors of change were a small elite of officers who constituted but one of several contending groups.

Elsewhere in that book (p. 365), a Saudi "leader" is quoted as saying that "we" are masters of our own affairs and will decide to whom oil is exported. But the identity of the "we" in this and other cases is not explored.

Hagans' *The World Today* tells students that many people who lived in Ottoman and Persian lands in the early 20th century "did not want to be ruled by anyone foreign" (p. 250). But as the text itself ambiguously implies, few of the subject Moslems came to look upon the Ottomans, their fellow Moslems, as foreign until long after Ottoman rule had ended.

Newhill's *Exploring World Cultures* gets off on a better foot, saying, "Traditionally, politics in the Middle East has involved clashes among opposing rulers or ruling families. The majority of the people were not involved in these struggles," except for occasional village revolts (p. 87).

Unfortunately, the book offers this only as a description of traditional society. It says that with nationalism came increasing support for "new political concepts coming from the West—ideas of freedom, independence, national sovereignty, and social equality." But this statement fails to convey how little has actually changed. The masses are still rarely involved in politics; they are the audience called on to applaud the vanguard parties, military officers, and dictators who act in their name. And in Arab political terminology, "freedom" usually refers not to the rights of the citizen but to the rights of the state; social equality—never a serious policy in Arab states—is translated into a highly bureaucratized and statist socialism.

Tortured Typologies

Mistaken assumptions lead to confused descriptions of the political systems of the Middle East. *Exploring World Cultures*, for example, presents a bizarre typology of Middle East governments that confuses more than it clarifies: "Some Middle Eastern countries like Turkey are moving toward a Western-style democracy. Others, like Egypt, have developed a one-party government ded-

icated to social reform. Jordan and others have remained as monarchies" (p. 87).

Although this list seems intended as exhaustive, it actually accounts for few non-royal Middle Eastern governments. Except for Turkey—basically a democracy since 1950 despite some breakdowns—it is hard to think of any Moslem country in the Middle East "moving toward" democracy. In the few countries where elections have been held, anti-democratic Islamic fundamentalists have made major gains. The fear that such extremists would gain power has led rulers in Egypt to fix the elections and in Algeria to cancel them altogether. It is also misleading for the text to couple one-party rule with social reform. To be sure, there is plenty of one-party rule in the Middle East, but it rarely accompanies social reform. A case could be made, in fact, that for such social reforms as providing education and medicine, the monarchies have done better than the one-party states. This is not because they are monarchies but because most of them are wealthy from oil. Moreover, it is misleading to lump together all one-party regimes: Egypt has tolerated pluralism for more than a decade; Iraq and Syria are rigid tyrannies.

Exploring World Cultures is not the only text that has trouble with typologies. *Eastern Hemisphere* lists Iraq, Algeria, Egypt, and Israel as republics; Syria as a dictatorship; Oman an absolute monarchy; Kuwait a constitutional monarchy; and the United Arab Emirates a sheikdom (pp. 330-31). In fact, the differences among these three monarchies—presented as three distinct types—are nominal, while those among the four "republics" could hardly be larger. And while it is good to see Syria described as a dictatorship, Iraq is no less of one. It would be far more informative to tell students that all of these countries except Israel are essentially dictatorships, that Egypt is the most tolerant and that some, say Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, are much less brutal than Syria and Iraq.

Hagans' *The World Today* also has trouble describing the political systems in the Middle East. It introduces the subject after saying that although Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey, reduced the power of Islamic religious leaders, army commanders "still have much power." The book goes on to explain that "a number of other countries in the Middle East have governments much like Turkey's. Egypt, the Sudan, Algeria, and Syria all have governments with some democratic features and some army influence" (p. 251). This is a very strained comparison. The Turkish military has assumed power three times in the last 65 years, but restored democratic practice on each occasion. Egypt, although allowing different parties, has never had a truly honest election; Algeria has been a one-party state for 30 years; and whatever "democratic features" Syria has (in the best formalist tradition, it does have a parliament and allows different parties to participate in the government coalition), these are only window dressing for a military dictatorship.

Good Dictators

These tortured typologies display an important feature in common: They fail to draw a clear distinction between freedom and tyranny, democracy and dictatorship. They rarely discuss the treatment of citizens, the degree of lib-

erty, or the level of competency of political regimes. If regimes are nationalist with modernizing aspirations, they seem preferable to traditionalist regimes. Thus, Wallbank's *History and Life* can say, "Syria and Iraq ... turned to dictatorships in order to establish order and encourage progress in their communities" (p. 732).

While these books devote a great deal of space to economic issues, none of them mentions the devastating economic failure of the "progressive" regimes in Syria, Iraq, Algeria, Egypt, or Libya. On the rare occasions when the texts address questions of human rights, they do not discuss the rights of all citizens but of minority groups. Even in this category, though, much is left out. There is no hint of the Syrian government's massacre of several thousand religious dissidents at Hama. The Iraqi government's murderous chemical weapons attack on the Kurdish town of Halabja is mentioned at most as a Kurdish accusation, although the grim facts have been amply confirmed. Indeed, there is almost no discussion in any of these works of any act of repression by any radical regime. Nor is there any discussion of what it is like to live in a repressive dictatorship.

The Nasser regime has been widely criticized in Egypt for more than a decade for its shortcomings in foreign policy (intervention in Yemen, provocation of the 1967 war with Israel) and domestic policy (concentration camps, torture, damage to the economy, wiretapping). Nonetheless, Nasser's legacy is often presented to American students in admiring terms. Nasser was a reformer who instituted land reforms, built industry, and improved the life of Egypt's peasants, says Newhill's *Exploring World Cultures* (p. 91). He was a "popular leader" who "help[ed] Egypt's poor ... promoted land reforms, encouraged industrialization, and developed the country's natural resources," says *History and Life* (pp. 720, 732).

History and Life does a better job than some in comparing the prerevolutionary and postrevolutionary governments of Iran: "A violent revolution in Iran replaced the dictatorial shah with an Islamic dictatorship led by the Ayatollah Khomeini" (p. 738). In contrast, *The World Today* reports that "the shah's officers tortured, imprisoned, and murdered people to hold on to power" (p. 257). This is true, but it is misleading to say this and not say that the same behavior was at least as common under the Khomeini regime.

Another weakness of the texts is their exaggeration of the practical impact of pan-Arabism. The idea of an Arab world united in the face of Western slights and challenges is perhaps the most venerable misperception of Middle East politics. These books perpetuate it. Although *Exploring World Cultures* has a fairly balanced discussion of the ups and downs of Arab unity (p. 89), a student relying on any of the other texts would believe that Arabs almost always support each other.

Arabs do feel a sense of group identity and solidarity, but the political reach of these sentiments is short. Arab politics has less often been characterized by unity than

by rivalries among states, clans, and leaders. The pan-Arab dream has been exploited for the benefit of individual leaders or states by the likes of Nasser, its greatest popularizer, or, more recently, Saddam Hussein. Still, it is no nearer realization than when it was first dreamt.

Students would be served better by texts that describe the emerging local identities within the individual states, the use of Arab nationalist rhetoric to justify dictatorship and subversion of neighbors on the part of governments, and the gap between the theory and practice of pan-Arabism.

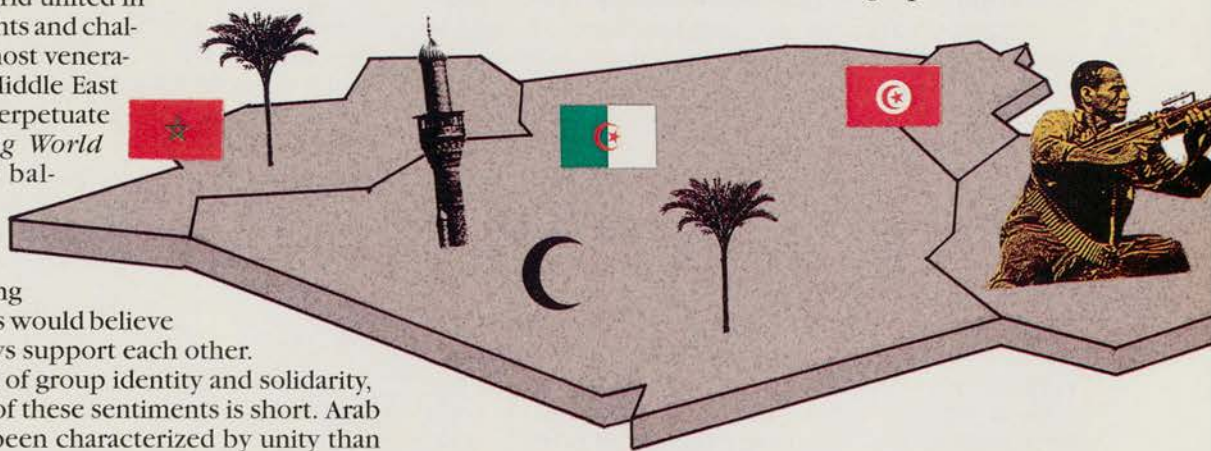
Invisible Terrorists, Radicals as Moderates

In presenting the Arab-Israeli conflict, the tone of the texts is balanced and dispassionate, but their substance tends to be skewed. None of the most widely used texts mentions Arab terrorism against Israel. Few discuss the refusal of the Arab states to recognize Israel, and not one offers a single Arab example of a hardline statement against Israel by any Arab ruler or leader. The PLO itself is ignored to a remarkable extent, and its long-held goal of destroying Israel is reported nowhere except in *History and Life*, which explains that this is a goal that Yasser Arafat foreswore in 1988.

The effect of the textbooks is to undercut the idea that Israel has a real security problem. Thus, Israel's past need to occupy territories and retain a large army, and its long-standing policy to refuse to negotiate with the PLO are rendered as totally irrational. Although this situation has now been altered, it did characterize an era of more than 40 years and created the current situation in the region. The problem here is not a matter of political belief or of a specific viewpoint but a failure to present one side of the conflict.

Beers' *World History* explains that the Arabs attacked Israel in 1948 because "Arab nations supported the demands of Arabs in Palestine for self-determination" (p. 769). The Arab nations and the Arabs of Palestine, however, defined "self-determination" as ruling the entire country. The Jews, supported by the UN plan, favored the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. The Israeli side on this and other issues is simply never presented.

World History's account of the 1967 War is equally misleading: "The simmering conflict flared into war again in 1967. Both sides had been building up their armed



forces. Fearing an Arab attack, Israel struck first in a surprise move" (p. 770). What precipitated war in 1967 was not "both sides," but Egypt's mobilization on the border, its unilateral expulsion of UN peacekeeping forces that had separated the two sides, its announcement of a naval blockade choking off Israeli shipping in direct violation of the 1948 armistice, and direct threats of war by President Nasser. At the time, American opinion was virtually unanimous that these actions made Egypt the aggressor, although Israeli forces did strike first. Future generations will see it differently if they are raised on texts such as this.

For all its flaws, *World History* is not nearly as biased as Hantula's *Global Insights*.

Global Insights introduces the Arab-Israeli conflict by explaining that the land "used to be called Palestine, and Muslim and Christian Arabs and Jews lived there. Then, on May 14, 1948, the Jewish state of Israel was created on Palestinian land. The Arabs, however, did not want a Jewish state on land that once belonged to Jews and Arabs, Muslims and Christians, alike. As a result, conflict broke out between the Arabs and the Jews" (p. 561). This makes it sound as if the Jews alone, who the text elsewhere says consider themselves "the chosen people" (p. 586), destroyed a paradise of inter-communal harmony. In contrast to Jewish particularism, "Many Palestinians feel that their hopes can be fulfilled only by returning to their land and by creating a democratic nonreligious Palestinian state" (p. 562).

With each ensuing war, *Global Insights* says, "the Israelis occupied new territories, which the Arabs want back. They also want the several million Palestinians who fled during the fighting to have their homes and lands returned to them" (p. 618). This greatly exaggerates the number of refugees and, more importantly, the book makes no mention of what Israelis might seek in return. *Global Insights* presents a critical view of the Camp David agreements (pp. 618, 621) without discussing the fact that the Palestinians rejected a treaty that contained a mechanism for the return of territories. Even more striking is that the book does not mention the PLO, the terrorist incidents at the time, the PLO's alliance with the USSR, Arab and PLO statements calling for Israel's destruction, or Israel's return of the Sinai in exchange for peace with Egypt.

