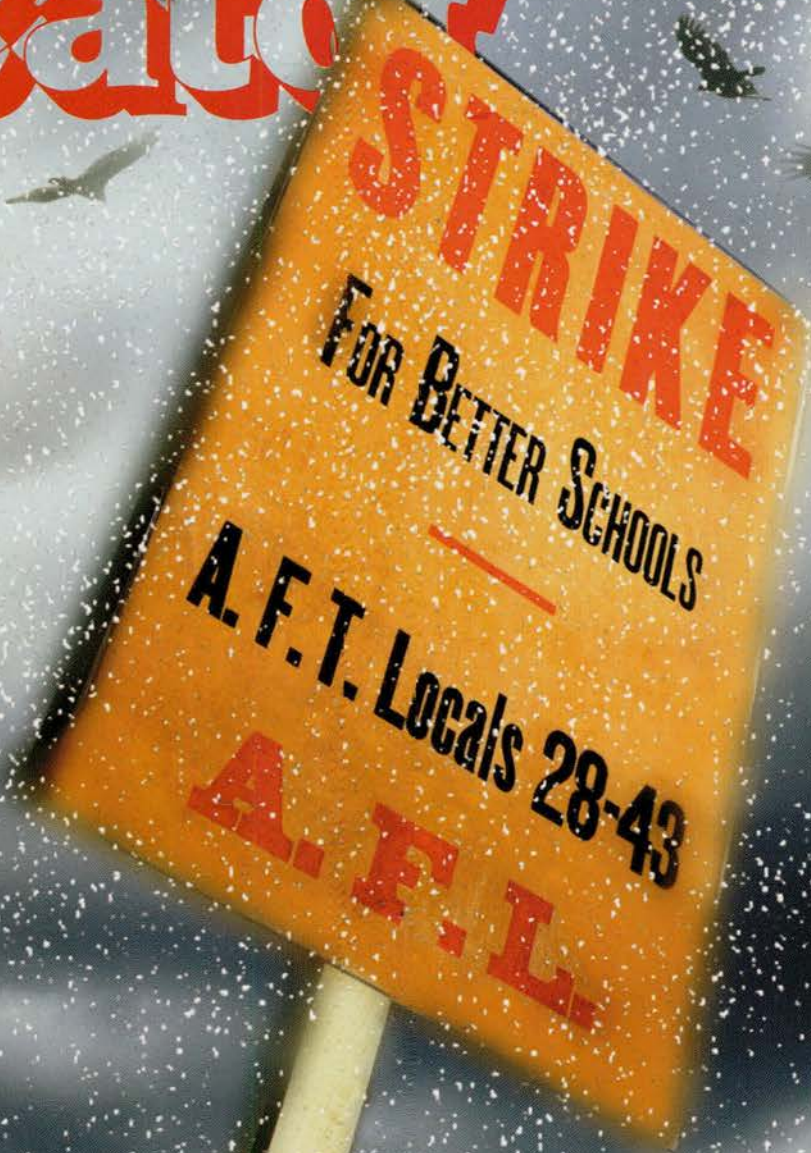
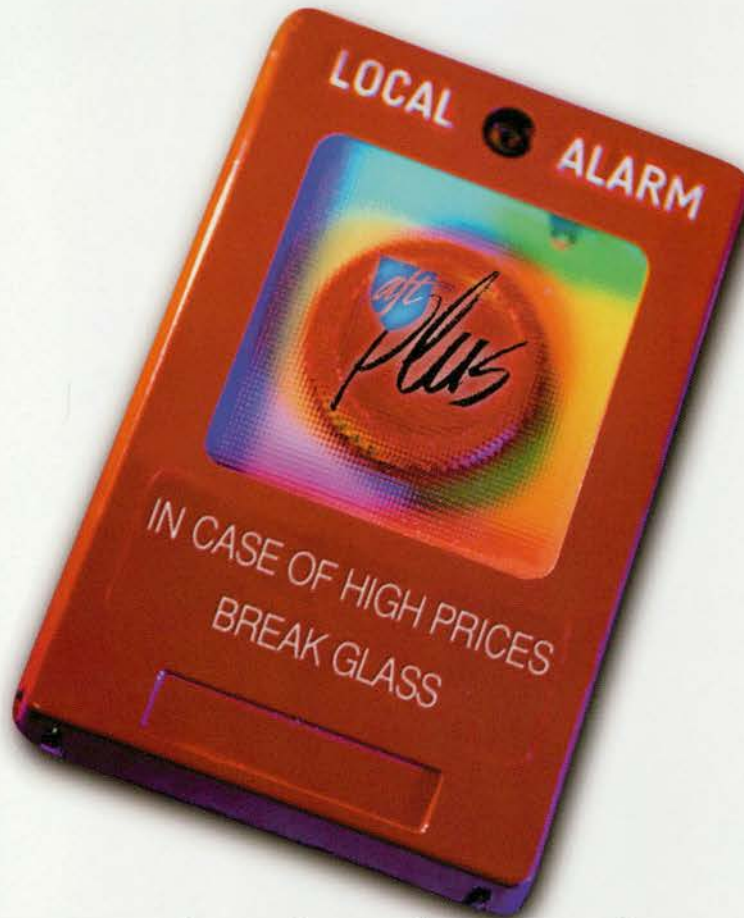


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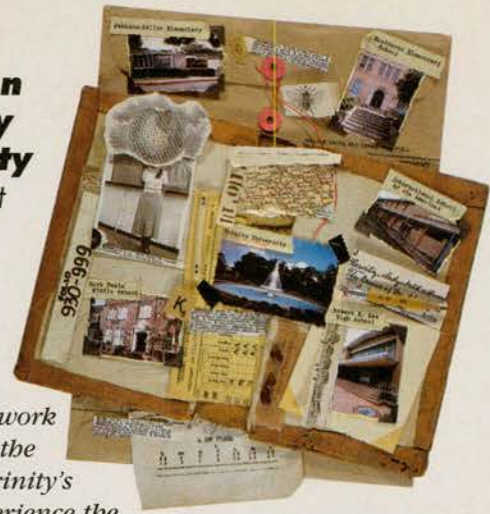
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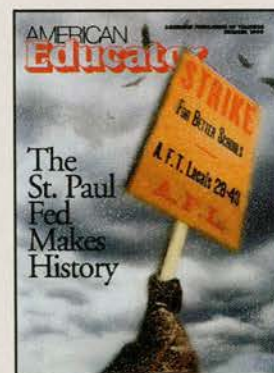
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LETTERS

Burton Bollag's article "In the Shadow of Auschwitz" (Spring 1999) presents a superficial and distorted view of Poles and the Holocaust. It is precisely such historical biases which explain why American-style Holocaust education is not popular in Poland, and also why many contemporary Poles dislike Jews.

In addition to the Jews, over 3 million Polish gentiles were murdered by the Germans during World War II. Any form of Holocaust education that makes light of this fact, will never be accepted by most Poles. Also, most Poles reject the argument that, since 90 percent of the victims of Auschwitz were Jews, this somehow abrogates the right of the other 10 percent to be remembered. The placing of crosses at Auschwitz in large numbers is a backlash against Jewish pressures in this regard.

Any form of Holocaust education that insinuates that Poles "were simply spectators" is contrary to historical fact. Poland was the first nation to stand up to German aggression, and the Poles fought in every Allied front during World War II. Polish underground resistance to the Germans was on a larger scale than in any other Nazi-occupied nation—this in the opinion of both the Allies and the Germans themselves. And there are more trees at Yad Vashem honoring Polish rescuers of Jews than for any other nationality. And this in spite of the fact that Poles were subject to the death penalty for aiding Jews—something not true of Scandinavian and Dutch rescuers of Jews.

Yes, there were also Poles who collaborated with the Germans, just as there were collaborators in other German-occupied countries. But this collaboration was on a smaller scale than elsewhere.

Until selective omissions such as those in Bollag's article, and in Holocaust education overall, are corrected, this issue will only be a source of divisiveness—which is the opposite of what Holocaust education should achieve.

—JAN PECZKIS
Chicago, Illinois

I would like to alert your readers to the availability of reports by the Case Study Project, a component of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). The reports describe the academic and cultural contexts in Germany, Japan, and the United States. The topics investigated include the development and implementation of education standards, dealing with differences in ability, the role of school in adolescents' lives, and teachers and the teaching profession.

Most of the data were obtained from interviews, discussions, and classroom observations conducted in 1994-95 at several sites in the aforementioned countries. As with TIMSS, the main focus was on mathematics and science in the fourth, eighth and twelfth grades.

The reports are available online (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/SAI/pubs.html>) and can be ordered at no charge by calling 877/433-7827 or e-mailing your request to edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

—MARK ASHWILL
Buffalo, New York

My three daughters, all of whom have school-age children, and I were very impressed with the Spring 1999 issue of *American Educator*. Your articles on measuring intelligence were outstanding. As a retired teacher, I fully agree with your point of view.

—HELEN GALLAGHER
Dearborn, Michigan



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YOUNG MURDERERS

*Why do children kill? We are unlikely to get a satisfactory answer to this question, but it is one we have to ask. James Garbarino has studied violence and its impact on children for 25 years, and he has interviewed children all over the world who have been the victims—and perpetrators—of violence. In the 1990s, he began talking with children in prison who had committed acts of lethal violence. In this article, which is drawn from his book *Lost Boys*, he offers some reflections on the moral world of these children, and others like them, and how this world has been shaped.—Editor*

BY JAMES GARBARINO

MAKING MORAL sense of their behavior is probably the most difficult challenge in dealing with kids who kill. When I appeared on a radio talk show in the days after Kip Kinkel, a schoolboy from Springfield, Ore., shot twenty-four fellow students and killed his parents, one of the callers said, “Surely, by the time a child reaches the age of four years, he knows the difference between right and wrong!” How can we understand the acts of lethal violence committed by violent boys in a way that helps us not only help them but prevents other kids from doing the same in the years to come? Do these actions make any moral sense? Are these boys without moral sense? Are they simply immoral? We need answers to these questions if we are to complete our understanding of the chain of events that begins in the disrupted relationships and rejections experienced in infancy and early childhood, that includes the bad behavior and aggression we see in later childhood, and that culminates in lethal violence in adolescence.

Sixteen-year-old Taylor is in prison for stabbing a priest. How did it happen, and why did he do it? Generally, Taylor doesn't like to talk about it. Now, looking back on it during an interview with me, he seems a bit ashamed. When he is finally willing to tell me the

*James Garbarino is co-director of the Family Life Development Center and professor of Human Development at Cornell University. This article is condensed from his book *Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them (Free Press, 1999)* and is used with permission of the publisher.*

story, it comes out like this: “I needed money. I used to go to the church—lot of good it did me—so I knew there was money in the church. So I went there to take it. You know, from the collection box. Anyway, I needed the money, and I was working on the box with a screwdriver, you know, opening it, when this priest comes in and yells at me to stop. I started to run and he came after me, so I stabbed him, you know, with the screwdriver. Then I ran.”