Thus, when the text finally mentions (p. 621) that some Israelis want the occupied territories as a security belt, this desire appears quite irrational. Israeli greed seems the only cause of continued conflict.

The text occasionally mentions Israel's position on one issue or another, but usually as a straw man quickly knocked down. As if to leave no doubt about where truth lies, it includes a page-long pedagogic exercise in "distinguishing between warranted and unwarranted claims" (p. 567). In it, all of the examples of unwarranted claims are sentences containing the Israeli view. One example is so amazing that it must be quoted in full: "The Israelis believe that their security would be threatened if they admitted into Israel persons who have been their enemies and who object to the 'Jewishness' of the state." The text continues: "This statement is a prediction that might very well prove to be true. However, since the persons to which [sic] the Israelis object have not actually been admitted to the country yet, at this point in time,

there is no way of proving if the claim is true or not. Therefore, it is an unwarranted claim."

In other words, Israel must let in millions of historically hostile Palestinians, and then we will see if they were right in fearing them. This kind of reasoning is biased to the point of being ludicrous. One text that incorporated the Israeli perspective in its presentation was Wallbank's *History and Life*—in its 1987 edition. However, in its 1990 edition, the section on the Arab-Israeli conflict was revised to present a very different picture. The earlier version began with a heading, "The state of Israel faced a hostile Arab world" (p. 685). This was replaced by "The Arab-Israel conflict challenged the entire region" (p. 729). After World War II, said the earlier edition, "Britain proposed that Palestine be partitioned (geographically divided) between Arabs and Jews, but the Arabs denounced partition" (p. 686). This explanation for the failure to reach a solution has been replaced in the later version with this: "Because Jews made up only one-third of the population of Palestine in 1945, an independent government that was based on a democratic vote would have meant a government dominated by Arabs. The Jews were opposed to living under this type of government" (p. 729). There was virtually no chance of such a government, regardless of Jewish opinion.

Both versions mention the refugees generated by the war of 1948, but the older version stressed the failure of Arab states to absorb these people (p. 687), while the new version stresses Israel's failure to readmit them (p. 729). The older version devoted a few sentences to the thousands of Jews who fled the Arab lands at this time (p. 687), but all such references are omitted from the new version.

Each version presents the PLO in a single paragraph, but there is a remarkable difference in the image conveyed. Here are the two paragraphs in their entirety.

Old version:

In 1964, the heads of the Arab states created an umbrella organization for the various Palestinian Arab groups and called it the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The PLO said that it was a government in exile and that it spoke for all Palestinian Arabs. It refused to recognize the existence of Israel and demanded that an Arab state be established in its place. In the next few years, the PLO began to acquire money and arms from various Arab states and the Soviet Union (p. 687).

New version:

In 1964, the heads of the Arab states recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The PLO is an umbrella organization for various Palestinian Arab guerrilla groups and service organizations. In addition, later that year the PLO received observer status at the UN to speak for Palestinian issues (p. 730).

The events described in the new paragraph actually took place in 1974.

In describing the onset of the 1967 war, the old version said:

The hostility of the Arab world toward Israel con-

tinued undiminished. In 1967, Egypt closed the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping and mobilized its troops in the Sinai. President Nasser called for a general Arab war, declaring that "our objective will be to destroy Israel." Thinking that Egypt, Syria, and Jordan were about to attack, Israel struck first (p. 687).

This has been replaced in the new edition with a more succinct version: "... in 1967[,] Egypt, Syria, and Jordan began to mass their troops along the Israeli border. Israel, sensing an invasion, decided to strike first" (p. 730).

The lack of detail in the latter version makes the events difficult for students to understand. And such a brief statement still managed a factual error: Jordan did not mobilize on the border.

Although no one change is egregious (apart from factual errors), the final result of all the changes is to give the impression of a unified Arab world rightly aggrieved by unilateral, unjustified Israeli actions.

Whitewashes and Scapegoats

The flaws in the treatment of the Arab-Israeli issue carry over into some of the portrayals of the Lebanese civil war. Hantula's *Global Insights* for some strange reason portrays the civil war as resulting in large measure from inflation. Then it says, "In 1976, the Lebanese government and other Arab states asked the Syrian government to help restore peace. Syria sent troops, and order was restored" (pp. 623-24). While it is true that Syria did obtain an Arab sanction for its action, Damascus occupied two-thirds of Lebanon, usurped the central government's sovereignty, silenced the free press, and killed many civilians. Syrian officers involved themselves in drug smuggling. And the civil war did not end.

This whitewash becomes coherent when the book

goes on to suggest that violence resumed only because of Israel's invasion in 1982. The Israeli attack, it says, "destroyed many villages and left tens of thousands ... homeless" (p. 624). To illustrate this point, it presents a long excerpt from an article by an American doctor (a PLO sympathizer) who says: "We could not find a single structure intact—nor a single person—in the formerly Christian town of Damur." The reader can only conclude that Israel was the culprit. But, as has been amply and often documented, Damur was besieged, looted, and destroyed by the PLO's radical Lebanese allies and some of its member groups years before Israel drove the PLO out in 1982.

Another book, Hagans' *The World Today*, states that soon after the Lebanese civil war began in 1975 other countries became involved: "Israel sent troops to help one group. Syria sent troops to help several other groups" (p. 260). This seems evenhanded, but from 1976 until 1982 there were some 20,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon and no Israelis. The Israeli attack was a single episode, however harsh, whereas Syrian intervention has been enduring. After 1984, there were still 20,000 Syrians in Lebanon and perhaps 200 Israeli soldiers in the far south. The book states that by 1984 several countries, including the United States, sent troops. But this expeditionary force (U.S., French, British) had left by then. More important, Syria comes across in all this as only one of a number of countries involved in Lebanon, rather than what it is: its occupier.

On the whole, the texts are not much better at presenting the 1980s war between Iraq and Iran. *The World Today* states simply that war "broke out" between Iran and Iraq (p. 259), inexplicably avoiding the more informative formulation, Iraq invaded Iran. It mistakenly says that the main cause of the war was a conflict between the Sunni and Shi'a branch of Islam (p. 260). *Global Insights* gives as the reason for the war the fact that the

Khomeini regime in Iran was fundamentalist while Iraq was secular (pp. 627-28).

Actually, there were two major causes of the war.

The first was Iraq's fear that Iran would win the loyalty of Iraq's large Shi'a population and persuade them to revolt. The

second was Iraq's ambition to dominate the Persian Gulf and the Arab world. *History and Life* is the only text reviewed here

that provides the second reason (p. 734). The others tend to leave

readers unprepared to think of Iraq as an aggressive country. *Global Insights* reproduces an article from *National Geographic* which goes on at length about the high standard of living in Iraq and the



relatively elevated status of women (pp. 628-29). While this is not altogether inaccurate, it is presented in the absence of any discussion of Iraqi repression and leaves a falsely favorable image of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Although the texts resort to less "West-bashing" than one might have found in earlier years, here and there the tendency lingers. For example, *Eastern Hemisphere* explains that by working too closely with the British an Egyptian king (presumably Farouk) angered nationalists (p. 363). This conforms to the stereotype that imperialism allied with reaction and was opposed by nationalists. Reality is more complicated. The British often supported liberal forces in Egypt. At times they were closer to the populist Wafd party than to the palace. In addition, Egyptian nationalists had some sympathy for the king as a victim of British imperialism. Moreover, the most egregious instance of British intervention came during World War II to eliminate pro-Axis tendencies in high Egyptian circles, including the king and some of those "angry" nationalists.

Global Insights says, "Many Middle Easterners fought and died for independence" from European rule (p. 603). Actually, with the exception of Algeria's war against France (which is not mentioned in this text), there was very little bloodshed. A long passage about Syria would lead one to believe that the French loosed a bloodbath there (p. 605-6) whereas, in the main, independence was granted peacefully. Again, the stereotype—heroic freedom fighters against recalcitrant imperialists—is the explanation implied in the absence of specific knowledge.

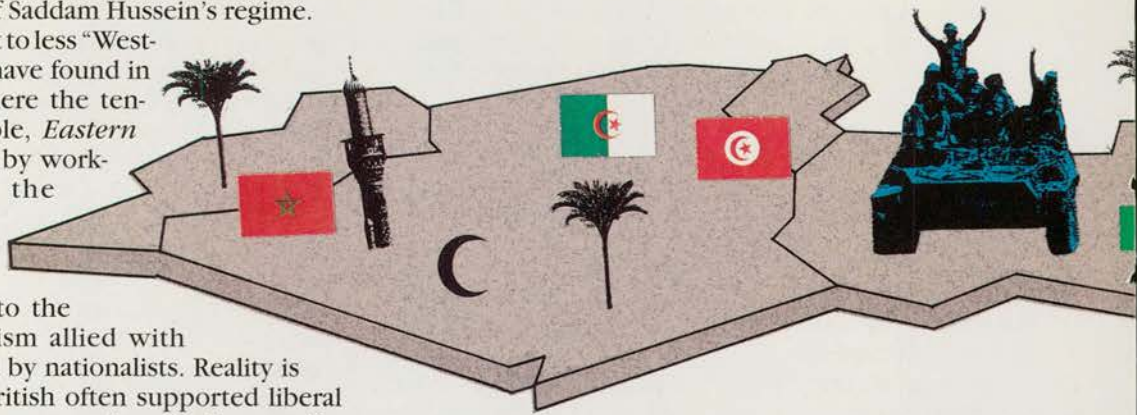
Factual Errors and Sloppiness

In addition to these thematic flaws, the texts suffer from a number of factual errors. Not all of them are substantive, but they display a sloppiness that reflects very poorly on the research, writing, editing, and evaluation methods used.

A few examples illustrate the problem. In *Eastern Hemisphere* the birth of Islam is given in a chart as in the 500s, a century too early (p. 328), while the caliphs' rule in Baghdad is given as between 700 and 1100 (it should be between 750 and 1258). The Ottoman Empire is said to have begun in the 1500s, but this date is about three centuries too late. (Perhaps the authors were thinking of the period of the Ottoman domination over the Arab world.)

The same book tells us that nationalism in the Middle East began in Turkey in 1919 (p. 357), when a nationalist government had already ruled that country for almost a dozen years. In Iran, we are told, nationalism developed because of Reza Shah and that this monarch "turned his country into a modern nation" (p. 358). Actually, a strong sense of nationalism never developed in Iran, and Reza Shah's effort to transform Iran was a failure for which his son would pay dearly at the time of the Islamic revolution.

The same source says that the PLO "has fought against



Israel for more than 40 years" (p. 366), but the PLO was founded in 1964. Golda Meir's name is given as "Mier" (p. 368).

The World Today puts the UN partition of Palestine in 1946 (p. 252), not 1947. It informs us that members of Israel's parliament are elected every four years (p. 253), but Israel is a parliamentary system in which elections must be held at least every four years. The text says that, "Many people suspect" that a fundamentalist group murdered Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat (p. 258), when this is a fact no one has ever disputed. Two pages later we read that in the 1970s many Palestinian Moslems arrived as refugees in Lebanon (p. 260). The correct date is 1948, although PLO gunmen did come from Jordan in 1970-71.

Newhill's *Exploring World Cultures* places the war in Jordan between the Jordanian army and the PLO in 1971 (p. 91), whereas it occurred in 1970. On the same page Saudi Arabia is misspelled. The same book explains that in 1979 religious leaders overthrew the shah of Iran and "returned the country to Islamic rule" (p. 91), although it had never known such rule before.

Conclusion

In the main, these books are good introductions to Islam, and the geography, culture, and early history of the Middle East. But they do a poor job of dealing with contemporary issues. Just how poor a job they do can be seen when the texts are held up to events that have occurred since they were published. It would be foolish to expect textbooks to predict correctly future events. But good historians have a head start in understanding events as they unfold. Students whose only knowledge of the Middle East was from these texts would more often be handicapped in understanding current events. A student who learned from the textbooks that war "broke out" between Iraq and Iran because of the religious differences between Sunnis and Shi'as (*The World Today*, p. 260) or between Iraq's secularism and Iran's fundamentalism (*Global Insights*, pp. 627-28) would have been very puzzled by the Iraqi invasion of Sunni Kuwait.