It seems hard to fathom any moral framework in which stabbing a priest makes sense. But is it really any more or less sensible than killing your classmates? Or shooting a convenience store clerk because he stuttered and was slow to get the money out of the cash register? Or killing a stranger on the street who insulted you? Or shooting a cop to death because he stopped you on the street? The violent boys I know have done all these things and more. Do any of these acts make moral sense? What strikes us about many of the kids who kill is that their actions don't seem to make any moral sense. And so we readily conclude that these boys have no moral sense. But things are not always as obvious upon reflection as they seem to be at first—both for the kids who kill and for all of us who judge them. To these boys and their peers, their acts often do make moral sense. Or perhaps they don't see their acts as either moral or immoral at all but, rather, as necessary for survival, or as simple entitlements.

Regardless of its origins, the action of many violent boys conveys a kind of arrogance, or what journalist Edward Helmore, writing in the *Guardian* in 1997, calls “deadly petulance.”¹ “I needed money,” says Taylor, as if that is justification enough. “He insulted me,” says Conneel, a boy who is in prison for murder, as if that is sufficient to warrant a death sentence. In this these two are not alone: Many of the shooters in the small-town and suburban school attacks offer what appear to be similarly self-centered explanations. Luke Woodham, who killed three schoolmates in Pearl, Miss., after murdering his mother, feels like an outcast and reported, “I just couldn't take it anymore.”² Michael Carneal, who shot three fellow students attending a prayer meeting before school in West Paducah, Ky., says he felt mad about the way other kids treated him.³ Mitchell Johnson, a thirteen-year-old from Jonesboro, Ark., who, with his eleven-year-old cousin,



opened fire on students and teachers in a playground, killing four students and a teacher, says, "Everyone that hates me, everyone I don't like is going to die."⁴ Andrew Wurst, a fourteen-year-old from Edinboro, Pa., who killed a teacher at a school dance, says he hated his parents and his teachers and was mad about not being successful with girls.⁵

Just hearing these few words from boys who kill does seem to cast their actions as grandiose, egotistical, and arrogant. Who the hell are they to take a human life because they feel insulted, frustrated, or teased or just because they need money? At this level, they do sound like simply rotten kids. But there is much more to the story. The sense of their actions and the scope of their moral framework emerge from the details, rather than the headlines, of the story when we place these details in the larger context of their lives. It comes from their being lost in the world.

The Moral Circle

All of us have a moral circle when it comes to violence; some acts are inside the circle of moral justification while other acts are outside that circle. Would you kill an intruder in your home? Would you kill a terminally ill relative? Would you abort a third-trimester pregnancy? Would you agree to the assassination of Saddam Hussein? Would you kill a relative if he were sexually abusing your child? Where does one draw the line, and how does one determine which killings make moral sense and which do not?

Cultures and societies set different standards for the morality of killing. Watching the film *Seven Years in Tibet* about the youthful Dalai Lama, many of us were amused to see the lengths to which Tibetan Buddhists went to avoid killing worms while digging the foundation for a new building. Their reverence for life extends their moral circle very widely. Most of us would put worms *outside* our moral circle when it comes to killing. Does that make us immoral, or does it make much of the killing we do amoral (in the sense that few Americans can relate to the killing of worms as a *moral* issue at all)?

Most of us can morally justify some form of killing when it seems necessary. Most of us legitimize violence when we see no moral alternatives and denounce it when we believe that alternatives are available. In this sense, necessity is the moral mother of murder. And that is the key to understanding boys who kill and their legitimization of violence. At the moment of crisis, they don't see positive alternatives, because of who they are and their emotional history, and where they come from and how they see the world. They do what they have to do—as they see it. Understanding this horrible reality is very difficult; it requires a kind of openheartedness and openmindedness that is hard for anyone to achieve, particularly in today's political and emotional climate. But achieve it we must if we are to understand the motivations and experiences that drive boys to commit acts of lethal violence and then marshal our resources to prevent this from happening with other troubled boys.

I face my own personal struggle to understand when the incarcerated boys I interview talk about

killing. It is my third interview with Conneel, and although the official topic of discussion is "his neighborhood," we end up talking about violence, specifically, his "first homicide." We are talking about girls, and Conneel says in passing, "They really started coming around after my first homicide." He says it so casually that I think it would be a good time to hear the whole story, particularly since other boys (such as Kip Kinkel) echo this theme; namely, that some girls find violent boys attractive.

Conneel tells his tale rather matter-of-factly, a narrative style common to the boys I have interviewed in prison. The discourse leading up to the description of the killing itself sounds rather chilling despite—or perhaps because of—the nature of the story. In this account, fifteen-year-old Conneel rounds a corner in his Brooklyn neighborhood and sees a nineteen-year-old standing on the street in front of his building; he is surrounded by other kids, most of whom Conneel knows from dealing drugs. Recognizing the gold chain around his neck as the one this youth had stolen from him at gunpoint two weeks earlier, Conneel approaches, gun drawn, and demands the chain back. The nineteen-year-old at first yells out that he doesn't know what Conneel is talking about, but then gives up the chain after seeing Conneel's gun. With the chain now in his left hand, Conneel puts the gun to the nineteen-year-old's head and pulls the trigger. The boy dies instantly.

Why on earth did he kill him when the chain was recovered? For Conneel it was simply, "I did what I had to do." What does that mean in moral terms? It means that this was a matter of retributive justice and an act of preemptive violence that made moral sense to Conneel because by robbing him in the first place the boy he killed had placed himself outside Conneel's moral circle. Conneel calculated that if he didn't kill the other boy at that moment, he would be exposing himself to danger in the future, so he "did what he had to do." In Conneel's eyes, the boy deserved the death penalty for threatening him, and executing him was a morally justified act of punishment, deterrence, and self-preservation. The fact that in Conneel's eyes the shooting was morally justified doesn't mean it was right. I must say that I feel the same way about those who favor the execution of kids who kill. They offer a moral justification, but they are not right.

Violent boys operate in a particular moral universe. They often have moral circles much more circumscribed than those of other kids their age. Sometimes these moral circles shrink so as to virtually disappear, which produces what seems from the outside to be unlimited legitimization of aggression. However, all but those with the most profound psychological damage do have a moral circle.

The Lure of the Dark Side

There are individuals who are so profoundly damaged that they are literally amoral, that is, without any morality whatsoever when it comes to interpersonal aggression and violence. As Yale University psychiatrist Dorothy Otnow-Lewis reports in her book *Guilty by Reason of Insanity*, some of the most notorious serial killers are so psychologically damaged that they ap-

proximate this state of pure amorality.⁶ But such individuals are very, very few in number, and even most of them do have some small area of morality in which they suspend their lethal behavior—for a dog, a cat, a bird, a rat, a lizard, or even a child.

Complete amorality is extremely rare. We have encountered a couple of boys in our work who are so profoundly damaged that they seem to have no moral circle at all. The psychiatric term for these individuals is *psychopath*.

Few boys ever get to this point, where they are beyond morality. But some boys do come close to achieving this final state, particularly when they are operating in the war-zone mentality of a conventional youth prison, where honor and the preservation of some modicum of dignity are a constant battle. Some get there when they are immersed in some sort of negative ideology, such as Satanism, in which they adopt a profound nihilism, believing only in the darkest of the dark side.

A study done by psychologists Kelly Damphousse and Ben Crouch revealed that nearly 10 percent of juvenile offenders in the Texas system reported some level of involvement in Satanism.⁷ These boys were characterized by a low level of attachment to conventional society, as represented by parents and schools; a high level of attachment to peers; higher than average intelligence; and a sense of life being out of their control. The fourteen-year-old shooter in Edinboro, Pa., Andrew Wurst, was nicknamed Satan by his schoolmates.⁸ Kip Kinkel in Springfield, Ore., was involved in the dark, violent imagery of “heavy metal” music.⁹ Luke Woodham, the sixteen-year-old shooter in Pearl, Miss., was part of an avowed Satanist group of boys in his community.¹⁰

The culture of the dark side has a special draw for troubled boys, alienated boys, and boys who are outside the orbit of the positive features of American life. When this attraction combines with the power of negative peer groups, the result can be very dangerous. Social worker Ronald Feldman has studied the impact of peer-group composition on adolescent behavior for decades. He finds that the tipping point in an adolescent peer group, from positive to negative, can come with only a minority of the individuals being predisposed to negative behavior. Once these negative peers take over the group, the positive boys either leave or are driven out or go along with the negative agenda. Today boys can become members of negative peer groups without even leaving home (e.g., through Internet chat groups).

Much more common than truly amoral boys are boys within whom a stunted or otherwise troubled emotional life combines with a narrow and intense personal need for justice. These impulses come to dominate a boy's moral thinking to the exclusion of other considerations, such as social conventions about right and wrong, consequences, empathy, and even personal survival.

I learned this lesson about the links between perceived injustice and the moral code of violence first from the work of psychiatrist James Gilligan. For many years Gilligan worked in the mental health system of the state prisons of Massachusetts, dealing with violent

boys grown into full, psychologically impoverished manhood.¹¹ Gilligan achieved the incredible openness of heart and mind required to understand men who commit lethal violence. As he did so, he came to understand that almost all acts of violence are related to perceived injustice, the subjective experience of frustrated justice, and an attempt to redress injustice. Deadly petulance usually hides some deep emotional wounds, a way of compensating through an exaggerated sense of grandeur for an inner sense of violation, victimization, and injustice.

Perceived Injustice

When boys kill, they are seeking justice—as they see it, through their eyes. What makes these acts appear senseless to us is often the fact that we either don't see the connection between the original injustice and the eventual lethal act or don't understand why the boy perceived injustice in the first place. This latter point is sometimes easily dispelled if it results from our lack of understanding of the boy's experience.

Consider Stephen, for example, an eighteen-year-old who killed a police officer. Stephen is a polite young man with an engaging smile and a shy manner. Words don't come easily for him, but when they do come they often tell volumes about his desperate efforts to escape his physically and psychologically abusive mother in the years after his father died, when Stephen was eight years old.

I see little evidence in the reports of his social workers and psychologists that they recognized the injustice he experienced at home at the hands of a mother who rejected him while she accepted his brother, a mother who whipped his back raw while she rewarded his compliant brother and who told him that he was like his “no-good father” and that his brother “favored” her side of the family. Interestingly, what comes across in Stephen's records is just a boy who after losing his father grew into an ungrateful teenager who caused his mother embarrassment and inconvenience.

But I have had a chance to see and hear the real story, from the inside out. What did Stephen want more than anything in the world? He wanted to be loved and accepted by his mother. He wanted to be free of the imprisonment he felt at home, where, he told me, his greatest fear was that he would strike out at his abusive mother. And when I asked him if he thought God would forgive her for what she did to him, he responded, “I hope so.”

Of course, not all the lost boys are so forgiving. Boys do commit parricide. In fact, kids kill their parents with alarming frequency, almost always in response to feeling they have been rejected and abused. In his book on the topic, *When a Child Kills*, lawyer Paul Mones presents numerous examples.¹² Even when the initial story paints the child as an ungrateful or crazed monster, further investigation often (but, admittedly, not always) reveals that the killing took place as the culmination of years of deteriorating family relationships and, most often, abuse.

I met one boy from such a situation, a fifteen-year-old who had killed his abusive stepfather. Abandoned

emotionally by his mother, Terry was left behind in the supposed care of her former husband. His humiliation of Terry was unceasing, but the boy had nowhere else to go. After nearly two years of escalating anger and sadness, Terry reached his limit when his stepfather casually slapped Terry's nephew across the face so hard that the two-year-old went sprawling across the floor. "I just wasn't going to take it anymore," Terry told me. "I knew I would have to pay the price for what I did, but I didn't care. The man had to be stopped. So I went into the bedroom and got his shotgun. Both barrels. Then I called the cops."

Terry was sentenced to twenty-five years in prison. Killings such as Terry's are easier to make sense of than what Stephen did. Even if we think Terry's response was extreme and impulsive, most of us can at least imagine his moral framework: retributive justice, vengeance, and a desperate attempt to escape from an emotionally intolerable situation. But what about Stephen?

Stephen killed when he was stopped on the street by the police. Why was he out on the street? He needed to escape from home. Why did he kill that night on the street? He was carrying a gun, and he was out on bail awaiting sentencing on a weapons charge; he was hoping for a brief sentence on that charge, but he knew that if he was picked up carrying a gun, the sentence would be lengthened substantially. At the moment he was stopped by police, he was caught by the injustice of his situation. Stephen needed freedom more than anything else (except love), and here was a threat to that freedom in the form of two cops who were stopping him on the street "for no good reason." As a result of this unfair action, he knew he would lose his freedom. He felt he had no choice but to prevent this injustice from going any further. He shot at the cops—he says to scare them so that he could run away. But after he shot twice, they started shooting at *him*. More injustice. Stephen returned the fire, and the result was a dead cop and his wounded partner—and one boy facing the death penalty.

Shame and Violence

Many of the acts of lethal violence committed by boys are deliberate and sometimes even meticulously planned, rather than spur-of-the-moment explosions of rage. I think this is significant, because it highlights the importance of understanding that boys think about violence as a solution to their problems. More than just the result of an uncontrollable urge, these violent acts are related to Gilligan's idea of frustrated justice. This is particularly true of the boys who committed the school shootings in the 1997-98 school year.

In Kentucky, Michael Carneal timed his assault so that it would occur during the regular morning prayer meeting at his high school. In Arkansas, thirteen-year-old Mitchell Johnson and eleven-year-old Andrew Golden developed an elaborate plan involving a false fire alarm to draw students out into the line of fire they had set up, like soldiers preparing an ambush; they succeeded in killing students and a teacher. In Oregon, Kip Kinkel carried his arsenal into the school cafeteria at just the right time in the morning and was

Nothing seems to threaten
the human spirit
more than rejection,
brutalization,
and lack of love.

able to shoot twenty-four classmates, two fatally.

What produces this intolerable state of being in which violent boys live? James Gilligan believes that injustice produces shame, and it is shame that generates the intolerability of existence. Shame imposes the fear that one will cease to exist, the prospect of psychic annihilation. Nothing seems to threaten the human spirit more than rejection, brutalization, and lack of love. Nothing—not physical deformity, not debilitating illness, not financial ruin, not academic failure—can equal insults to the soul. Nothing compares with the trauma of this profound assault on the psyche.

Those who are shamed are vulnerable to committing violence and aggression because they know that acts of violence against self or others are a reliable method for reasserting existence when life experience has denied it. And, paradoxically, acts of violence against the self may serve the same purpose, particularly for children; as they contemplate suicide or actually engage in a suicide attempt, many youth seem to think, "That will show them. They'll be sorry when I'm gone."

Remember that adolescents are theatrical, viewing the world as a stage, with themselves playing the leading roles. And their plays are often melodramas and, on occasion, even tragedies. Many of us can recall thinking suicidal thoughts, but most of us had the inner resources and outer supports to leave it at that. Of course, tens of thousands of kids each year can't leave it at that and do attempt suicide.

The greatest danger comes when the crisis of perceived impending psychic annihilation is melodramatically merged with the idea of addressing intolerable injustice with violence. The two go together, because in our society the idea of retribution through violence is a basic article of faith. Vengeance is not confined to some small group of psychologically devastated indi-

viduals. It is normal for us, a fact of value in our culture. The actions of violent boys show us what comes of our society's poisonous belief that "revenge is sweet." We would all do better to heed the ancient proverb, "When you begin a journey of revenge, start by digging two graves, one for your enemy and one for yourself."

Making Moral Mistakes

Illuminating the role of shame and perceived injustice in the lives of violent boys provides a good beginning to making some moral sense of their violent actions. But there is more to tell. One of the most difficult things to understand about the lost boys is their use of the word *mistake* to refer to deliberate, intentional acts of violence that achieve their conscious goal. Is there any way to understand how they can regard these immoral acts as mistakes without resorting to explanations that hinge upon the assumption that they are simply lying or engaging in self-protective denial?

Studies of moral reasoning generally focus on the development of sophisticated thinking as the hallmark of moral development, yet sophisticated thinking is but one side of a triangle. The other two are sophisticated feelings and behavior. Thus, the moral person is one who does more than reason about dilemmas. Such a person has moral character. As character education expert Thomas Lickona puts it, being a moral person involves "knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good."¹³

The standard for efforts to assess the thinking part of morality or reasoning grew out of the work of Harvard psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg.¹⁴ Kohlberg's approach has been adopted and adapted by many investigators as a strategy for identifying how well kids are doing in applying their intellect to the task of figuring out moral dilemmas. At Kohlberg's "preconventional level," the emphasis is on fear of punishment, desire for rewards, and the trade-offs between the two that alternative courses of action will produce. At the "conventional level," the focus is on doing what "good people" do and respecting family and society's rules. At the "postconventional level," the key is an attempt to live by more universal principles, that is, principles that go beyond specific times and places and people.

Most violent boys stand at the first level in Kohlberg's classification system, preconventional, moral reasoning. Systematic studies of juvenile delinquents responding to moral dilemmas of the type used by Kohlberg also identify such kids as primitive thinkers. A boy at this level responds to the rightness and wrongness of alternative courses of action on the basis of what and how each possibility will cost and benefit him. Few violent youths are at the second level, where right and wrong are couched in terms of what helps people meet their legitimate needs. For these boys, "wrong" equals "mistake." Thus, when they say they made a mistake in committing their crimes, often this is an indication of unsophisticated moral reasoning, not amorality per se.

In the wake of the Jonesboro shootings, in the spring of 1998, I ask Conneel about the two boys who committed the murders. Conneel has already admitted

to me that he himself was responsible for several deaths and has amassed a substantial arsenal that is hidden in the basement of his apartment building. When I ask him to tell me what he thinks about an appropriate punishment for Mitchell Johnson and Andrew Golden, he starts out with the thought that they might deserve the death penalty. But then he quickly pulls back from that position, reminding me that he is concerned that the death penalty may be imposed upon *him* for *his* lethal acts. He thinks for a while, and then continues. "They're responsible for what they did," he says. "They shot innocent victims—girls," he reasons, "and they should go to prison for that. I'd say at least fifteen years in jail so they can change." When it comes to judging *others*, Conneel is about normal for an American. Of course, like many of us, he has trouble applying those standards to himself. His killings were not of innocent people, he is quick to point out. But isn't that always the point? Do any violent offenders see the target of their lethal violence as innocent?

To an outsider, the violence that lost boys commit often seems to make no sense or to evidence a total breakdown in morality. But this is not the case when we see the world through their eyes. These boys often commit acts of violence on the basis of a "moral" idea in their heads, usually something to do with revenge or injustice or wounded pride or glory. Pressures build as they ruminate on the injustice done to them, usually some specific insult or disappointment set within a bigger picture of resentment. In this way, there is no such thing as a "senseless act of violence." This does not mean that we simply accept their analysis as legitimate, of course, but it does force us to look beyond our shock, horror, and indignation to see the roots of the problem.

Conscience Under Construction

Eleven- to fifteen-year-olds are as much children as they are adolescents, and their ability to engage in reality-based moral thinking is still very much "under construction." Some children have erected a solid internal monitor, a prosocial conscience, by the time they enter adolescence. But, as psychologist Barbara Stilwell's research shows, most teens actually have to deal with a "confused conscience."¹⁵ Some are still mainly responding to external messages about what is right and what is wrong. And some have a great emotional emptiness inside that drives them to seek extreme solutions to their problems. Some of this emptiness is personal, as we see from the individual life histories, but some of it is social and cultural in its origins.

But whether they exhibit conscience or not, boys are not yet adults, and their ability to appreciate the consequences of their behavior is often quite limited. This has a bearing on what we should do with juvenile killers. The fact that they are capable of committing lethal, adult-like crimes does not mean that they are adults. The two things are quite separate and distinct. The common belief that "if you can do the crime, you can do the time" is offered to justify the prosecution and incarceration of kids as if they were adults, but

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THE GUN DISPUTE

BY ROBERT J. SPITZER

FEW TEACHERS could avoid a shudder when word of the most recent school shootings hit the media. In the last couple of years, it seems as though public schools have become shooting galleries for deranged students. What, exactly, is going on? What role can we ascribe to guns? And what can we, as educators, learn from these seemingly random and senseless acts?

Teachers know very well that schools do not exist in isolation from their communities. When students enter the schoolhouse door, they bring with them their own problems and attitudes, which are inextricably linked to those of society. So it seems reasonable to begin a search for answers to these questions by looking at our society's attitude toward guns.