Students who learned only of the intransigent Israelis whose concern about security seemed irrational were probably equally puzzled by the eagerness of the Israeli government and population to sign a peace accord as

WHAT STUDENTS WERE READING 100 YEARS AGO

Selections from Classic American Readers

BY JEANNE S. CHALL

EARLY IN my work on the psychology and teaching of reading, I became fascinated with classic American readers—particularly those published about 100 years ago. I found the books utterly charming, instructive, and inspiring.

I first fell in love with old readers when I found one in a secondhand bookshop in Martha's Vineyard, Mass., about 40 years ago: *Towne's Spelling and Defining Book*, published in 1846. It was small in size, with sharp, black and white drawings and small type. The little book fit easily in one's hand or pocket. It contained a few pages of instructions and exercises for the teacher and student. But mostly it contained a collection of stories that entertain, inform, inspire, and serve as a means of developing a student's reading ability. I have since collected several hundred of these early American readers, and my fascination with them has grown.

When I started collecting the old readers in the 1950s, I was an assistant professor teaching teachers how to teach reading, supervising their clinical work with problem readers, and conducting research on reading and readability. The more I learned about teaching reading and the more research I did on the subject, the more I came to appreciate these books.

I used them to introduce my students to the history of American reading instruction by exposing them to the books used to teach children how to read then and now.

At first my students were struck by the small size and quaintness of the old books compared with the large, colorful ones in current use. But, in spite of their quaintness, a little study revealed that the old reading books have many redeeming features. In fact, a more careful study reveals that they contain many features that are being sought today. I present, below, several of these features and the support they receive from research on teaching and learning to read.

Jeanne S. Chall is professor of education emerita at Harvard University and founder and former director of the Harvard Reading Laboratory. She is author of the seminal studies Learning to Read: The Great Debate (1967, 1983, and 1994), Stages of Reading Development (1983 and 1994), and of numerous other publications.

Content Difference

The children's readers used 100 years ago contain selections that are more mature, substantial, and sophisticated—grade for grade—than those in use today. Current readers tend to contain selections that are child-oriented; they seem designed to keep a child amused and interested. Although the reading books of 100 years ago also appealed to a child's interests, they were instructive and appealed to adults as well. Indeed, the old fables and fairy tales used widely in the old readers originally were told and read to adults, at a time when most adults could not read.

Another difference in the old readers is their greater use of serious nonfiction. The readers of 100 years ago contain more selections about history, geography, and natural science. These raised questions, encouraged thinking, and invited children to think creatively about what they read.

The old books contain selections that invited critical reading. They did not, as we tend to assume, teach by rote. They also taught values that were incorporated in the fables, tales, stories, science, and historical selections on the American Revolution and on the lives of the founding fathers—George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and others.

Level of Difficulty

Perhaps the greatest difference between the old and new readers is their level of difficulty. The older readers were considerably more challenging and demanding than the new.

Although current readers have gotten more difficult in the past few years, they still are easier than those used 100 years ago. Recent research on the readability of texts and the level of difficulty that is optimal for learning to read has found that books published within the past 50 years have tended to be too easy for the average student. The research also indicates that more challenging books—those that are on or somewhat above the student's level—lead to better reading achievement.

This was found in a study commissioned by the College Board and the Educational Testing Service for the Panel on SAT Score Decline. With two associates at Harvard University (Sue Conard and Susan Harris) I found in



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1977 that those students who had used more challenging and demanding textbooks tended to score higher on their SATs in the 11th grade. Indeed, it was the readers used in the first few grades that seemed to make the greatest difference.

Some may argue that the rigorous reading texts of 100 years ago, although appropriate for the student population of that time, would not be suitable for many children today, particularly those from low-income, at-risk backgrounds. Our research supports just the opposite view. In 1990, in a study of children in grades 2 to 7 from low-income families, we found that those who were exposed to more challenging books made greater gains in their reading.

More recently, Hayes and his associates at Cornell University obtained similar findings using a larger number of textbooks and a more elaborate test of difficulty. He too found that higher achievement occurred when books are more demanding.

Both features of the early readers—more sophisticated content and more difficult selections—relate to the current concern for higher standards. It might strike one as ironic that the classic readers of 100 years ago provided standards that are, perhaps, more appropriate than those found in readers being used today.

Physical Features

The readers of 100 years ago are smaller than current reading books—closer in size to our modern paperback books. They were easier for young children to carry around than the rather heavy contemporary readers.

The old readers have fewer illustrations, and all are black and white. Today's readers are lush with color, and the illustrations have become part of some beginning reading instructional programs which ask the child to read the story from the pictures.

Instructions for the Teacher

Unlike today's reading texts, the readers of 100 years ago did not come with accompanying teacher's guidebooks. Questions to be asked and words to be learned are included with the selection itself, for the teacher and the student. The older books would seem to appeal more closely to the sentiments of teachers today: that less time be spent on exercises and more on reading the selections.

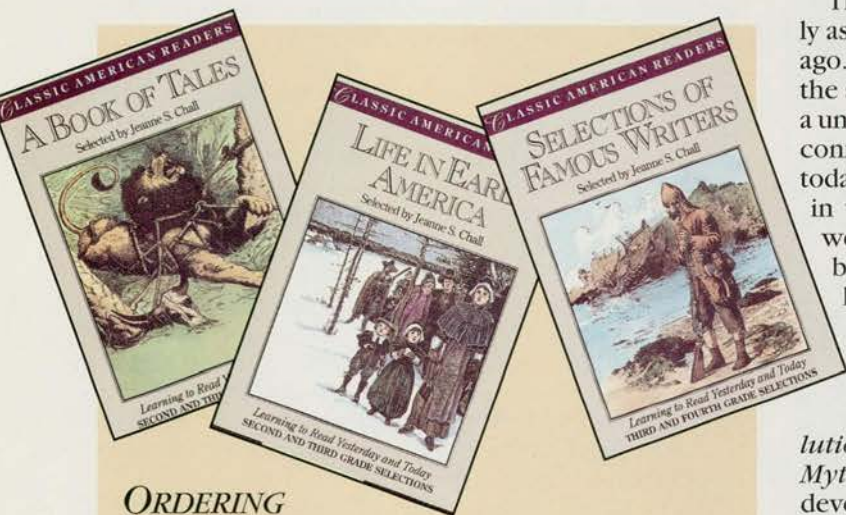
The Classic—and Still Relevant—

Purpose of Readers

Each of the old readers has a brief preface that highlights the authors' views about books and reading. The following excerpts from some of these prefaces give a flavor of their beliefs about teaching and learning to read:

"[The series'] purpose is to inspire the child with a desire to read, by opening up to him the story-world, and through his love of reading, to give him the power to read." (*The Progressive Road to Reading, Book Three*. Silver, Burdett and Company, 1909.)

"The literature is of the choicest. Its subject matter is drawn from topics which attract and engage all children, appealing at once to their intelligence and interest, and giving them something to read about and think about." (*The Normal Course in Reading, Third Reader*. Silver, Burdett and Company, 1896.)



ORDERING INFORMATION

Ordering information for *Classic American Readers* can be obtained by writing or calling the publisher: Andrews and McMeel, Education Division, 4900 Main Street, Kansas City, Mo. 64112; 1-800-826-EDUC (3382).

STORY CREDITS

"The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse," *A Book of Tales* copyright © 1994 Andrews and McMeel. Used with permission. All rights reserved. [From *School Reading by Grades, Third Year*, American Book Company, 1897.]

"How Rollo Learned to Work," *Life in Early America* copyright © 1994 Andrews and McMeel. Used with permission. All rights reserved. [From *School Reading by Grades, Second Year*, American Book Company, 1897.]

"Washington's Christmas Gift," *Stories of the American Revolution* copyright © 1994 Andrews and McMeel. Used with permission. All rights reserved. [From *Stories of Great Americans for Little Americans*, American Book Company, 1895.]

"Learning to Write," *Selections of Famous Writers* copyright © 1994 Andrews and McMeel. Used with permission. All rights reserved. [From *The New Century Fourth Reader*, Rand, McNally & Company, 1899.]

"The reading book, therefore, has more direct influence upon the character of the pupil than any other textbook, and, with this in mind, it has been the fundamental purpose of this series to make its readers familiar with the best writers and their works." (*Cyr's Fourth Reader*. Ginn and Company, 1899.)

"The stories in prose and verse are well adapted to awaken a lively interest in the minds of the pupil, and at the same time to instill principles of truthfulness and honesty, and sentiments of kindness and honor." (*Holmes' Second Reader*. University Publishing Company, 1906.)

About the Current Series

Recently, I have had the pleasure of making selections from these old readers and presenting them in a series of six softcover volumes for second-, third-, and fourth-graders. The overall title for the series is *Classic American Readers*. [See box for additional information.]

The stories from the old readers are published as nearly as possible as they first appeared some hundred years ago. The words and illustrations are the same. However, the size and style of type have been adjusted to provide a uniform appearance and to make the type size larger to conform to the type size children are used to reading today. The vocabulary lists and activities are the same as in the originals. Paragraphs or groups of paragraphs were numbered in some of the old readers. The numbers were used to help the class keep its place. I have kept the numbers where I have found them.

The books for second- and third-graders include, *A Book of Tales*, *About Animals and Plants*, and *Life in Early America*. The books for the third- and fourth-grade contain, *Stories of the American Revolution*, *Selections from Famous Writers*, and *Ancient Myths and Legends*. In addition to an entire volume devoted to selections from famous writers (Hans Christian Andersen, Anna Sewell, Louisa May Alcott, and Daniel Defoe) each of the other volumes contain selections from other famous writers—Aesop, Charles Perrault, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, Samuel T. Coleridge, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson.

The blending of high-quality literature with substantive nonfiction currently is favored for the language arts curriculum, much as it was 100 years ago. It provides the kind of practice needed to improve reading and writing for students at all levels of development.

Each book in the series begins with a short introduction for today's students, teachers, and parents. In addition, I have added to each selection a brief overview of its contents and a few suggestions and questions on how it can be used to improve the student's reading, writing, and reactions to text.

To give you a firsthand look at what America's young students were reading a century ago, reprinted here are four selections from *Classic American Readers*: "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse," from *A Book of Tales*; "How Rollo Learned to Work," from *Life in Early America*; "Washington's Christmas Gift," from *Stories of the American Revolution*; and "Learning to Write," from *Selections of Famous Writers*. □

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

About the Selection: The story is about two mice—cousins—who visited in each other's homes.

Improving Your Reading: The lesson taught in the fable is in the last sentence. "A grain of corn in safety is better than fine cake in fear." Try to say this in your own words.

anybody
dining
escape

fare
fear
freely

narrow
offer
safety

1. Once upon a time a Town Mouse went to visit his cousin in the country. The country cousin was a rough fellow, and his manners were not very fine. But he was glad to see his town friend, and did all that he could to make things pleasant.



The Country Mouse

2. Beans and corn and dry roots were all that he could offer for dinner, but they were offered very freely. The Town Mouse rather turned up his nose at this country fare. He said, "Cousin, I wonder how you can put up with such food as this every day."

3. The Country Mouse said, "I don't know of anybody that has any better." "Perhaps not," said his cousin; "but if you will go home with me, I will show you how to live. When you have been in town a week, you will wonder how anyone can bear to stay in the country."

4. No sooner said than done. The two mice set off for town, and came to the home of the Town Mouse late at night.

5. The Town Mouse was very polite. After they had rested a little while, he took his friend into the great dining room. He said, "We will have something to eat after our long walk."

6. On the table they found what had been



left of a fine supper. Soon they were busy eating cakes and all that was nice. "This is what I call living," said the Town Mouse.

7. Just then a noise was heard at the door. "What is that?" said the Country Mouse.

"Oh, it's only the dogs barking," said his cousin.

8. "Do they keep dogs in this house?"

"Yes, and you must be careful to keep out of their way."

9. The next minute the door flew open, and two big dogs came running in. The mice jumped off the table and ran into a hole in the floor. But they were none too quick.

"Oh, I am so frightened!" said the Country Mouse, and he trembled like a leaf.

"That is nothing," said his cousin. "The dogs cannot follow us."