Order First

The first purpose of government is the establishment of order, so that citizens can rely on a modicum of safety. Without order, the only freedom we can expect is the "freedom" of anarchy. The British political philosopher John Locke put it this way: "God hath certainly appointed government to restrain the partiality and violence of men." And the political scientist Samuel Huntington noted, "Men may, of course, have order without liberty, but they cannot have liberty without order." Schools are no different from society as a whole in their need for order. If we expect learning to take place, we must make sure students are, and

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feel, safe. Beyond the continuing effort to ensure such security at school—an obvious if painful lesson arising from the shootings in Littleton, Colo., and other U.S. schools—what else can such incidents teach us about the connection between guns and our children, our schools, and our society?

First and foremost, there is no single cause for this senseless violence. Video games, a popular culture infatuated with violence, the Internet, absentee parents, and flawed police work all share some blame, along with the easy access to guns. In the long run, our best approach is to separate these strands and try to identify the role of each. But just as it is clear that guns are not the only problem, so, too, is it clear that guns are a significant part of the problem. The two boys who carried out the Littleton killings reportedly brought fifty explosive devices into their school, as well as four guns. Yet all of those killed in the attack died from gunshot wounds, and accounts of the mayhem at Littleton's Columbine High School reveal that the guns gave the two boys immediate control over the parts of the school they occupied.

Further, it is well understood that introducing guns into any situation increases the lethality of a confrontation, meaning that the likelihood of injury or death increases significantly. Our ideal is to raise children who are free from the dark impulses that propel young people toward violence and mayhem. Since we are far from realizing such an ideal, however, we would do well to take whatever steps we can to minimize the danger that troubled youths will carry out their violent fantasies with guns in hand.

Not as Bad as You Think

National polls consistently reveal that crime is one of Americans' chief concerns. In fact, the fear of crime has continued to rise throughout the 1990s. Yet this has oc-



curred at the same time that crime has been declining in virtually every category. Students' attitudes about school safety follow a similar, contradictory pattern. In 1989, 6 percent of students ages twelve to nineteen reported fear of attack or harm at school. In 1995, this figure had risen to 9 percent.¹ Actual school crime rates reflect the opposite trend. So we need to begin with the fact that schools are relatively safe places, as compared with local communities and even homes. This alone is remarkable given that U.S. public schools enrolled almost 46 million students during the 1996-97 school year and the fact that teens and young adults compose the most crime-prone segment of the population.

Moreover, school shooting deaths are both rare and declining. According to the National School Safety Center, there were fifty-five such school deaths during the 1992-93 school year, fifty-one in 1993-94, twenty in 1994-95, thirty-five in 1995-96, twenty-five in 1996-97, forty-two in 1997-98, and until the April 20 massacre at Littleton High School, where fourteen students (including the two assailants) and one faculty member were killed, only nine such deaths were recorded for 1998-99.² But statistics notwithstanding, the rise in headline-grabbing multiple-victim shootings (from two during 1992-93 to six in 1997-98) coupled with their occurrence in what are supposed to be low-crime areas, have greatly intensified people's worries about school safety.

Downward trends apply to other crime patterns as well. In 1996 (the last year for which data are available), children ages twelve to eighteen were subjected to serious violent crime at a rate of twenty-six crimes for every 1,000 students away from school, totaling about 671,000 incidents nationwide. Also in 1996, the same age group was victimized by violent crime within schools at a rate of ten per 1,000 students (about 255,000 incidents, or 38 percent of the non-school crime rate). In addition, overall crime rates this decade—in and outside school—have been declining. From 1993 to 1996, the overall crime rate in schools for twelve- to eighteen-year-olds dropped from 164 incidents to 128 per 1,000 students. The rate dropped comparably for non-school crimes.³ These trends are even more significant when you consider that nationwide crime rates such as homicide are proportionately highest among eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds, followed by fourteen- to seventeen-year-olds.⁴

Admittedly, these statistics provide little comfort for the families of students and teachers killed or injured in schools, and this is not a call for complacency. One wrongful death in a school is one too many. Nor are the fears of parents who wonder whether their child's school will be next easily quieted. Still, we need to remind ourselves that although serious, school violence occurs at lower rates than in society at large, and it is indeed following a downward trend.

Although children are the primary victims of most school crimes, their teachers are not exempt from such acts of violence. From 1992 to 1996, an average of thirty violent crimes per 1,000 were committed against teachers at public and private schools, amounting to about 123,000 per year. Concern about school violence is also fanned by large numbers of students who carry guns. Although the percentage of students

who report bringing guns to school has declined in grades 9-12, in 1997, about 9 percent of students reported carrying a gun onto school property within the previous 30 days (down from 12 percent in 1993).⁵

Except for a scattered few who would like to see teachers and administrators armed,⁶ virtually no one argues that guns belong in schools, except perhaps in the hands of properly trained security guards or police. In addition to the obvious problems that can follow from guns in schools—gun thefts, accidents, suicides, murders, and mayhem—there is the problem that guns lead to more guns. This kind of escalation occurs for the same reasons as it does in society at large. Students who decide to carry guns for security—and this is the reason they usually cite—do so because other students are already bringing guns to school. And predators seeking to do harm are encouraged to bring firearms, or more firearms, to top the firepower that may already exist. The rule that the presence of guns increases the deadliness of any confrontation holds for schools, too, and this accounts for the sharp rise in homicides by juveniles that occurred nationwide in the 1980s. Criminologists initially concluded that this spike was the product of a new generation of "superpredator" teens who were more prone to murder. More recent analysis has found, however, that the murder spike was instead almost entirely attributable to juveniles' gaining access to handguns.⁷

The gun phenomenon as it affects schools cannot be understood apart from America's love-hate relationship with the gun. The National Rifle Association (NRA), the organization most closely connected with gun possession and use, has steadfastly opposed new regulations, extolled traditional gun use arising from what is loosely termed "the gun culture," and trumpeted the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment.

The Gun Culture

America's attachment to guns dates back to colonial times. Historians have noted that actual gun ownership from the colonial era to the Civil War has been greatly exaggerated: Gun ownership never exceeded 10 percent of the population from colonial times until after the Civil War, when mass-produced guns were heavily marketed to civilians.⁸ Nevertheless, the romantic attachment to guns is part of the American heritage. Today's gun culture, whose adherents are primarily males in rural areas and the South, rests mostly with about 15 million Americans who continue to hunt and engage in other sporting activities involving guns. This base of support has gradually declined since about 1960 for a variety of reasons. Hunting areas have shrunk, as has the population in rural areas. At the same time, the public has become increasingly suspicious of guns, and more Americans have therefore abandoned gun-related activities.

Many of the students who have committed acts of gun violence grew up in homes where guns were readily available and where gun use was taught. The shootings in schools at Moses Lake, Wash.; Bethel, Alaska; Jonesboro, Ark.; and Springfield, Ore., were all committed by young males who were exposed to, and trained in, the use of guns. An angry, isolated, alien-

Gun ownership in the U.S. never exceeded 10 percent of the population until after the Civil War.

ated child is a child at risk. Put a gun in that child's hand, and "at risk" becomes "potentially lethal." If these murderous acts represent a distortion of a legitimate gun culture, they also cannot be divorced from the existence of this culture or its article of faith that guns should continue to be easily available. This conviction stems at least in part from an oft-invoked, yet little understood, constitutional amendment.

'The Right To Bear Arms'

Americans attach enormous importance to the rights, powers, and privileges that flow from the U.S. Constitution. In the gun debate, nearly any effort to tamper with gun laws or gun access provokes heated invocation of the Second Amendment. Speaking at the NRA's annual meeting on April 30 in Denver, virtually in the shadow of the deaths in Littleton, NRA president Charlton Heston sought to rebut gun control supporters by arguing that, "Our mission is to remain a steady beacon of strength and support for the Second Amendment, even if it has no other friend on the planet."⁹ Although Heston surely was not arguing that the young assassins were exercising their constitutional rights, the customary allusion to the Second Amendment indeed suggests that it somehow justifies citizens' possession and use of guns in modern America. This is a view that is shared by most Americans. For example, a 1995 poll reported that 75 percent of Americans believe that the Constitution's Second Amendment "guarantees you the right to own a gun."¹⁰ In fact, the amendment does no such thing.

Polemic aside, the meaning of the Second Amendment is relatively clear. The full text, often quoted in fragmentary form, states: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Former Supreme Court chief justice Warren Burger once wrote that this amendment should be read as though it began with the word "because." That is, the right to keep and bear arms assumes a government-organized and regulated militia (the courts have specifically eliminated from the concept of *militias* any self-created militias that are not expressly formed by, and under the control of, the government). The Second Amendment, added to the Constitution in 1791 along with the nine other amendments in the Bill of Rights, was written at a time when citizen militias were still a primary means of national defense, when suspicions of standing armies were still strong, and when the government itself could not be relied on to

provide arms to prospective soldiers—ergo, the need for citizens to have weapons of their own in case they were called in to service. All of the debate about the Second Amendment during the First Congress centered on matters of national defense and military organization. At no time did anyone argue that the amendment was designed to enshrine any personal use of firearms for purposes such as hunting, sporting, recreation, revolt against the government, or even self-defense (a matter already covered in common law).¹¹

This interpretation has been ratified in four Supreme Court cases: *U.S. vs. Cruikshank* (1876), *Presser vs. Illinois* (1886), *Miller vs. Texas* (1894), and *U.S. vs. Miller* (1939). In 1980, the court affirmed the reasoning of these cases in *Lewis vs. U.S.*, emphasizing that the Second Amendment comes into play only when the government calls citizens into military service as members of a militia and needs them to bring their own weapons. This interpretation has also been verified in nearly twenty lower federal court rulings. Although Congress still retains the power to call up the militia, since the Civil War the government has met military emergencies through mobilization of a professional army enlarged through the military draft, rather than by citizen militias, which were effectively abandoned after their abysmal performance in the War of 1812. And the government has long had ample resources to provide proper arms to the military. Finally, the courts have said repeatedly that the Second Amendment is no impediment to firearms regulations—including such sweeping measures as banning handguns.

In short, there is no connection whatsoever between the Second Amendment and any of the modern uses or purposes ascribed to it. That the amendment is constantly invoked, even in the aftermath of Littleton, is a testament to the political value of constitutional symbolism, rather than constitutional law.

The Link Between Guns and Crime

Much of this country's despair about guns arises from their sheer numbers. There are 200 million guns in the U.S., according to the best recent estimate. Given such a statistic, many argue that it is pointless to talk about gun control, especially because guns are a relatively durable commodity. However, the link between guns and crime is more precise and narrow. Two-thirds of all guns in this country are long guns—rifles and shotguns—which usually are easier to obtain than handguns. Yet 80 percent of all gun crimes are committed with handguns. Moreover, there is mounting evidence that most guns used in crimes are purchased legally and shortly before they are used. This contradicts the long-held belief that guns used in crimes are typically obtained illegally.

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), nearly half of all handguns used in crimes were purchased from federally licensed dealers within the three years prior to the crime. Many of these purchases were through "straw purchasers," people who buy guns in quantity in a place where that is allowed in order to bring the guns to customers who, because of their background or residence, would not

be able to make such purchases. In New York state, which has one of the toughest gun laws in the nation, 90 percent of all gun crimes involve firearms that were purchased in states with lax gun laws, including Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. (These statistics are based on guns obtained by law enforcement officers who traced them to their origin.) Moreover, only 1 percent of all licensed gun dealers were responsible for selling almost half of all guns traced to crimes in 1998. For gun crimes committed by juveniles, half of all the traceable guns were purchased by straw buyers; 14 percent were sold by unlicensed private sellers, and 10 percent were purchased at unregulated gun shows, flea markets, or through magazine ads.¹² A 1999 ATF study found that 46 percent of the felons studied obtained weapons by purchasing them at gun shows.¹³ This should come as no surprise. After all, why steal or purchase something on the black market when it can be bought openly and without any trouble?

There are several points to be made here: First, access to guns continues to be relatively easy—a fact that applies to the young as well as to hardened criminals. Three of the four guns used in the Littleton assault—two shotguns and a Hi-Point carbine—were purchased at a gun show by the girlfriend of one of the shooters. Acting as a straw buyer, she bought the firearms shortly before the killing spree. The fourth gun, a semi-automatic pistol called a TEC-DC9 (with a large-capacity ammunition magazine), was also purchased at a gun show. Second, guns linked to crimes are typically funneled through ill-regulated but legal avenues. Third, in localities where law enforcement authorities have succeeded in cutting down gun-related crimes, they have done so by paying more attention to gun tracing, as well as through stricter regulation of the flow and possession of guns. Fourth, teenagers' access to guns warrants special attention by authorities because juveniles often react impulsively, and because introducing guns into a hostile situation dramatically increases the likelihood of injury and death.

Given the prevalence of guns in our society, there can be no guarantee against future Littletons; however, many steps can be taken to make such incidents significantly less likely. Gun control opponents often argue that since current laws cannot stop gun crimes, they should be repealed, and further regulatory efforts abandoned. However, no one proposes that we repeal laws against murder because murders continue to occur; nor does anyone propose that minors be given legal permission to smoke cigarettes because millions of minors do so illegally. In fact, society's response in both instances has been the reverse—to increase sanctions against these and other activities that cause harm, and there is no reason why we should not pursue this course of action with guns. Former New York City police commissioner William J. Bratton has called "easy access to guns...one of the biggest factors in violent crime."¹⁴ Such measures as regulating unregulated gun purchases at gun shows and flea markets, restricting multiple gun purchases, removing the grandfathering that currently applies to certain banned weapons and ammunition clips produced before they were banned in 1994, increasing penalties for those who provide firearms to mi-

nors, and requiring trigger locks (devices that prevent a gun from being fired and which can be installed in existing guns) are a few examples of regulatory reform that could yield measurable benefits. If the boys in the Littleton case had been able to obtain only the two shotguns and not the TEC-DC9 or the carbine, it might not have prevented the shooting spree, but it would have reduced their total firepower and perhaps the loss of life.

The Political Battleground

The key decisions concerning gun availability and regulation come out of the political process. If governing decisions were purely a matter of translating public preferences into public policy, national gun laws would be far more restrictive than they are. Since the advent of modern polling in the late 1930s, public opinion has consistently supported stronger gun laws. Indeed, public support for gun control is not only one of the most consistent trends in the history of public opinion, but among the most one-sided. To cite a recent example, a May 1998 Harris Poll found that 70 percent of adults favor stricter gun laws, and so did 57 percent of gun owners. Measures such as waiting periods for gun purchases; restriction or denial of citizen access to more destructive, higher-firepower weapons—like the AK-47, which fires bullets at 2,300 feet per second;¹⁵ across-the-board gun registration; and mandatory gun locks have long been supported by large majorities of Americans.¹⁶ Yet the general public normally takes notice of such matters only when national attention is focused by some catastrophic event. Thus, the first major national gun law, the National Firearms Act of 1934, was enacted in response to public outrage over gun-related gangster violence. The Gun Control Act of 1968 was enacted in the aftermath of the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy. The Brady Law of 1993 and the Assault Weapons Ban of 1994 were both responses to a series of multiple shootings that received national attention.¹⁷ Aside from these modest changes in law, the prevailing political pattern has been gridlock on the gun issue during the last several decades. Gun control opponents have mostly succeeded in blocking the enactment of major gun laws at the national level and in winning passage of "concealed carry" laws, which allow citizens to carry concealed weapons, in 32 states.

The Littleton shooting, followed quickly by the planned rampage in Fort Huron, Mich., and the shooting at Heritage High School in Conyers, Ga., has prompted a new wave of gun control fervor, and renewed scrutiny of gun practices and habits.

Significantly, on May 20 the U.S. Senate passed the first new federal gun restrictions since enactment of the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban. The bill, passed after tumultuous debate and despite the opposition of Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.), called for background checks for firearms purchases at gun shows and pawn shops, and revocation of gun ownership for those convicted of gun crimes as juveniles, as well as tougher penalties for juvenile offenders. It also required safety devices to be sold with all handguns and banned import of high-capacity ammunition clips (those that can hold more than ten bullets).

Despite widespread public support, the Senate bill

met a chilly reception in the House. Gun control opponents succeeded in putting off consideration of the bill until June, allowing control foes time to marshal their resources and supporters. From mid-May to mid-June, the NRA spent \$750,000 on mass mailings and \$300,000 on phone banks. The pro gun-control group, Handgun Control, Inc., spent about \$350,000 on similar activities. On June 17 and 18, the House capped a tumultuous week of politicking with a series of votes that gave a victory to gun control opponents, led by Minority Whip Tom DeLay (R-Texas) and senior Democrat and former NRA Board Member John Dingell (Mich.). The amendment, drafted with NRA guidance, included some control provisions—like mandatory locks for new handguns and a ban on the import of high-capacity gun magazine clips. But the measure also weakened the gun-show background check system, and opened the door to the interstate sale of handguns (rolling back a restriction that had been in place for thirty years). In the final vote, the now-weakened gun measure was defeated by a coalition of gun control supporters who found the bill too weak, and some control opponents opposed to any control measures. At this writing, a conference committee of representatives from both chambers is expected to offer a compromise plan, but the House is unlikely to accept a gun control measure anywhere near as strong as that passed by the Senate.

In the Statehouses

Less noticed, but perhaps more significant, has been a flurry of action in state legislatures around the country. Formerly dormant efforts to enact new gun regulations, such as one-handgun-a-month purchase limits and gun lock requirements, have gained momentum. Similarly, efforts in some states to relax state gun laws have been stopped in their tracks, although Texas Gov. George W. Bush signed a bill to bar liability suits by localities against gun manufacturers, making his the fourteenth state to enact such a restriction. In all, over twenty states have seen renewed attention to gun laws on both the pro- and anti-control sides. Finally, aroused public sentiment is likely to provide added fuel to recent efforts by cities to file civil suits against gun manufacturers to hold them liable for gun-related injuries and deaths.

As for our schools, the current national mood is now more receptive than ever to restricting and regulating adolescent access to guns and to imposing tighter restrictions on firearms that are especially destructive. States and local communities may well find support for new regulations that focus on gun access, especially as it affects the young. This does not mean that new regulations will be foolproof; the persistence of the gun culture means that some children will continue to have access to guns through their families. And tighter regulation in some communities is likely to be neutralized by lax gun laws in surrounding jurisdictions. Nevertheless, the government has both the right and the obligation to take steps to minimize the likelihood of future Littletons. That it cannot provide a perfect solution is no reason to abandon the effort; rather, it underscores the need to look carefully at all the influences on our young, including the family and the media.

The great nineteenth-century civil libertarian John Stuart Mill stated succinctly the special obligation of a society toward its young. In *On Liberty*, Mill said that “young persons below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood...must be protected against their own actions as well as against external injury.” Nothing has happened, since Mill wrote these words, to release us from this obligation, which applies equally to our children in society, and in our schools. □

Endnotes

- ¹U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, “Annual Report of School Safety 1998,” p. 13.
- ²These data have been reported in various places, including Jerome G. Miller, “Juvenile Justice: Facts vs. Anger,” *New York Times*, 15 Aug. 1998; Edward Walsh, “Calm Year in Schools Is Shattered,” *Washington Post*, 21 April 1999.
- ³U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, “Annual Report,” pp. 8-11.
- ⁴James Alan Fox and Marianne W. Zawitz, “Homicide Trends in the United States,” Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, January 1999, NCJ 173956.
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- ⁸Michael A. Bellesiles, “The Origins of Gun Culture in the United States, 1760-1865,” *Journal of American History* 83 (September 1996), pp. 426, 428.
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- ¹¹Robert J. Spitzer, *The Politics of Gun Control* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1998), ch. 2.
- ¹²Fox Butterfield, “New Data Point Blame at Gun Makers,” *New York Times*, 28 Nov. 1998; Fox Butterfield, “Most Crime Guns Are Bought, Not Stolen,” *New York Times*, 30 April 1999; Fox Butterfield, “Study Exposes Illegal Traffic in New Guns,” *New York Times*, 21 Feb. 1999.
- ¹³“Follow the Firearms,” *Newsweek*, 10 May 1999, p. 34.
- ¹⁴William J. Bratton, “Mr. Heston, the Police Are Not the Enemy,” *New York Times*, 20 June 1998.
- ¹⁵This is more than twice as fast as the bullet speed of typical handguns carried by the police. Physicians report more serious injuries from such weapons because of the greater muzzle velocity, the bullets’ tendency to tumble and thus produce greater injury, and the fact that large capacity clips allow more bullets to be fired before reloading.
- ¹⁶See Spitzer, *The Politics of Gun Control*, pp. 92-97.
- ¹⁷Two mass murders that helped galvanize national opinion were the 1989 schoolyard shooting of elementary school children in Stockton, Calif., where five children were killed and twenty-nine were wounded, and a 1991 incident when a man killed twenty-two people and wounded twenty-three others in a cafeteria in Killeen, Texas. That the Brady Law and the assault weapons ban were not passed sooner than 1993 and 1994, respectively, was attributable to opposition by President George Bush. The Clinton presidency’s receptivity to these measures was key to their passage. See Spitzer, *The Politics of Gun Control*, pp. 114-26.