10. Then they went into the kitchen. But while they were looking around and tasting first of this thing and then of that, what did they see in a dark corner? They saw two bright eyes watching them, and they knew that the house cat was there.



The Town Mouse

"Run for your life!" cried the Town Mouse.

11. In another moment the cat would have had them. The Country Mouse felt her claws touch his tail as he ran under the door. "That was a narrow escape!" said the Town Mouse.

12. But the Country Mouse did not stop to talk. "Good-bye, cousin," he said.

"What, are you going so soon?"

"Yes, I must go home. A grain of corn in safety is better than fine cake in fear."

How Rollo Learned to Work

About the Selection: This story is about a boy and his father who had different ideas about work.

Improving Your Reading: What did Rollo learn about work? What helped him to learn?

| | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|
| beans | loose | sort |
| brushed | nails | task |
| cousin | pick | taught |
| horseshoe | poured | teach |
| lesson | rusty | |

I

1. "Horses have to be taught to work just as boys have to be taught," said Rollo's father, one morning.

"I know how to work," said Rollo.

His father smiled and said, "I will give you some work to do, and then we shall see."

2. He took a small basket in his hands and led Rollo to the barn. Rollo sat down on some straw. He wondered what kind of work he was going to do.

3. Soon his father brought a box full of old nails and put it on the barn floor. "What can I do with those old nails?" said Rollo.

4. His father said, "You must sort them. There are many kinds of nails in the box, and I want each kind put by itself."



Rollo

II

5. Rollo put his hand into the box. He began to pick up some of the nails and look at them. But his father told him to put them back

into the box. He said, "Wait and I will show you how to sort them."

6. He then brushed away a clean place on the barn floor, and poured the nails upon it. "Oh, how many nails!" said Rollo.

7. His father showed him that there were many kinds. He put some of them on the floor, each kind by itself. Some were long, some were short, some were straight, and some were crooked.

8. "Now, Rollo," he said, "I want you to keep on doing this until you have sorted them all. If you find anything that you don't know what to do with, lay it down, and keep at work sorting the nails."

9. Rollo sat down on the floor and began his work, and his father went away.

III

10. "I think this is easy work," Rollo said. It was easy to see which nails were short and which were long. But, by and by, he began to think it very hard to sit in the barn all alone, and keep on doing this dull work.

11. There was no one to talk to and no one to help him; and there was nothing to look at but rusty nails on the floor.

12. Rollo's father knew that he would soon get tired, and so he did. He thought he would go and ask if he might get his cousin James to help him.

"What is the matter now?" said his father.

13. Rollo said, "I think it will be nice to have James come and help me. It will not take so long then."

But his father said, "No. What I want to teach you is to work, and not to play."



His father said, "You must sort them."

IV

14. So Rollo went back to his task. He picked out a few more nails. He was very sorry that his father had set him to work. The pile of nails looked very large now. Rollo was sure that he could never sort them all.

15. By and by he found two horseshoe nails. "What shall I do with these?" he said to himself. He played with them a little while, and then went to ask his father. His father said, "You must not leave your work. I told you just what to do."

16. Rollo went back to his nails. But he did not work very fast. At last his father came to see what he had done. "I see, Rollo," he said, "that you do not know how to work. It is time for you to begin to learn."

17. Rollo did not know what to say. His father told him that he might go and play, and that he would give him a new lesson the next day.

V

18. Rollo's next work was to pick beans in the garden. He did very well for an hour, and was glad when his father told him that he was

learning to work. He felt now as if he was almost a man.

19. But the next day he did not do so well. He was to pick up the loose stones in the road, and put them in a heap. It was hard work, and the little boy did not like it at all.

20. "Rollo," said his father, "you have not learned to work well. A good workman would do better than this." But it was not long before he learned to do many things. And he found that his work helped him in his play.

21. When he had picked up all the stones, he rolled his hoop in the road, and thought how much better it looked than before. He liked it much better than if someone else had picked up the stones.



He rolled his hoop.

Washington's Christmas Gift

About the Selection: *Washington and his soldiers had a very hard time during the winter of 1776. This selection tells about this hard time.*

Improving Your Reading: *What did Washington do during Christmas when the Hessians were sleeping? Why did people say that what Washington did was a Christmas gift to the country?*

Washington was fighting to set this country free. But the army that the King of England sent to fight him was stronger than Washington's army. Washington was beaten and driven out of Brooklyn. Then he had to leave New York. After that he marched away into New Jersey to save his army from being taken. At last he crossed the Delaware River. Here he was safe for a while.

Some of the Hessian soldiers that the king had hired to fight against the Americans came to Trenton. Trenton is on the Delaware River.

Washington and his men were on the other side of the Delaware River from the Hessians. Washington's men were discouraged. They had been driven back all the way from Brooklyn. It was winter, and they had no warm houses to stay in. They had not even warm clothes. They were dressed in old clothes that people had given them. Some of them were barefooted in this cold weather.

The Hessians and other soldiers of the king were waiting for the river to freeze over. Then they would march across on the ice. They meant to fight Washington once more, and break up his army.

But Washington was thinking about something, too.

He was waiting for Christmas. He knew that the Hessian soldiers on the other side of the river would eat and drink a great deal on Christmas Day.

The afternoon of Christmas came. The Hessians were singing and drinking in Trenton.

But Washington was marching up the riverbank. Some of his barefoot men left blood marks on the snow as they marched.

The men and cannons were put into flatboats. These boats were pushed across the river with poles. There were many great pieces of ice in the river. But all night long the flatboats were pushed across and then back again for more men.

It was three o'clock on the morning after Christmas when the last Americans crossed the river. It was hailing and snowing, and it was very cold. Two or three of the soldiers were frozen to death.

It was eight o'clock in the morning when Washington got to Trenton. The Hessians were sleeping soundly. The sound of the American drums waked them. They jumped out of their beds. They ran into the streets. They tried to fight the Americans.

But it was too late. Washington had already taken their cannons. His men were firing these at the Hessians. The Hessians ran into the fields to get away. But the Americans caught them.

The battle was soon over. Washington had taken nine hundred prisoners.

This was called the Battle of Trenton. It gave great joy to all the Americans. It was Washington's Christmas gift to the country.



Learning to Write

BY EDWARD EVERETT HALE

About the Selection: *This selection gives excellent rules for writing well. Its author, Edward Everett Hale, was a well-known American writer of the nineteenth century. His most famous book is The Man Without a Country.*

Improving Your Reading: *If a writer follows the four rules of good writing, how does it help the reader?*

In learning to write well, our first rule is: *Know what you want to say.* The second rule is: *Say it.* That is, do not begin by saying something else which you think will lead up to what you want to say. I remember, when they tried to teach me to sing, they told me to "think of eight and sing seven." That may be a very good rule for singing, but it is not a good rule for talking or writing.

Thirdly, and always: *Use your own language.* I mean the language you are accustomed to use in daily life. If your everyday language is not fit for a letter or for print, it is not fit for talk. And if, by any series of joking or fun, at school or at home, you have got into the habit of using slang, why, the sooner you get out of it the better.

Remember that the very highest compliment paid to anything printed is paid when a person, hearing it read aloud, thinks it is the remark of the reader made in conversation. Both writer and reader then receive the highest possible praise.

A short word is better than a long one. Here is a piece of weak English. It is not bad in other regards, but simply weak:

"Entertaining unlimited confidence in your intelligent and patriotic devotion to the public interest, and being conscious of no motives on my part which are separable from the honor and advancement of my country, I

hope it may be my privilege to deserve and secure, not only your cordial cooperation in great public measures, but also those relations of mutual confidence and regard which it is always so desirable to cultivate between members of coordinate branches of the Government."

Take that for an exercise in translating into shorter words. Strike out the unnecessary words, and see whether the sentence does not come out stronger. I think that sentence would have been better if it had been couched in thirty-five words instead of seventy-eight. I think we should have lost nothing of the author's meaning if he had said:

"I have full trust in you. I am sure that I seek only the honor and advancement of the country. I hope, therefore, I may earn your respect and regard, while we heartily work together."

I am fond of telling the story of the words which a distinguished friend of mine used in accepting a hard post of duty. Like many other men of great ability, he was a modest man. He said:

"I do not think I am fit for this post. But my friends say I am, and I trust them. I shall take it, and when I am in it, I shall do as well as I can."

It was a grand speech. Observe that it contains only words of one syllable.

accustomed, made familiar by use

advancement, furtherance

compliment, an expression of approbation

cooperation, joint labor

coordinate, of equal rank

devotion, consecration

THE NEGLECTED HEART

The Emotional Dangers of Premature Sexual Involvement

BY THOMAS LICKONA

*You didn't get pregnant. You didn't get AIDS. So why
do you feel so bad?*

—Leslee Unruh, abstinence educator

There is no condom for the heart.

—Sign at a sex education conference

IN DISCUSSIONS of teen sex, much is said about the dangers of pregnancy and disease—but far less about the emotional hazards. And that's a problem, because the destructive psychological consequences of temporary sexual relationships are very real. Being aware of them can help a young person make and stick to the decision to avoid premature sexual involvement.

That's not to say we should downplay the physical dangers of uncommitted sex. Pregnancy is a life-changing event. Sexually transmitted disease (STD)—and there are now more than 20 STDs—can rob you of your health and even your life. Condoms don't remove these dangers. Condoms have an annual failure rate of 10 percent to 30 percent in preventing pregnancy because of human error in using them and because they sometimes leak, break, or slip off. Condoms reduce but by no means eliminate the risk of AIDS. In a 1993 analysis of 11 different medical studies, condoms were found to have a 31 percent average failure rate in preventing the sexual transmission of the AIDS virus.¹ Finally, condoms do little or nothing to protect against the two STDs infecting at least

Thomas Lickona is a developmental psychologist and professor of education at the State University of New York at Cortland. He is the father of two sons, ages 20 and 26, and author of the Christopher Award-winning book Educating for Character (Bantam Books, 1992). This article is adapted from a chapter in his forthcoming book, Sex, Love, and You: Making the Right Decision, written for teenagers and co-authored by Judith Lickona and William J. Boudreau, M.D. (to be published by Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN, September 1994).

one-third of sexually active teenage girls: human papilloma virus (the leading cause of cervical cancer) and chlamydia (the leading cause of infertility), both of which can be transmitted by skin-to-skin contact in the entire genital area, only a small part of which is covered by the condom.²

Why is it so much harder to discuss sex and emotional hurt—to name and talk about the damaging psychological effects that can come from premature sexual involvement? For one thing, most of us have never heard this aspect of sex discussed. Our parents didn't talk to us about it. The media don't talk about it. And the heated debate about condoms in schools typically doesn't say much about the fact that condoms do nothing to make sex *emotionally* safe. When it comes to trying to explain to their children or students how early sexuality can do harm to one's personality and character as well as to one's health, many adults are simply at a loss for words, or reduced to vague generalities such as, "you're too young" or "you're not ready" or "you're not mature enough."

This relative silence about the emotional side of sex is ironic, because the emotional dimension of sex is what makes it distinctively human.

What in fact are the emotional or psychological consequences of premature, uncommitted sex? These consequences vary among individuals. Some emotional consequences are short-term but still serious. Some of them last a long time, sometimes even into marriage and parenting. Many of these psychological consequences are hard to imagine until they've been experienced. In all cases, the emotional consequences of sexual experiences are not to be taken lightly. A moment's reflection reminds us that emotional problems can have damaging, even crippling, effects on a person's ability to lead a happy and productive life.

Let's look at 10 negative psychological consequences of premature sexual involvement.



1. Worry About Pregnancy and AIDS

For many sexually active young people, the fear of becoming pregnant or getting AIDS is a major emotional stress.

Russell Henke, health education coordinator in the Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools, says, "I see kids going to the nurses in schools, crying a day after their first sexual experience, and wanting to be tested for AIDS. They have done it, and now they are terrified. For some of them, that's enough. They say, 'I don't want to have to go through that experience anymore.'"³

A high school girl told a nurse: "I see some of my friends buying home pregnancy tests, and they are so worried and so distracted every month, afraid that they might be pregnant. It's a relief to me to be a virgin."

2. Regret and Self-Recrimination

Girls, especially, need to know in advance the sharp regret that so many young women feel after becoming sexually involved.