SCHOOLS CAN HELP

THERE ARE hundreds of violence prevention programs in existence, but how many are worthwhile—and how can you pick a good one? The problem is similar to that facing schools trying to select a new reading or math or science program. Praiseworthy goals and a good prospectus do not necessarily mean good results.

In 1996, the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado (CSPV) began a search for ten programs that would meet a high standard of effectiveness and would, people at the center hoped, “provide a nucleus for a national violence prevention initiative.” The criteria were rigorous: a strong research design; evidence that, when properly implemented, the program would deter delinquency, drug use, and/or violence to a significant degree; replication at multiple sites; and sustained effects. The center reviewed 450 programs using these criteria. The ten selected are extremely varied, and not all are school-based. Each is described in a separate book in the series “Blueprints for Violence Prevention.”

The brief descriptions that follow are of two Blueprint programs that are particularly appropriate for schools: Bullying Prevention and PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies), which helps young children learn how to understand and deal with their feelings. The descriptions are adapted from overviews that appear in the Blueprint books.

The Bullying Prevention Program

The Bullying Prevention Program is a multilevel, multi-component program designed to reduce and prevent bully/victim problems in schools. School staff are largely responsible for introducing and carrying out the program, and their efforts are directed toward improving peer relations and making the school a safe and pleasant place to be. The Bullying Prevention Program attempts to restructure the existing school environment to reduce opportunities and rewards for bullying behavior.

Program Targets. Program targets are students in elementary, middle, and junior high schools. All students participate in most aspects of the program; students identified as bullies or victims of bullying receive additional individual interventions.

Program Content. Core components of the program are implemented at the school, the classroom, and the individual levels:

- School-level components include a student questionnaire, answered anonymously, which assesses the nature and prevalence of bullying at each school; a school conference day for discussing bullying problems and planning the implementation of the program; the formation of a Bullying Prevention coordinating committee to coordinate all aspects of a

school's program; and the development of a coordinated system of supervising students during break periods.

- Classroom components include establishing and enforcing classroom rules against bullying and holding regular classroom meetings with students to increase knowledge and empathy and to encourage pro-social norms and behavior. Meetings with parents to foster more active involvement on their part are considered highly desirable components both at the classroom and school levels.
- Individual-level components include interventions with children identified as bullies and victims and discussions with the parents of these students.

Evidence of Effectiveness. The program has been demonstrated to result in: (1) substantial reductions, by 50 percent or more, in the frequency with which students report being bullied and bullying others (peer and teacher ratings of bully/victim problems show roughly similar results); (2) significant reductions in students' reports of general antisocial behavior such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy; (3) significant improvements in the “social climate” of the class, as reflected in students' reports of improved order and discipline, more positive social relationships, and a more positive attitude toward schoolwork and school.

Costs. In addition to costs associated with compensating an on-site coordinator for the project, the cost (which will vary with the size of the site) is approximately \$200 per school to purchase the questionnaire and computer program to assess bullying at the school, plus approximately \$65 per teacher to cover costs of classroom materials.

PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)

PATHS is a comprehensive program for promoting emotional and social competencies and reducing aggression and behavior problems in children of elementary school age while simultaneously enhancing the educational process in the classroom. This curriculum is designed to be used by educators and counselors in a multiyear universal prevention model. Although primarily focused on the school and classroom, materials are also included for use with parents.

Program Targets. PATHS was developed for use in the classroom with all children of elementary school age. It has been field-tested and researched with children in regular education classroom settings, as well as with a variety of special needs students (including deaf, hearing-impaired, learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, and gifted). Ideally, children should begin the program when they enter school and continue through grade 5.

Program Content. The PATHS curriculum, taught three times per week for at least 20 to 30 minutes per day, provides teachers with systematic, developmentally based lessons, materials, and instructions. PATHS lessons include instruction in identifying, labeling, and expressing feelings, as well as assessing their intensity and managing them; understanding the difference between feelings and behaviors; controlling impulses and delaying gratification; reading and interpreting social cues; and understanding the perspectives of others. Teachers receive training in a two- to three-day workshop and in biweekly meetings with the curriculum consultant.

Program Outcomes. PATHS has been shown to improve protective factors and reduce behavioral risk factors. Evaluations have demonstrated significant improvements for children in the program (regular education, special needs, and deaf) compared to children in the control group in the following areas: self-con-

trol, understanding and recognizing emotions, ability to tolerate frustration, use of effective conflict-resolution strategies, thinking and planning skills. PATHS children have also demonstrated significant decreases in the following problems: anxiety/depressive symptoms (teacher report of special needs students); disruptive conduct (teacher report of special needs students); symptoms of sadness and depression (child report from special needs students); bad conduct, including aggression (child report).

Program Costs. Program costs over a three-year period would range from \$15/student/year to \$45/student/year (higher figure includes hiring an on-site coordinator).

For material about these programs, including information on applying for a training and technical assistance grant to fund implementation, call CSPV, (303) 492-8465 or (303) 492-1032; or send an e-mail (blueprints@colorado.edu).

Some Resources for Dealing with Antisocial Behavior

THIS BIBLIOGRAPHY is by no means exhaustive, but it brings together a collection of publications on successful approaches to dealing with students who have behavior problems. They are not full-scale programs, like the ones described in the Blueprint series, but each is grounded in rigorous research and contains its own resource guide.

Among the interventions described are several that require intensive work and are, therefore, inappropriate for use in the regular classroom. To make sure they reduce classroom disruptions—rather than adding to them—intensive behavioral interventions should be undertaken only by experienced educators in an appropriate alternative setting.

The bibliography also includes several low-intensity intervention and prevention strategies, appropriate for use in class. Some of these interventions can also be carried out by a paraprofessional as small-group or pull-out programs for one or two students who are creating problems.

To prevent loss of valuable instructional time, these behavior management activities should be integrated with academic lessons, wherever possible.

- *The Tough Kid Tool Box* and *The Tough Kid Book* by William Jenson, Ginger Rhode, and H. Kenton Reavis. Published by Sopris West; (800) 547-6747. Hands-on, practical guides that provide day-to-day assistance with behavior problems.
- *The Acting-out Child: Coping with Classroom Disruption* by Hill Walker. Published by Sopris West. A more detailed discussion of acting-out behavior, with instructions for behavior management interventions and explanations of how and why they work. Includes advice on day-to-day classroom management and instructional practices that can, in many cases, prevent acting-out behavior from starting and minimize it when it does. Also provides suggestions for recognizing adult behavior that can be a catalyst for acting-out behavior.
- *Antisocial Behavior in School: Strategies and Best Practices* by Hill Walker, Geoff Colvin, and Elizabeth Ramsey. Published by Brooks/Cole; (800) 354-9706. Summarizes research in the field, providing a comprehensive description of interventions at all levels; offers guidance for getting families involved; and outlines a system-wide approach to school safety and students with difficult behavior problems.
- *Effective Strategies for Teaching Appropriate Behaviors to Children with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders* by Robert B.

Rutherford, Jr., Mary M. Quinn, and Sarup Mathur (Order #D5133); and *Teacher-Mediated Behavior Management Strategies for Children with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders*, by Sarup R. Mathur, Mary M. Quinn, and Robert B. Rutherford, Jr. (Order #D5135). Published by the Council for Exceptional Children; (800) 232-7323; fax (703) 264-1637. Summaries of research-based practice in easy-to-read format. The strategies are appropriate for all students with behavior problems, whether or not they are identified as disabled.

- *Techniques for Managing Verbally and Physically Aggressive Students* by Beverly Johns and Vivian Carr. Published by Love; (303) 221-7333; (Order #9505.) Hands-on suggestions for dealing with confrontations with students, including breaking up fights and defending oneself from less violent physical attacks such as hair-pulling.

Organizations

Center for Effective Behavioral Supports at the University of Oregon

E-mail: Ebsweb@darkwing.uoregon.edu

Web site: <http://brt.uoregon.edu/ebs/>

Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

(888) 457-1551; fax (202) 944-5454

E-mail: Center@air-dc.org

Web site: <http://www.air-dc.org/CECP>

The Council for Exceptional Children

(888) CEC-SPED; TTY (703) 264-9446; fax (703) 264-9494

E-mail: service@cec.sped.org

Web site: <http://www.cec.sped.org>

Council for Children with Behavior Disorders

Web site: <http://www.air-dc.org/CECP/CCBD>

Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior

E-mail: lvdb@darkwing.uoregon.edu

Web site: <http://www.interact.uoregon.edu/ivdb/ivdb.html>

Kentucky Center for School Safety

Web site: <http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/behav/homepage.html>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Web site: <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org>

—BETH BADER, *AFT Educational Issues Dept.*

TESTS, TESTS, TESTS

BY PAUL E. BARTON

THE TESTING enterprise has mushroomed in the United States. To show you mean business in dealing with crime, you call for more prisons and mandatory sentencing. To show you are tough on welfare reform, you ask for time limits. To show seriousness in raising educational achievement, you call for more frequent and more rigorous testing. Those who oppose testing are accused of protecting teachers and the educational system, and not putting children first.

The critics of massive testing, who include many in educational measurement, offer the following complaints. Tests have been composed mostly of multiple-choice questions, which cannot assess a student's ability to come up with his or her own answers. Commercial or state tests may not test what local schools are actually teaching. Some critics argue that teachers are pushed in the direction of narrowing instruction to what they think is on the test. Further, test preparation sometimes *becomes* the instruction, with instructional materials mimicking the formats and exercises that appear on such tests.