Says one high school girl: "I get upset when I see my friends losing their virginity to some guy they've just met. Later, after the guy's dumped them, they come to me and say, 'I wish I hadn't done it.'"⁴ A ninth-grade girl who slept with eight boys in junior high says, "I'm young, but I feel old."

Girls are more vulnerable than boys because girls are more likely to think of sex as a way to "show you care." They're more likely to see sex as a sign of commitment in the relationship.

If a girl expects a sexual interlude to be loving, she may very well feel cheated and used when the boy doesn't show a greater romantic interest after the event. As one 15-year-old girl describes her experience: "I didn't expect the guy to marry me, but I never expected him to avoid me in school."

Bob Bartlett, who teaches a freshman sexuality class in a Richfield, Minn., high school, shares the following

story of regret on the part of one of his students (we'll call her Sandy):

Sandy, a bright and pretty girl, asked to see Mr. Bartlett during her lunch period. She explained that she had never had a boyfriend, so she was excited when a senior asked her out.

After they dated for several weeks, the boy asked her to have sex with him. She was reluctant; he was persistent. She was afraid of appearing immature and losing him, so she consented.

"Did it work?" Mr. Bartlett asked gently. "Did you keep him?"

Sandy replied: "For another week. We had sex again, and then he dropped me. He said I wasn't good enough. There was no spark.

"I know what you're going to say. I take your class. I know now that he didn't really love me. I feel so stupid, so cheap."⁵

Sandy hoped, naively, that sex would keep the guy. Here is another high school girl, writing to an advice column about a different kind of regret. She wishes she *could* lose the guy she's involved with, but she feels trapped by their sexual relationship.

I am 16, a junior in high school, and like nearly all the other girls here, I have already lost my virginity. Although most people consider this subject very personal, I feel the need to share this part of my life with girls who are trying to decide whether to have sex for the first time.

Sex does not live up to the glowing reports and hype you see in the movies. It's no big deal. In fact, it's pretty disappointing.

I truly regret that my first time was with a guy that I didn't care that much about. I am still going out with him, which is getting to be a problem. I'd like to end this relationship and date others, but after being so intimate, it's awfully tough.

Since that first night, he expects sex on every date, like we are married or something. When I don't feel like it, we end up in an argument. It's like I owe it to him. I don't think this guy is in love with me, at least he's never said so. I know deep down that I am not in love with him either, and this makes me feel sort of cheap.

I realize now that this is a very big step in a girl's life. After you've done it, things are never the same. It changes everything.

My advice is, don't be in such a rush. It's a headache and a worry. (Could I be pregnant?) Sex is not for entertainment. It should be a commitment. Be smart and save yourself for someone you wouldn't mind spending the rest of your life with.

—Sorry I Didn't And Wish I Could
Take It Back⁶

Regret over uncommitted sexual relationships can last for years. I recently received a letter from a 33-year-old woman, now a psychiatrist, who is very much concerned about the sexual pressures and temptations facing young people today. She wanted to share the lessons she had learned about sex the hard way. After high school, she says, she spent a year abroad as an exchange student:

I was a virgin when I left, but I felt I was pro-

tected. I had gotten an IUD so I could make my own decisions if and when I wanted. I had steeled myself against commitment. I was never going to marry or have children; I was going to have a career. During that year abroad, from 17½ to 18½, I was very promiscuous.

But the fact is, it cost me to be separated from myself. The longest-standing and deepest wound I gave myself was heartfelt. That sick, used feeling of having given a precious part of myself—my soul—to so many and for nothing, still aches. I never imagined I'd pay so dearly and for so long.

This woman is happily married now, she says, and has a good sexual relationship with her husband. But she still carries the emotional scar of those early sexual experiences. She wants young people to know that "sex without commitment is very risky for the heart."

3. Guilt

Guilt is a special form of regret—a strong sense of having done something morally wrong. Guilt is a normal and healthy moral response, a sign that one's conscience is working.

In his book for teenagers, *Love, Dating, and Sex*, George Eager tells the story of a well-known speaker who was addressing a high school assembly. The speaker was asked, "What do you most regret about your high school days?"

He answered, "The thing I most regret about high school is the time I singlehandedly destroyed a girl."

Eager offers this advice to young men: "When the breakup comes, it's usually a lot tougher on the girls than it is on the guys. It's not something you want on your conscience—that you caused a girl to have deep emotional problems."⁷

One 16-year-old boy says he stopped having sex with girls when he saw and felt guilty about the pain he was causing: "You see them crying and confused. They say they love you, but you don't love them."

Even in an age of sexual liberation, a lot of people who are having sex nevertheless have a guilty conscience about it. The guilt may come, as in the case of the young man just quoted, from seeing the hurt you've caused other people.

The guilt may come from knowing that your parents would be upset if they knew you were having sex. Or it may stem from your religious convictions. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, for example, all teach that sex is a gift from God reserved for marriage and that sexual relations outside marriage are morally wrong.

Sometimes guilt about their sexual past ends up crippling people when they become parents by keeping them from advising their own children not to become sexually involved. According to counselor Dr. Carson Daly: "Because these parents can't bear to be considered hypocrites, or to consider themselves hypocrites, they don't give their children the sexual guidance they very much need."⁸

4. Loss of Self-Respect and Self-Esteem

Many people suffer a loss of self-esteem when they find out they have a sexually transmitted disease. For example, according to the Austin, Texas-based Medical Institute for Sexual Health, more than 80 percent of people

Sometimes guilt about their sexual past ends up crippling people when they become parents by keeping them from advising their own children not to become sexually involved.

with herpes say they feel “less confident” and “less desirable sexually.”

But even if a person is fortunate enough to escape sexually transmitted disease, temporary sexual relationships can lower the self-respect of both the user and the used.

Sometimes casual sex lowers self-esteem, leading a person into further casual sex, which leads to further loss of self-esteem in an oppressive cycle from which it may be hard to break free. This pattern is described by a college senior, a young woman who works as a residence hall director:

There are girls in our dorm who have had multiple pregnancies and multiple abortions. They tend to be filled with self-loathing. But because they have so little self-esteem, they will settle for any kind of attention from guys. So they keep going back to the same kind of destructive situations and relationships that got them into trouble in the first place.

On both sides of dehumanized sex, there is a loss of dignity and self-worth. One 20-year-old college male confides: “You feel pretty crummy when you get drunk at a party and have sex with some girl, and then the next morning you can’t even remember who she was.”

Another college student describes the loss of self-respect that followed his first sexual “conquest”:

I finally got a girl into bed—actually it was in a car—when I was 17. I thought it was the hottest thing there was, but then she started saying she loved me and getting clingy.

I figured out that there had probably been a dozen guys before me who thought they had “conquered” her, but who were really just objects of her need for security. That realization took all the wind out of my sails. I couldn’t respect someone who gave in as easily as she did.

I was amazed to find that after four weeks of hav-

ing sex as often as I wanted, I was tired of her. I didn’t see any point in continuing the relationship. I finally dumped her, which made me feel even worse, because I could see that she was hurting. I felt pretty low.¹⁰

People aren’t things. When we treat them as if they were, we not only hurt them; we lose respect for ourselves.

5. The Corruption of Character and the Debasement of Sex

When people treat others as sexual objects and exploit them for their own pleasure, they not only lose self-respect; they corrupt their characters and debase their sexuality in the process.

Good character consists of virtues such as respect, responsibility, honesty, fairness, caring, and self-control. With regard to sex, the character trait of self-control is particularly crucial. The breakdown of sexual self-control is a big factor in many of the sex-related problems that plague our society: rape, promiscuity, pornography, addiction to sex, sexual harassment, the sexual abuse of children, sexual infidelity in marriage, and the serious damage to families many of these problems cause. It was Freud who said—and it is now obvious how right he was—that sexual self-control is essential for civilization.

Sex frequently corrupts character by leading people to tell lies in order to get sex. The Medical Institute for Sexual Health reports: “Almost all studies show that many sexually active people will lie if they think it will help them have sex.”¹¹ Common lies: “I love you” and “I’ve never had a sexually transmitted disease.”

Because sex is powerful, once sexual restraint is set aside, it easily takes over individuals and relationships. Consider the highly sexualized atmosphere that now characterizes many high schools. A high school teacher in Indiana says, “The air is thick with sex talk. Kids in the halls will say—boy to girl, girl to boy—‘I want to f— you.’”

In a 1993 study by the American Association of University Women, four of five high school students—85 percent of girls and 75 percent of boys—said they have experienced “unwelcome sexual behavior that interferes with my life” in school.¹² An example: A boy backs a 14-year-old girl up against her locker, day after day. Says Nan Stein, a Wellesley College researcher: “There’s a Tailhook happening in every school. Egregious behavior is going on.”

Another recently reported example of this corruption of character is the Spur Posse club at Lakewood High School in suburban Los Angeles. Members of this club competed to see how many girls they could sleep with; one claimed he had slept with 63. Sadly, elementary school-age children are beginning to mimic such behavior. In a suburb of Pittsburgh, an assistant superintendent reports that sixth-grade boys were found playing a sexual contact game; the object of the game was to earn points by touching girls in private parts, the most points being awarded for “going all the way.”

In this sex-out-of-control environment, even rape is judged permissible by many young people. In a 1988 survey of students in grades six through nine, the Rhode Island Rape Crisis Center found that two of three boys and 49 percent of the girls said it was “acceptable for a

man to force sex on a woman if they have been dating for six months or more."¹³ In view of attitudes like these, it's easy to understand why date rape has become such a widespread problem.

In short, sex that isn't tied to love and commitment undermines character by subverting self-control, respect, and responsibility. Unchecked, sexual desires and impulses easily run amok and lead to habits of hedonism and using others for one's personal pleasure. In the process, sexual intercourse loses its meaning, beauty, and specialness; instead of being a loving, uniquely intimate expression of two people's commitment to each other, sex is trivialized and degraded.

6. Shaken Trust and Fear of Commitment

Young people who feel used or betrayed after the break-up of a sexual relationship may experience difficulty in future relationships.

Some sexually exploited people, as we've seen, develop such low self-esteem that they seek any kind of attention, even if it's another short-lived and demeaning sexual relationship. But other people, once burned, withdraw. They have trouble trusting; they don't want to get burned again.

Usually, this happens to the girl. She begins to see guys as interested in just one thing: Sex. Says one young woman: "Besides feeling cheap [after several sexual relationships], I began to wonder if there would ever be anyone who would love and accept me without demanding that I do something with my body to earn that love."¹⁴

However, boys can also experience loss of trust and fear of commitment as a result of a broken relationship that involved sex. Brian, a college senior, tells how this happened to him:

I first had intercourse with my girlfriend when we were 15. I'd been going with her for almost a year, and I loved her very much. She was friendly, outgoing, charismatic. We'd done everything but have intercourse, and then one night she asked if we could go all the way.

A few days later, we broke up. It was the most painful time of my life. I had opened myself up to her more than I had to anybody, even my parents.

I was depressed, moody, nervous. My friends dropped me because I was so bummed out. I felt like a failure. I dropped out of sports. My grades weren't terrific.

I didn't go out again until I got to college. I've had mostly one-night stands in the last couple of years.

I'm afraid of falling in love.¹⁵

7. Rage Over Betrayal

Sometimes the emotional reaction to being "dumped" isn't just a lack of trust or fear of commitment. It's rage.

Every so often, the media carry a story about a person who had this rage reaction and then committed an act of violence against the former boyfriend or girlfriend. Read these accounts, and you'll find that sex was almost always a part of the broken relationship.

Of course, people often feel angry when somebody breaks up with them, even if sex has not been involved. But the sense of betrayal is usually much greater if sex has been part of the relationship. Sex can be emotional dynamite. It can lead a person to think that the relation-

Teenagers who are absorbed in an intense sexual relationship are turning inward on one thing at the very time in their lives when they should be reaching out.

ship is really serious, that both people really love each other. It can create a very strong emotional bond that hurts terribly when it's ruptured—especially if it seems that the other person never had the same commitment. And the resulting sense of betrayal can give rise to rage, even violence.

8. Depression and Suicide

In *Sex and the Teenager*, Kieran Sawyer writes: "The more the relationship seems like real love, the more the young person is likely to invest, and the deeper the pain and hurt if the relationship breaks up."¹⁶ Sometimes the emotional turmoil caused by the rupture of a sexual relationship leads to deep depression. The depression, in turn, may lead some people to take their own lives.

In the past 25 years, teen suicide has tripled. In a 1988 survey by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, one in five adolescent girls said they have tried to kill themselves (the figure for boys was one in 10).

This is the same period during which the rate of teenage sexual activity has sharply increased, especially for girls. No doubt, the rise in youth suicide has multiple causes, but given what we know about the emotional aftermath of broken sexual relationships, it is reasonable to suspect that the pain from such break-ups is a factor in the suicide deaths of some young people.

9. Ruined Relationships

Sex can have another kind of emotional consequence: It can turn a good relationship bad. Other dimensions of the relationship stop developing. Pretty soon, negative emotions enter the picture. Eventually, they poison the relationship, and what had been a caring relationship comes to a bitter end.

One young woman shares her story, which illustrates the process:

With each date, my boyfriend's requests for sex became more convincing. After all, we did love each other. Within two months, I gave in, because I had justified the whole thing. Over the next six months, sex became the center of our relationship....

At the same time, some new things entered our relationship—things like anger, impatience, jealousy, and selfishness. We just couldn't talk anymore. We grew very bored with each other. I desperately wanted a change.¹⁷

A young man who identified himself as a 22-year-old virgin echoes this warning about the damage premature sex can do to a relationship:

I've seen too many of my friends break up after their relationships turned physical. The emotional wreckage is horrendous because they have already shared something so powerful. When you use sex too early, it will block other means of communicating love and can stunt the balanced growth of a relationship.¹⁸

10. Stunting Personal Development

Premature sexual involvement not only can stunt the development of a relationship; it also can stunt one's development as a person.

Just as some young people handle anxieties by turning to drugs and alcohol, others handle them by turning to sex. Sex becomes an escape. They aren't learning how to cope with life's pressures.

Teenagers who are absorbed in an intense sexual relationship are turning inward on one thing at the very time in their lives when they should be reaching out—forming new friendships, joining clubs and teams, developing their interests and skills, taking on bigger social responsibilities.

All of these are important nutrients for a teenager's development as a person. And this period of life is special because young people have both the time and the opportunities to develop their talents and interests. The growing they do during these years will affect them all their lives. If young people don't put these years to good use, they may never develop their full potential.

The risk appears to be greater for girls who get sexually involved and in so doing close the door on other interests and relationships. Says New York psychiatrist Samuel Kaufman:

A girl who enters into a serious relationship with a boy very early in life may find out later that her individuality was thwarted. She became part of him and failed to develop her own interests, her sense of independent identity.¹⁹

REFLECTING ON her long experience in counseling college students and others about sexual matters, Dr. Carson Daly comments:

I don't think I ever met a student who was sorry he or she had postponed sexual activity, but I certainly met many who deeply regretted their sexual involvements. Time and time again, I have seen the long-term emotional and spiritual desolation that results from casual sex and promiscuity.

No one tells students that it sometimes takes years to recover from the effects of these sexual involvements—if one ever fully recovers.

Sex certainly can be a source of great pleasure and joy. But as should be amply clear—and youngsters need our help and guidance in understanding this—sex also can be the source of deep wounds and suffering. What makes the difference is the relationship within which it occurs. Sex is most joyful and fulfilling—most emotionally safe as well as physically safe—when it occurs within a loving, total, and binding commitment. Historically, we have called that marriage. Sexual union is then part of something bigger—the union of two persons' lives. □

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HIGH STANDARDS FOR ALL?

(Continued from page 9)

school graduation requirements by state legislatures; and the setting of higher standards for student performance by school districts. By late 1986, for example, 45 states and the District of Columbia had raised their graduation requirements, 42 states increased math requirements, and 34 states bolstered science requirements.¹⁶

Two additional factors are also worth noting. First, school leaders could no longer rely on demographic trends to mask the decline in the percentage of academic course-taking by American students. Between 1976 and 1991, the number of students in grades nine through twelve fell steadily from 15,656,000 to 12,655,000.¹⁷ Had earlier policies continued unchanged, both the absolute number of students in academic courses and the percentage of these courses taken by students would have been falling by the late 1970s. Second, many colleges and universities (at times prompted by state boards of higher education) increased entrance requirements for incoming freshmen, thereby adding considerable support to complementary efforts on the high school level regarding graduation requirements.

As positive as these trends in academic course-taking are, some very important questions still need to be asked. Specifically, are the courses that we identified as academic truly academic in content or have we simply cataloged changes in course titles while content has either remained unchanged or has been diluted? As noted earlier, our data could not answer these questions. However, a new study conducted by the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research (WCER) does provide some answers at least in regard to math and science courses. Led by WCER Director Andrew Porter, researchers intensively studied course content and teaching strategies in 18 schools in six states. These states—Arizona, California, Florida, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina—all had introduced “relatively major increases in their standards for high school mathematics and science.” Porter summarized the results of the study noting, “Some education scholars wondered if course content would get watered down as more average and below average students enrolled in more advanced courses. However, our data indicate that, in the schools in the states that we studied, the content of the math and science was as rigorous after standards were increased.”¹⁸ These are very exciting findings that support our belief that the trend toward greater academic course-taking is more than a cosmetic change. However, additional studies need to be conducted to see if the same patterns regarding the quality of teaching and material hold true in other content areas.

As promising as these trends are, much remains to be done. As late as 1990, when the percentage of academic course-taking had improved to over 66 percent, the ratio of academic to non-academic courses still had not returned to 1928 levels. In other words, the progress that has been made should be viewed as a first step but not an end in itself.

The Impact of “Excellence” Reforms on the Dropout Problem and Minority Students

Any demand for more rigorous curricula and higher

academic standards inevitably must confront the question, won't such curricula and standards increase the dropout rate in general and have a negative impact on the educational opportunities of poor and minority students in particular? As noted earlier, for more than half a century, educational policy makers have made decisions based on the presumption that tougher course requirements automatically increase the dropout rate, especially among poor and minority students. Moreover, these policy makers assumed that the only way to keep the dropout rate from soaring was to make the high school curriculum less challenging and more entertaining. Consequently, these educational leaders routinely condemned efforts to raise academic standards because of their fear that such measures would contribute to greater educational inequality.

Is that specter of higher dropout rates validated by findings on the effects of academically oriented reforms? The short answer is no. Between 1973 and 1990, when higher standards and tougher graduation requirements were widely enacted and the percentage of academic course-taking jumped by almost 10 percent, the national dropout rate declined from 14 percent to 12 percent. These numbers are even more impressive for minority students. Between 1982 and 1990, African Americans and Hispanics increased their academic course-taking to a greater extent than whites and Asian Americans. In 1982, only 28 percent of African Americans and a quarter of Hispanic students took a regimen of four years of English, three years of social studies, and two years of math and science. By 1990, the percentages had nearly tripled to 72 percent and 70 percent respectively. The share of minority students taking three years of math and science has risen even more dramatically, from 10 percent to 41 percent of black students and from 6 percent to a third of Hispanic students. During the same period, the dropout rate for black students fell from 18 percent to 13 percent while the dropout rate for Hispanic students remained unchanged at about 32 percent.¹⁹ These data should put to rest the ritualized invocation of the threat of increased dropouts every time someone suggests that U.S. schools demand more from their students.

Not only are more minority students taking an increasing percentage of tougher academic courses, but they are performing better on national standardized exams, as well. During the late 1970s and 1980s, SAT scores for both blacks and Hispanics rose significantly *especially among students who took the most advanced academic courses*. Between 1976 and 1993, black students' scores on the verbal section of the SAT rose 21 points and in math increased 34 points. During the same period, Mexican-American students' scores rose 21 points on the verbal section and 18 points in math, while Puerto Rican students' scores rose three points and eight points respectively. In addition, since 1988, the number of minority students taking Advanced Placement Tests has grown at “record rates” according to the College Board. The number of black students taking the tests grew from under 10,000 in 1988 to more than 15,000 in 1993, and the number of Latino students soared from just over 10,000 to just under 30,000 in the same period.²⁰

In short, demanding more academic course work from students appears to have contributed to improved student outcomes especially among minorities, and it *has*

Critics who argue that national standards and national assessment will damage the educational prospects for poor and minority students simply are ignoring the historical record.



not led to increases in the dropout rate among these groups. Unfortunately, the increases in academic course-taking by minority students have not resulted in subsequent increases in college enrollments, especially on the part of black students. In fact, that group's enrollment in colleges has fallen since the mid-1970s. Between 1976 and 1988, the proportion of black 18- to 24-year-olds going to college fell from 22.6 percent to 21.1 percent of the age group. At the same time, the percentage of whites rose from 27.1 to 31.3.²¹

No finding from our research is more troubling than this one. If large numbers of black students are taking the courses that meet college entrance requirements but are still not entering college, something is seriously wrong. We suspect that economic factors rather than educational preparation have been primarily responsible for the decline in black college enrollment in the 1980s. Specifically, it appears that a 1975 change in federal student aid policy that replaced large numbers of grants

(that did not have to be repaid) with loans (that did have to be repaid) had a negative impact on black college attendance. Black students generally come from poorer families than whites and consequently may be less willing and less able to accept the burden of long term debt.²²

Conclusion

How do these findings relate to the questions about goals and standards that we considered at the beginning of this essay? Our study of high school course-taking points to four important conclusions.

First, it is clear that equal educational opportunity was not achieved by lowering academic standards through curricular differentiation, tracking, shortening courses from two semesters to one, and giving academic credit to previously extracurricular activities. Indeed, the students most harmed by these policies were the children of working-class and minority families. Critics who argue that national standards and national assessment will damage the educational prospects for poor and minority students simply are ignoring the historical record. In the past, poor and minority students have been the most frequent casualties of such standard-lowering policies as allowing less rigorous courses to meet academic requirements for graduation or diluting content in academic courses while keeping course titles the same. The second-class education that resulted from these policies undoubtedly contributed to social, racial, and gender inequality. We believe that clearly articulated national content and performance standards and well-designed national methods of assessment can make such policies more difficult to implement and thus make an important contribution to equality of educational opportunity.

Second, the recent process of raising academic standards in high schools by strengthening graduation requirements and reducing the number of electives that students may take has moved us closer to the goal of equal educational opportunity for larger numbers of students than ever before in our history. No group has responded more positively to these changes than African-American students who have increased their proportion of academic course-taking more dramatically than whites. Equally striking is the fact that during the very time that high school standards were being raised, the dropout rate fell, particularly among black students.

Third, such factors as resources do play an important role in ensuring educational equality, but the struggle for greater equity in resources should not be allowed to sidetrack the push for national goals and standards. The decline in black college attendance, which appears to be due to changes in federal financial aid policy, provides evidence of the importance of adequate resources for achieving equal educational opportunity. However, we take issue with critics of Goals 2000 who argue that unless and until resources are equalized among school districts the setting of national goals and standards will increase educational inequality. That stance tacitly acquiesces to the low educational standards currently in place in many impoverished communities across the country. Moreover, if goals and standards are put on hold while activists, politicians, policy makers, and judges battle over equalization, the practical consequence will be to consign yet another generation of

students in impoverished districts to a second-rate, second-class education. That stance seems to us sadly reminiscent of the arguments for curricular differentiation early in this century. While the reasons have changed, the theme remains the same, namely that children from poor and minority backgrounds cannot be expected to rise to the challenge of high academic standards. We reject that assumption.

Finally, we see the setting of national goals and standards as the beginning not the end of the struggle. What remains to be done will be extremely difficult because it demands a massive effort to create developmentally appropriate, challenging course materials and methods for students of differing ability on every grade level. The idea that all students should meet high standards (and essentially follow the same curriculum) does not deny that there are educationally relevant differences among individuals in interests and abilities. Nor does it rule out approaches that would recognize different levels of mastery or that would offer a solid core of academically rigorous courses within a career-related focus. But implicit in the idea of high standards for all is the belief that differences in students' interests and abilities should challenge educators to explore a host of alternative instructional methods and approaches that will enable students to meet demanding performance standards rather than adopt what has been the traditional policy of curricular differentiation.