Although there have been constructive attempts to improve the testing enterprise in the 1990s, most of the testing today is not much changed from what it was a dozen years ago. It is important that these improvements be made because testing has become, over the past twenty-five years, the approach of first resort of policymakers. Robert Linn, a scholar of test-

Paul E. Barton is director of the Educational Testing Service's Policy Information Center. This article is drawn from a report entitled "Too Much Testing of the Wrong Kind: Too Little of the Right Kind in K-12 Education." Copies of the full report are available online (<http://www.ets.org/research/pic/testing/tmt.html>) or for \$9.50 (prepaid) from the Policy Information Center, ETS, Rosedale Road, Mail Stop 04-R, Princeton, NJ 08541-0001 (609/734-5694).

ing, identifies several reasons for the attractiveness of testing:

1. Tests are relatively inexpensive, especially when you compare them with other more costly changes like increasing class time, decreasing class size, or providing substantial professional development.
2. Tests can be externally mandated by states or districts; it is very difficult to mandate anything that involves change inside the classroom.
3. Tests can be rapidly implemented, even within the term of elected officials.
4. Test results are visible. They can be reported to the press. Poor results in the beginning are desirable for policymakers who want to show that they have had an effect.¹

Exposing the existence of substandard education has long been the objective of written examinations, but the mushrooming of standardized testing started in earnest in the early 1970s with the "minimal competency" testing movement, which, at best, helped achieve more minimal competency. It continued to grow in the 1980s, as a response to *A Nation at Risk*. Such statewide testing probably misinformed more than it informed. By 1987, John Cannell, a physician in West Virginia, had noticed that many states or schools were claiming that their students were above average.² A sustained investigation revealed that students' scores almost everywhere were above average, a phenomenon that came to be dubbed the Lake Wobegon effect. Robert Linn, who studied the Lake Wobegon effect, summarized his conclusions in this way:

There are many reasons for the Lake Wobegon effect... among [them] the use of old norms, the repeated use of the same test form year after year, the exclusion of students from participation in accountability testing programs at a higher rate than they are excluded from norm-



IGAP

MEA

ITBS

MSPAP

CASE

TAAS

CSAP STAR

FCAT

SAT

SAT-8

TIMSS

SAT-9

NAEP

SOL

MAT-7

TCAP

CMT

MEAP

MCAS

HSPT

ACT

ing studies, and the narrow focusing of instruction on the skills and question types used on the test.⁵

Whatever the reason for the Lake Wobegon effect, it is clear that the standardized test results widely reported as part of the accountability systems of the 1980s were giving an inflated impression of student achievement.

Promising Trends

In the 1980s and 1990s it was elected officials—governors and state legislators—who continued to press for more testing. Of course, in the 1990s, tests are also expected to somehow be a means of reform, and too often, to be the principal means. *How* this is to work is not clear. However, it is perfectly clear that standardized testing is here to stay. The question is whether it can be made to play a more constructive role or will continue to be used as a shortcut across quicksand.

Testing has been improving during the 1990s and is slowly being aligned to new and higher content standards. However, pitfalls still exist: Testing is often an instrument of public policy to affect schools, to grade schools, to scold schools, and to judge whether other improvements in the education system are having the desired effect. Most of these tests have not been validated for these purposes. By and large, tests are not used within the classroom by teachers as *their* means of assessment; rather, teachers know the tests are used to grade them.

We can change the way we administer standardized tests for school/teacher control and accountability, with much less intrusion into the classroom. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provides a proven means of giving a test to a *sample* of students rather than testing *all* students. NAEP is mandated by Congress and administered by the National Center for Education Statistics, with the purpose of finding out what fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade students know and are able to do. Sample-based approaches will provide *better* information about schools, will be much less intrusive into instructional settings, and will require less frequent testing. If the objective is a report card on the schools, testing every couple of years will accomplish the purpose. Changes in education cannot be accomplished abruptly; a meaningful reordering of an important phase of the instructional process takes time. There is an impatience at work here that is typically American; it is like pulling up the carrots to see how they are growing.

Many questions remain, however. Most tests are constructed to measure the knowledge a student has acquired. They have not been designed for the accountability purposes for which they are now regularly used. They are not designed, for example, as measures of teachers' capabilities. They have not been validated in this use to determine whether they have the intended consequences. Have the results based on testing, for example, been compared to results of other rigorous efforts to evaluate teacher and school performance? Have the results been useful in changing teacher behavior in desired ways? Do the tests actually measure what the policymakers who ordered their use intended? The use of such tests for accountability

without meeting standard and well-known methods of validation amounts to testing malpractice.

What we want from standardized testing is *better* information for teachers, administrators, policymakers, and the public. Testing used presently too rarely results in better information to aid instruction and achievement.

Aligning Standards and Assessments

The greatest promise continues to be in intensifying efforts to establish strong standards for the content of instruction, developing curricula reflecting this content, and aligning assessments to the curricula actually being taught. Both the Clinton and Bush administrations have encouraged such efforts, and both have played a role in encouraging national (not federal) content standards. These national standards have led states to develop their own modifications. The math standards led the way, emerging from the work of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, begun in the early 1980s; forty-two states had content standards in 1998. Science is second, with forty-one states, and emerged from the work of the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the National Research Council. There are now forty states with social studies/history standards; English and language arts follow, with thirty-seven states having established standards. About half the states now have standards in foreign languages, health, and physical education.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) reports that these states have "standards ready for implementation." The extent of actual implementation varies widely; such standards mean little until they are translated into curricula. This standard-setting has led to a constructive dialogue in the great majority of states about what should be taught in the schools, and at what level. The 1997 review of these developments by the Council of Chief State School Officers summed it up this way:

State initiatives in the 1990s to develop state standards and framework documents differ from earlier state efforts in several ways. First, the pattern across states is widespread involvement of local educators, community leaders, business groups, and political leaders; a dialogue and review concerning what should be taught and learned in mathematics and science.

... a second development in the 1990s is active involvement of classroom teachers in writing and editing content standards and frameworks.... A common practice for states in producing standards documents is to convene a large steering committee or task force which represents educators, administrators, subject specialists, and community leaders from across the state.... [The process also] developed new alliances among educators and the public, as they jointly defined the directions for mathematics and science education for children.

These content standards vary in a number of respects. Some just spell out content. Others go well beyond to give more detailed "benchmarks" concerning what students should accomplish, describe what is expected of students, give examples of approaches to teachers, give guidance on how to assess students' accomplishments, and also address professional development. And some fall in between. They vary in rigor and quality, and they are often a work in progress. Pro-

posals are also in various stages of implementation, with much to do to develop new curricula and begin professional development of the teachers who have to use them.

For a great many states, there is still a long way to go, even in math and science, which are far ahead. But it is the right *direction* to go and deserves the focused attention of all who want to raise the level of achievement of American students. The path will be difficult: to assess more subjects, to develop curriculum and instructional materials, to encourage teacher development and proper assessments, and to establish *performance* standards.

For most states, the alignment of assessments is a big task ahead. By 1998, CCSSO was reporting that almost all the states had some kind of content standards in place. But twenty-nine of those states also reported in 1997 that their assessments were not yet aligned with standards. So, frequently, the system is divided against itself—new content standards with old tests that do not reflect the new content and the curriculum. What counts for students and schools, still, are the results on the old tests.

One example of what is required is what Pennsylvania is doing, beginning in the fall of 1998, as reported by *Education Daily* (Nov. 2, 1998). In a move to help teachers align classroom instruction to the standards, state officials have mailed 50,000 resource kits to schools across the state. Developed by more than 100 teachers, the new Classrooms Connection's Resource Kit contains an overview of the standards, assessment tips and instruction strategies, resources for parents, sample lesson plans, and professional development ideas. All this is also available on CD-ROM and on the state education department's web site.

What alignment means, however, will vary among the states, depending on how much local variation the state tolerates and its views concerning desirable levels of decision-making. In general, activity has occurred at the state level. The process must devolve to the community level, and educators in inner cities, who often feel left out of the process, must participate.

Setting Performance Standards

Even when assessment standards reflect content standards, the task of establishing performance standards remains. States must assess *how much* of that content a student needs to master, and whether an assessment will show that students have learned the content standards. The question becomes: What score is necessary for performance to be judged *acceptable*, or *advanced*? Teachers do it by judgment when they assign an A or a C to students who have all studied the same material. Setting these "cut points" on assessments means confronting the wide dispersion of achievement among students in any one grade. A standard that the bottom third of students can reasonably

be expected to reach under higher content standards will be no incentive for the students higher up the scale. A standard high enough to challenge those up the scale will probably be out of reach for those below, at least given the limitations schools are likely to have in terms of resources.

A set of content standards and a set of test questions intended to reflect that content lead directly to setting performance standards. Yet setting content standards has been the work of educators (with the involvement of various publics).

Setting performance standards on tests has been the work of measurement experts and psychometricians. The bridge between the two has not been constructed.

We are speaking of a challenge in setting cut points on a standardized instrument used for large-scale assessment, used for accountability, or possibly for promotion or graduation. At the classroom level, these test results are not determinants of teachers' judgments of student performance. Once content standards have evolved into curriculum, and into pedagogical approaches, teachers will be the judges in the classroom. They give the tests and assign the grades. They will do it as professionals, not as psychometricians using statistical methodologies.

Here then is the situation we find ourselves in at the end of about two decades of education reform. Most states have content standards established in at least some subjects. A minority of these have assessments that they say are aligned to these standards; and only eleven states have trend data on student achievement for two or three years. In some key subjects, just half the states have content standards. Where performance standards have been established, we do not know how directly the standards are linked to the content standards and whether or how these states overcame the challenges they face. The whole content-assessment-performance approach is incomplete, and to the extent that this approach is the linchpin of "educational reform," we don't have it adequately in place as we approach the year 2000. But steady progress is being made.

Accountability—For the Right Things

If the standardized tests used for school, district, and state accountability were switched from the intrusive testing of every student to sample-based assessments, and assessments were aligned to content standards, would we be on the right track in standardized testing for accountability? No, there would still be some work to do.

The way tests are used *in practice* in elementary and secondary education—of rewarding and punishing schools, closing schools, and judging educational progress—is often appallingly primitive. Frequently:

■ Commercial standardized tests are used that measure

a blend of what is being taught across the nation—not what is taught in a school or district (and not what is supposed to be taught).

- The test content changes from time to time to reflect changing views of what should be taught. Yet the scores from year to year are used to judge whether progress is being made.
- In many cases, norm-referenced tests designed to show how one school's students compare with those in the entire nation are used to track change in the school's performance over time, a task they are not designed to do.
- While the tests are presumed to judge the quality of what the school does, a large part of an individual's score is attributable to family background and opportunities before school and outside the classroom. Current tests that measure both the quality of current in-school instruction and out-of-school development are used to unfairly reward or punish schools, or close them down entirely.
- While tests are presumably used to determine how well the school instructs from the beginning of one grade to the beginning of the next grade, the tests actually determine the cumulative level of knowledge of eighth-graders, for example—not what knowledge was added during the eighth grade. It is rare to have a measure of "value added," a measure of the change in the levels of knowledge between two points in time.

Measuring and comparing what students have learned in school in a given time period is quite different from measuring and comparing the total of what they know. One early recognition of the difference was reflected in the 1984 South Carolina Education Improvement Act. It called for a number of measurement approaches to reward and penalize schools; two are described here.⁴

First, the act dealt with the different levels of students' socioeconomic backgrounds by grouping the state's schools into five comparison groups based on certain context variables. These included the percentage of free-lunch-eligible students and, for elementary schools, the percentage of first-grade students meeting the state readiness standards. Schools within each of the five groups were compared on achievement results.