Much of the modern failure of American K-12 education lies in our avoiding the formidable task of discovering how to teach difficult subjects in ways that are both accessible to young people and yet still true to the complexity and richness of the material. Over 30 years ago, Jerome Bruner declared that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development."²³ Goals 2000 challenges us to make that happen. □

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WARRIORS DON'T CRY

(Continued from page 17)

Kaye admitted she hadn't tried to understand much about us until that meeting.

"We're scared to death five hundred of you'all are gonna be coming into school," Sammy Dean said.

The white students also expressed their feelings about the troops. Several times they spoke of their outrage at having soldiers in their school. "How do you think we like being escorted in and out of school?" I said. "How do you think we like not knowing who will hit us and when or where we'll be attacked?"

Later in *The New York Times*, Sammy Dean Parker and Kaye Bacon said that as a result of the meeting they now had a new attitude. One headline in the *Gazette* read: TWO PUPILS TELL OF CHANGE IN ATTITUDE ON SEGREGATION.

Sammy Dean Parker was quoted as saying, "The Negro students don't want to go to school with us any more than we want to go with them. If you really talk with them, you see their side of it. I think the NAACP is paying them to go."

When I read her statement, I realized Sammy hadn't understood at all our reason for attending Central High. I wondered where on earth she thought there was enough money to pay for such brutal days as I was enduring. I wouldn't know how much money to charge for all the good days I wasn't having in my old high school with friends who liked me. What price could anyone set for the joy and laughter and peace of mind I had given up?

I stayed in bed all day Sunday, telling myself I was ill, but the truth was I was partially suffering from downhearted blues. That meeting hadn't helped the integration at all. Those white students didn't understand. Even when Vince called for our regular Sunday date, I didn't give up my claim to illness. Snuggling down into the safety of my bed made me feel as though I were a carefree little girl who hadn't been to Central High and hadn't yet discovered that miracles don't happen exactly when and how you want them to.

In my diary, I wrote:

October 14, Monday

Flu, absent—Governor Faubus is still speaking out and causing turmoil. Quotes in daily papers make me know he will not let us rest.

Today Mother Lois brought home a new hi-fi. I guess she thought it would cheer up my sadness.

October 15, Tuesday

Flu—absent

With my head under the covers so Grandmother could not bear or see me, I cried myself to sleep. I know I am fighting for a good cause—and I know if I trust God I shouldn't cry. I will keep going, but will it really make a difference.

I feel like something inside me has gone away. I am like a rag doll with no stuffing. I am growing up too fast. I'm not ready to go back to Central and be a warrior just yet. I don't have any more strength. I want to stay right here, listening to Nat King Cole.

On Tuesday, October 15, my friends entered Central with only one soldier from the 101st as an escort. Once

inside the school, only twenty-one National Guardsmen and nine 101st Airborne soldiers guarded them in the hallways.

A story in the Wednesday *Arkansas Gazette* was headlined: TWO NEGROES ILL. I thought it was funny to read about myself and Terry Roberts being out of Central High with the flu. By the time the paper printed the story, I was already back in class. According to that same article, Terry had said that things had been so bad for him the week before that he had almost decided to quit Central and go back to Horace Mann.

By the time I returned to school on Wednesday, things had deteriorated. The headlines that day read:

101ST DIVISION CUT BACK FORCE TODAY; ½ GOING BACK TO KENTUCKY

Until that time, when soldiers were taken away it was only to Camp Robinson—a stone's throw away. The announcement of their departure to Kentucky gave segregationists reason to celebrate, and it was evident in the students who bragged about their renewed hope of getting rid of us.

As I stepped into the hallway, just for an instant the thought of fewer troops terrified me. But the warrior growing inside me squared my shoulders and put my mind on alert to do whatever was necessary to survive. I tried hard to remember everything Danny had taught me. I discovered I wasn't frightened in the old way anymore. Instead, I felt my body muscles turn steely and my mind strain to focus. I had to take care of myself. I could really depend only on myself for protection.

A new voice in my head spoke to me with military-like discipline: Discover ink sprayed on the contents of your locker—don't fret about it, deal with it. Get another locker assigned, find new books, get going—don't waste time brooding or taking the hurt so deep inside. Kicked in the shin, tripped on the marble floor—assess the damage and do whatever is necessary to remain mobile. Move out! Warriors keep moving. They don't stop to lick their wounds or cry.

During early morning classes that day several students heckled me about Minnijean, saying that if she tried to take part in their school activities there would be a big retaliation. Word had gotten around school and to the Central High Mothers' League that Minnijean would be participating in a student talent show. Segregationists demanded that we not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities.

"That nigger ain't gonna sing on our stage. My daddy says he'll see her dead first." The boy shouting this ran past me, knocking my books out of my arms. When I bent over to pick them up, someone kicked me from behind and pushed me over. I landed hard on my wrist. It felt broken.

"Okay. Get yourself up, and I'll get the books." It was a voice I didn't recognize, speaking to me while students rushed past, laughing and pointing as I lay in pain. An Arkansas National Guard soldier was standing beside me, gathering my books and speaking in a gentle tone.

"Can you get up? Try to get up on your feet as fast as you can."

I tried to get to my feet, but my head was pounding and my body ached.

"What the hell, gal, take my hand. You're gonna get us both killed if you don't move. We ain't got no help." He took my hand and boosted me upright. It hurt to stand on my ankle. "Let's move outta here, right now!" He was pushing me faster than my body wanted to go, but I knew he was right, I had to move.

When we finally got to a safe spot, I thanked him, blinking back hot tears. That soldier, whoever he was, stayed within full sight of me for the rest of the day. He didn't say anything, but whenever I looked for him, he was there. As I was leaving school, he was standing in the hallway, slouching against the wall like his buddies. But he had been kind to me, and I would remember that not all members of the Arkansas National Guard were of the same character.

That evening, during the meeting at Mrs. Bates's house, we were told that within a few days we would no longer have the jeep and station wagon to take us back and forth to school. We would have to set up car pools. I tossed and turned all night, wondering whether or not we could survive without our 101st guards and the station wagon escort.

By mid-October, there were fewer and fewer 101st guards and fewer Arkansas National Guardsmen. We quickly learned that the presence of the 101st had lulled us into a false sense of security. The segregationist students were just biding their time until they could make their move. As the guards were reduced in number, our attackers revved up a full campaign against us. The less visible the 101st, the more we suffered physical and verbal abuse.

JUDGE DAVIES DISMISSES SUIT FOR REMOVAL OF U.S. TROOPS; STATE MAY FILE, FAUBUS SAYS

—*Arkansas Gazette*, Friday, October 18, 1957

That lawsuit had been filed by Margaret Jackson and the Central High Mothers' League. Segregationists continued to apply whatever pressure they could to get the troops reduced. Governor Faubus continued to bargain with President Eisenhower for our withdrawal from school and for an extension to begin integration sometime in the far distant future. Faubus's declarations provided a glimmer of hope that made segregationists feel their oats. We were suffering increased harassment inside the hallways and classrooms, and still the troops were dwindling day by day.

Although I saw some 101st soldiers around the school, Danny didn't seem to be there any longer. At first I looked for him in every corner, but finally I was so busy defending myself that looking for him was no longer the first thing on my mind.

In the days that followed, I neither understood nor controlled the warrior growing inside me. I couldn't even talk to Grandma India about the way I was feeling. It was a secret. As Samson had been weakened by a haircut, I thought I might lose my power if I spoke of it. I stopped complaining as much to my eight friends about the awful things segregationists were doing to me. I stopped trying to figure out what might happen the next moment, the next hour, the next day and focused intensely on right now.

I thought a lot about how to appear as strong as I could as I walked the halls: how not to wince or frown when somebody hit me or kicked me in the shin. I practiced quieting fear as quickly as I could. When a passerby called me nigger, or lashed out at me using nasty words, I worked at not letting my heart feel sad because they didn't like me. I began to see that to allow their words to pierce my soul was to do exactly what they wanted.

My conversations with my eight friends began to change, too. We joked less with each other, and there was considerably less talk about our hopes that the students might immediately begin to accept us. Instead, we exchanged information about how to cope: "Don't go down this hallway to get to the cafeteria, that's where the hit-and-run trippers wait for you." "Stay out of the third-floor doorway; boys with knives hang out there." "Don't exit that set of stairs; that's where the boys with the dynamite sticks always wait."

It was the kind of information warriors exchange to wage the battles they must win, or die. My energies were devoted to one goal—planning for my own safety and shielding myself from hurt. Even though I wasn't totally satisfied with the grades on my report card of October 17, I decided I had to make staying alive my priority.

October 20's newspaper carried an article saying that Clarence Laws, Southwest Regional Field Secretary for the NAACP, denied rumors that we nine were being paid to go to Central, or had been imported from the North to integrate Little Rock schools, or that our parents were planning to take us out of school.

On October 23, we left school without a guard and walked to the station wagon alone. On the morning of October 24, we walked to the front door once more without an escort. The evening headlines read:

NEGRO STUDENTS ENTER SCHOOL WITHOUT ESCORT REDUCED TO SIX 101 AIRBORNE

My brother, Conrad, complained that I wouldn't play games with him—not even our favorite Monopoly. I realized he was right. Lately I had no time for play. Vince was complaining as well because I wasn't available to speak on the phone or to go out with him. My after-school time was filled with meetings and news people and sometimes just sitting silent in my room to ponder what would become of me. Central High integration was slowly destroying my life.

During one late October after-school meeting, we discussed the fact that President Eisenhower would not stop withdrawing 101st troops even though our parents and Mrs. Bates had sent a telegram informing him that opposition against us was more violent with each passing day. We discussed trying yet another approach to change the attitudes of school officials so they would take control of the hooligans.

The next day was a living hell. In addition to increased heckling in the hallways, it was the beginning of a series of experiences in my gym class I would not soon forget. It all started with a verbal barrage I tried to ignore.

"You're already black meat, and what is black meat? It's burned meat," said the lanky brunette, with a devilish gleam in her eyes, as she stood outside my shower space. I stood stark naked, my privacy invaded, while others

joined her, leering and spouting insults. I was racking my brain, wondering what she was talking about, and then it came, the scalding water. I felt myself cry aloud as the sheet of steaming water spread pain across my shoulders and back. I was stunned, paralyzed by the cruelty of their act. Two other girls appeared just at that moment to shove me directly beneath the spray and hold me there.

I suddenly felt surging inside of me a strength that matched my determination. I grabbed my attackers' arms and pulled them in with me as close as I could. I let them feel my anger with my elbows, my feet, and with words that would take me to brimstone and hellfire later, but at least I'd have time to prepare. I was using some of the same language they used on me.

As the girls backed away, I emerged to find they had removed my clothing and books. There I was, scrambling about wearing only a towel and a bad attitude. When finally I found my outer clothing, it was stuffed in a corner, but my underwear was on the floor of another shower, soaking wet. I would freeze all day. I could look forward to damp spots seeping through my outer garments. As I got dressed, my clothes irritated my scalded skin. It hurt to move.

Later in the day I encountered the "heel-walking committee." Groups of students would walk close up behind me and step on my heels, generating the most excruciating pain. I would walk faster, but they would catch up and continue doing it. After a while my heels were bleeding though my socks. When I went to the office for Band-Aids, the woman on duty turned up her nose and sneered. "If you can't stand an occasional tap on the heel, why don't you leave."

By the end of the day, I was exhausted from defending myself and trying to figure out what would come next. And I was beginning to have an uncontrollable urge to fight back.



LITTLE ROCK WARRIORS THIRTY YEARS LATER

THE LITTLE ROCK NINE COME TOGETHER
FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE '57

Headline, *Arkansas Gazette*, Friday, October 23, 1987

THE STONE steps are slippery with morning drizzle as we begin the tedious climb up to the front door of Central High School. It is the first time in thirty years that we nine black alumni have entered this school together.

In 1957, as teenagers trying to reach the front door, we were trapped between a rampaging mob, threatening to kill us to keep us out, and armed soldiers of the Arkansas National Guard dispatched by the governor to block our entry.

On this day Arkansas Governor Billy Clinton, who in less than six years will be President of the United States, greets us warmly with a welcoming smile as he extends



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

The author (left) and Thelma Mothershed do their Central High homework.

his hand. We are honored guests, celebrating both our reunion and thirty years of progress in Little Rock's race relations. Cameras flash, reporters shout questions, dignitaries lavish enthusiastic praise on us, and fans ask for our autographs.

And yet all this pomp and circumstance and the presence of my eight colleagues does not numb the pain I feel at entering Central High School, a building I remember only as a hellish torture chamber. I pause to look up at this massive school—two blocks square and seven stories high, a place that was meant to nourish us and prepare us for adulthood. But, because we dared to challenge the Southern tradition of segregation, this school became, instead, a furnace that consumed our youth and forged us into reluctant warriors.

On this occasion, we nine ascend the stairs amid a group of reporters and dignitaries gathered here for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People convention. I have a slight tension headache and, like some of the others, I am yawning. Even though each one of us is forty-something, we were up very late last night enjoying one another's company and giggling just as we did when we were teenagers.

Long past the hour that should have been bedtime, we gathered in Ernie's suite to catch up on the years when we were separated from each other. Our senior member and now a Shearson Lehman Hutton vice president, Ernie treated us to all the room service we could handle. Still, the fun we enjoyed last night does not make it easier to appear nonchalant on this occasion. Some of us take another's arm to brace ourselves as we prepare to face the ghosts in this building. Even as we speak of how much we dread touring this school, some of us blink back tears to smile for the media, shake hands, and sign autographs.

"How does it feel to be in Little Rock again?" a reporter shouts.

"Weird," I reply.

We nine have come from our homes around the world. Gloria, a magazine publisher, is a citizen of the Netherlands. Minniejean, a Canadian citizen, is a writer and raises her six children on a farm. Shearson V.P. Ernie comes from New York; Thelma has come from her Illinois teaching duties; and Dr. Terry Roberts comes from his UCLA professor's post. Carlotta is a Denver realtor, and Jeff is a Defense Department accountant from California. Only

Elizabeth stayed on in Little Rock, where she is a social worker. It is significant that almost all of us chose not to remain in Little Rock but sought lives elsewhere.

All of us bring children—some are adults now like my daughter, Kellie. Others are toddlers, or the same age as we were when we attended Central. We have observed each other's graying hair and balding spots and noted paunches brought on by the years. Time has, nonetheless, been kind to us.

Our relationships with one another and the joy of our camaraderie have not changed. For me our reunion has been a rediscovery of a part of myself that was lost—a part that I longed to be in touch with. I have missed these eight people who by virtue of fate's hand are most dear to me. Since our arrival in Little Rock, we have laughed and cried together and talked nonstop. We have both relished and dreaded this moment when we would again walk up these stairs.

Today, if I let the memories flood in and listen closely, on these same stone steps I can hear the click-clack of leather boots—boots worn by soldiers of the 101st Airborne, dispatched to escort us past the raging mob. I hear the raspy voices of their leaders commanding, "Forward march," as we first walked through these front doors on September 25, 1957.

"What was it like to attend Central?" asks one reporter.

"I got up every morning, polished my saddle shoes, and went off to war," I reply. "It was like being a soldier on a battlefield."

"It was a teenager's worst nightmare," someone else shouts.

"What's worse than to be rejected by all your classmates and teachers?"

"What's it like to be back here again?" another reporter asks.

"Frightening," one voice says. Most of us have rarely come back to Arkansas as adults. Even though my mother and brother continue to live here, I have only found the strength to visit five times in thirty years because of the uneasy feeling the city gives me. Three of those visits have been since Bill and Hillary Clinton took over the governor's mansion, because they set a tone that made me feel safer here.

"How does the city look to you now?"

I answer the question to myself. Very different from when I lived here. Today, I could not find my way around its newly built freeways, its thriving industrial complexes, its racially mixed, upscale suburban sprawl. It is a town that now boasts a black woman mayor. My brother, Conrad, is the first and only black captain of the Arkansas State Troopers—the same troopers that held me at bay as a teenager when I tried to enter Central.

We reach the crest of the first bank of stairs, turn right at the landing, and begin mounting the next set of steps when we hear more shouting from the reporters: "Stop. Look this way, please. Can you wave?"

I am annoyed. You'd think I'd be more patient with their questions, since I am a former NBC television news reporter and have been a working journalist for twenty years. But it's different when you're the person being baraged by questions. I resent their relentless observation of the nine of us during such a personal time. Still, I try to smile graciously, because these reporters have traveled a great distance from their posts around the world

to be here.

Where is Governor Faubus, I wonder. Where is the man who dispatched armed soldiers to keep nine children out of school, who bet his life and his career that he could halt integration?

"Faubus is quoted on the news wires today saying if he had it to do over again, he'd do the same thing. What do you think about that?" a reporter asks.

"If we had it to do again, we'd do the same," Terry quips.

"Why isn't Faubus here?" someone asks.

"Because he wasn't invited," a reporter replies. "At least that's what he says. He retired to some small town in Arkansas."

As we near the top of the second bank of stairs, I sense that something is missing. I look below and see that the fountain has disappeared. It once stood directly in front of the hundred-foot-wide neo-Gothic entryway, with stairs ascending to it on both sides. Hearing my expression of surprise, a man I do not know explains: Someone threw Jell-O into it, so they concreted it over. I pause as I recall what a treacherous place that fountain was in 1957 when students repeatedly tried to push us the sixty feet or so down into the water. Nobody thought to close it then.

All at once, I realize the questions have suddenly stopped. I am surrounded by an anxious silence—like the hush of an audience as the curtain is about to rise. The main entrance of the school is now clearly in sight. I feel a familiar twinge; a cold fist clamps about my stomach and twists it into a wrenching knot, and just at that instant, it is October of 1957, and I am a helpless, frightened fifteen-year-old, terrified of what awaits me behind those doors. What will they do to me today? Will I make it to my homeroom? Who will be the first to slap me, to kick me in the shin, or call me nigger?

Suddenly one of the huge front doors swings open. A black teenager impeccably dressed in morning coat and bow tie emerges. He is slight, perhaps five feet six inches tall, with closely cropped hair, wearing wire-rimmed spectacles. He bows slightly as we approach.

"Good morning. I am Derrick Noble, president of the student body. Welcome to Central High School."



WHEN I watch news footage of the day we entered school guarded by the 101st soldiers, I am moved by the enormity of that experience. I believe that was a moment when the whole nation took one giant step forward. Once President Eisenhower made that kind of commitment to uphold the law, there was no turning back. And even though later on he would waver and not wholeheartedly back up his powerful decision, he had stepped over a line that no other President had ever dared cross. Thereafter the threat of military intervention would always exist whenever a Southern governor thought of using his office to defy federal law.

I marvel at the fact that in the midst of this historic confrontation, we nine teenagers weren't maimed or killed. Believe me, it was only by the grace of God and the bravery of those few good men—some of them white men. I never allow myself to forget that, although I was abused by many white people during that incident. Without the

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help of other law-abiding whites who risked their lives, I wouldn't be around to tell this story.

Yet even as I wince at the terrible risk we all took, I remember thinking at the time that it was the right decision—because it felt as though the hand of fate was ushering us forward. Naive and trusting, adults and children alike, we kept thinking each moment, each hour, each day, that things would get better, that these people would come to their senses and behave. This is a land governed by sane citizens who obey the law, at least that's what we're taught in history class.

So we headed down a path from which there was no turning back, because when we thought of alternatives, the only option was living our lives behind the fences of segregation and passing on that legacy to our children.

Today, when I see how far we have progressed in terms of school integration, in some instances I am pleased. In other areas I am very angry. Why have we not devised a workable plan for solving a problem that has so long plagued this nation? We put a man on the moon because we committed the resources to do so. Today, thirty-six years after the Central High crisis, school integration is still not a reality, and we use children as tender warriors on the battlefield to achieve racial equality.

If my Central High School experience taught me one lesson, it is that we are not separate. The effort to separate ourselves whether by race, creed, color, religion, or status is as costly to the separator as to those who would be separated.

When the milk in Oregon is tainted by the radiation eruption of a Soviet nuclear reactor, we are forced to see our interdependence. When forgotten people feel compelled to riot in Los Angeles, we share their pain through our TV screens, and their ravages impact our emotional and economic health.

The task that remains is to cope with our interdependence—to see ourselves reflected in every other human being and to respect and honor our differences.

Namasté

(the God in me sees and honors the God in you)

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LETTERS

NOT AMATEUR SOCIAL WORKERS

Gerald Grant's piece, "Schools Where Kids Are Known," in the Spring 1994 issue, hits the nail on the head over and over. Naturally we liked it since Central Park East Secondary School (CPESS), along with our Coalition sister school Thayer in New Hampshire, is spoken of so positively.

However, in describing examples of school practice at CPESS, Grant falls into an all too familiar trap. In imagining what and why students "check in" daily with their advisors he imagines our staff focusing on "whose mother has lost her welfare check or whether an uncle is dying of AIDS." That misses the point! Most of our students don't fall into either category, any more or less than those in Winchester, N.H., and the primary reason for Advisory is not to be amateur social workers, but to be wise and competent adults—pushing, provoking, encouraging, cajoling, tutoring, coaching, and "teaching" our students. When we're doing it badly we focus on deficits and disasters, and "chime in with detailed current life situation" stories. I don't doubt that happens, but it's a hang-over from the past, not a good harbinger for the future of small schools that know their kids well.

Like the process pioneered by Pat Carini of Prospect, which Grant also describes, our job is to look at the student as a producer, thinker, inventor, creator of meaning—not as a bundle of social pathologies, family difficulties, or needs. Sure such needs exist—both in the Winchesters and the Harlems of our nation—and soci-

ety ought to attend to them. It hurts to see how many untended needs we are not addressing. We do our bit. But a school that puts its major attention on helping young people use their hearts and minds well has enough work cut out for itself.

—DEBORAH MEIER, CO-DIRECTOR
CENTRAL PARK EAST SECONDARY SCHOOL
NEW YORK CITY

TEACHING ANCIENT HISTORY

As a social studies teacher in the public schools for 35 years and an adjunct professor of history at Camden Community College and Villanova, I must point to a serious omission in Frank J. Yurco's article, "How to Teach Ancient History: A Multicultural Model" (Spring 1994). Where are the contributions of the ancient Hebrews? Can a student understand Western literature without reference to the Hebrew Scriptures? Judaism was the mother of two great world religions, Christianity and Islam. Yet only a weak reference is made in Yurco's article to this—a suggestion that teachers read the *Biblical Archaeology Review*.

Now why was this omission made? Could it be that Mr. Yurco blends in the Jews with the white majority, yet cannot place them as a minority? For teacher Yurco, "The proper study of ancient history should highlight the brilliant achievements of these many diverse peoples." However, Mr. Yurco eliminates the Ten Commandments, injunctions on loving one's neighbor, the prophets, the Psalms, and proverbs, and Job—to mention a few.

—PHILIP ROSEN PH.D.
PHILADELPHIA, PA

BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

In his article "Everyday School Violence: How Disorder Fuels It," (Winter 1993/94) Jackson Toby articulated the frustration and anger educators feel regarding defiant, destruc-

tive, and aggressive student behavior. He is correct that measures must be taken to create safe, productive, and positive learning climates. Despite his articulate ability to delineate the problem, Mr. Toby's focus is blurred and nearsighted with respect to the solutions.

Despite the efforts of professional groups to enlighten educators and the public at large, many individuals still feel that students with emotional disorders do not deserve the same considerations and protections as learners with other disabilities. Would Mr. Toby punish a paraplegic youngster for falling down when told to walk across the room; would he discipline a visually impaired youngster for failing to copy accurately from the board? Certainly not. Why then would we suspend or expel a student who displays traits of a disturbed psyche? Quite simply, these reactionary consequences are not in the long-term best interest of the pupil or society. In the short-term, if teachers are threatened or attacked, they make use of their right as an American/Canadian citizen to bring suit against the aggressor. School organizations, however, must follow a different path of intervention.

We would remind Mr. Toby that federal and state laws protect the rights of students with disabilities. We would urge him to advocate for strategies that will promote more productive citizenship traits among youth with emotional or behavioral disorders: better teacher training in respectful, consistent, and appropriate programming (e.g., social skills instruction, aggression replacement training, mediation skills programming); and awareness/understanding of disabilities among the rest of the school population with increased security and administrative support.

—KEVIN BROWN, PRESIDENT
—THOMAS MCINTYRE, PAST PRESIDENT
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