Second, it dealt with the matter of how much is learned within a school year, as compared to total knowledge accumulated:

The report cards present a matched longitudinal analysis of reading and mathematics test scores for the two most recent test administrations. Put simply, this procedure allows the calculation of score gains (or losses) of the *same students from one year to the next* [emphasis supplied].⁵

Thus school accomplishments were not to be judged simply in terms of background that students brought to school with them; nor teachers in terms of what students had already been taught (or not taught) when they entered their classrooms. Instead, students would be judged on what they had learned in the



classroom. This was a huge departure in the use of standardized testing as it had developed in the 1970s and 1980s.

For the nation, regions, and for state data on a comparable basis, we have relied on the reports of the National Assessment of Educational Progress. NAEP has been providing a continuous record of school achievement, for the nation and regions, for almost three decades, and more recently it has provided a record for states that have participated in the program. These reports have all been about levels of achievement at ages 9, 13, and 17 or grades 4, 8, and 12. Thus, we can compare the scores in mathematics for students in grade 4 in 1996 with scores of fourth-graders in earlier years. Again, when we look at trends in these scores of fourth-graders, we know whether they now know more. We can't tell whether it is because they were better developed by the time they were in the first grade, had learned more in grades 1 through 3, or had learned more in grade 4—the year in which they were being tested. Have the schools performed better? Or is it the family? If it is the schools, was the change due to better teaching in the second grade? Or the fourth grade? Or both? Change over time may be influenced by any one of these, or by a combination of factors.

A redesign of NAEP in the early 1980s led to a provision for tracking a cohort of the same students, in addition to measuring the level of fourth-graders at a given time, compared to some previous time. What emerged was quite a different picture from that given by the NAEP reports based on the levels of student knowledge in a particular grade (or at a particular age), compared with the levels of their counterparts in earlier years. A 1998 report from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) explained it this way:

While in most cases the average NAEP scores of today's students are slightly higher than those of students twenty or twenty-five years ago, the cohort growth between the fourth and the eighth grade is not. In fact, cohort growth is the same as, or lower than, it was during the earliest period for which we have data.

And when we compare states, there is little difference in the cohort growth between the fourth and eighth grade. While Maine was the top-scoring state in the nation and Arkansas was the bottom-scoring state, both states had the same cohort growth, fifty-two points on the NAEP scale (in mathematics) between the fourth and eighth grade.

How do we, and how should we, look at NAEP scores in reaching a judgment as to whether the education system is performing better or worse over time? Are Maine and Arkansas at the two ends of the school quality continuum, or are they actually equal?⁶

The comparison of trends in cohort growth and averages at a particular grade is shown in the accompanying table. The Maine/Arkansas comparison is shown in the figure. The ETS report urged that we be able both to measure changes in the levels of student knowledge in the same grade and changes in the knowledge of the same students between two points in time. The report also asked whether standards should be set for both kinds of change, if we are to

Table: Trends in Cohort Growth Compared to Average Score Trends for 9- and 13-year-olds*

	Cohort Growth, Age 9 to 13	Average Score Trend, Age 9	Average Score Trend, Age 13
Science	Level	Up	Up
Mathematics	Down	Up	Up
Reading	Level	Up	Up
Writing**	Level	Level	Level

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress data analyzed by the ETS Policy Information Center. See <http://nces.ed.gov/naep>. "False Discovery Rate" procedure used to test for significance.

* Science cohort changes are from 1973-77 to 1992-96. Average science score trends are from 1973 to 1996. Mathematics cohort changes are from 1973-77 to 1992-96. Average mathematics score trends are from 1973 to 1996. Reading cohort changes are from 1971-75 to 1992-96. Average reading score trends are from 1971 to 1996. Writing cohort changes are from 1984-88 to 1992-96. Average writing score trends are from 1984 to 1996.

** Writing was administered to fourth- and eighth-graders.

have a standards-based assessment system.

From NAEP, to state, to district, to school standardized testing, it is levels of achievement that are measured—not value-added—growth in what students know and can do. The exception of South Carolina in the early 1980s was noted above. Also, since 1992, Tennessee has used the Value-Added Assessment System. Recently, Memphis City Schools used this assessment to compare student achievement gains in twenty-five elementary schools that began implementing national school redesign models in 1995-96 with a comparable group of schools that were not redesigned. The comparison measured year-to-year gains in achievement, and redesigned schools showed greater gains. And Chicago has developed what is called a "grade productivity profile" that enables judging schools on this basis, even though the testing system

itself was not designed for this use.⁷

What all three of the efforts described above have in common is a measure of learning gain between two points in time for the same students (or the same cohort of students). These are exceptions in the vast day-to-day enterprise in using standardized assessments to hold schools and teachers accountable.

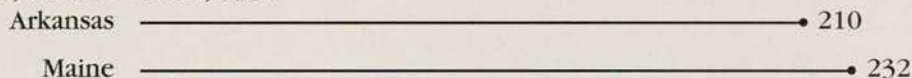
It Comes Back to Teachers

While we need to complete the content-assessment-performance triad, we do not need this ever-larger volume of standardized testing of individual students to render individual scores. Aligned assessments can examine whether educational achievement is progressing, and for what kinds of students. Teachers should be the judges of performance, give out the grades, and

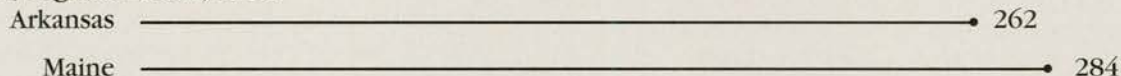
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Figure: Average NAEP Mathematics Scores and Cohort Growth for Arkansas and Maine

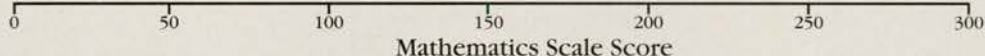
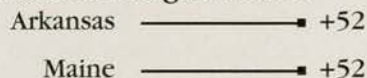
Average Score, Fourth Grade, 1992



Average Score, Eighth Grade, 1996



Cohort Gain, Fourth to Eighth Grade



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress data analyzed by the ETS Policy Information Center. See <http://nces.ed.gov/naep>.

TEACHER EDUCATION AT TRINITY UNIVERSITY

A Coherent Vision

JULIA E. KOPPICH

TEACHER EDUCATION has, at best, a checkered reputation. Many graduates of teacher education programs—now successful teachers themselves—lament the failings of the programs where they received their professional training. They talk about skimpy subject matter preparation, pedagogy courses that artificially separate theory from practice, and inadequate experience in the classroom. So, it's refreshing to find a teacher education program, like the one at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, that has confronted all these criticisms and remade itself.

A decade ago, the program at Trinity would have been open to most of the common complaints. Admission standards were relatively low. A majority of the students majored in education. And their classroom experience was limited to the classic eight weeks in a traditional public school.

The current program, which its creators still consider a work in progress, was hammered out by a group that included university faculty, experienced classroom teachers, and school administrators. The result of their efforts, a five-year teacher education program culminating in a master of arts in teaching (MAT), combines three basic elements: academic coursework in a range of subjects; rigorous classes that give students the basics of teaching; and a series of internships in professional development schools that are associated with the program.

Trinity's program is based on a coherent vision of teacher education, and it is anchored by a network of K-16 partnerships. It aims at producing excellent

Julia E. Koppich, a former high school teacher and staff director at the United Educators of San Francisco and the author of United Mind Workers: Unions and Teaching in the Knowledge Society (Jossey-Bass, 1997), is an educational consultant in San Francisco.

teachers whose professional influence will extend beyond the walls of their classrooms.

The Birth of a Program

Trinity's new teacher education program came into being during the education reform of the early 1980s. The publication of *A Nation at Risk*, with its prediction about a "rising tide of mediocrity" that was threatening to engulf the nation's schools, gave rise to heated debate about reform. In Texas, as elsewhere, there was a mega-reform statute that returned to the state much of the power over education that had formerly been ceded to local school districts.

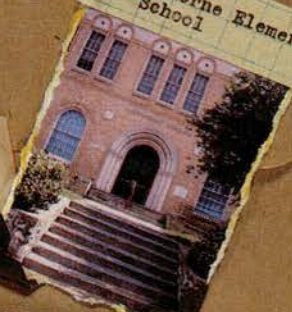
Two members of Trinity's Department of Education, John Moore (the now-acknowledged "father" of Trinity's new teacher education program) and Thomas Sergiovanni, a nationally known education researcher and scholar whom Moore had wooed to Trinity, were convinced that the Texas law, with its emphasis on top-down reform and minimum competencies for teachers and students, failed to capture either the subtleties or the complexities of schooling. The law treated all schools as if they were cast in the same mold, and it ignored the important role that teachers' professional knowledge and skills play in successful education.

Moore and his colleagues brought together Trinity faculty and classroom teachers, along with some nationally prominent thinkers on education reform, including Ernest Boyer, Arthur Wise, and TheodoreSizer, to talk about the issues raised by the Texas reform. Their discussions resulted in *Teachers Speak: Quality Schooling for Texas Today and Tomorrow*. This report, which was written principally by the classroom teacher members of the group, expressed frustration with Texas policymakers' acceptance of the "factory model" of schooling in which state prescriptions and standardization predominated. "It is time," the report

Jackson-Keller Elementary



Hawthorne Elementary School



Partnership, n. 1. State of being a partner. 2. Joint ownership or interest. 3. An alliance or association of an advantage or a business on joint account. (See Partnership, n. 2.)



RE-USE UNTIL ALL LINES FULL.



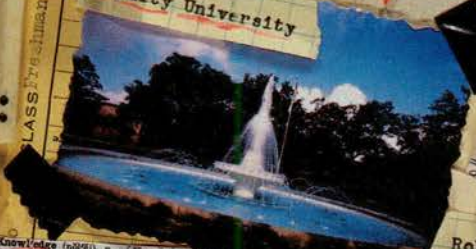
Master (under 100), n. (From Master, the commander of Trismachos). 1. A wise counselor or monitor.



International School of the Americas



Trinity University



Author Spirit, Ladybeth & Queen
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930-999

Mark Twain Middle School



Robert E. Lee High School



K

GARDNER BACHUBERT
SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
REPORT OF HILGOTT

YEAR	Sept. Oct.	Nov. Dec.	Jan. Feb.
192	38	44	37
192			

ATTENDANCE

Days Present	Days Absent	Times Disc'd	Conduct
AA	AA	AA	AA
AA	AA	AA	AA

LAST PUPIL ROOM 6

Knowledge (nōwledge), n. (From *know* - a verb - to know as verb: to know, play, and able to AS. 1. Art or state of knowing; certain apprehension; cognition. 2. That which is or may be known; a cognition; study in pt. 3. That which is known; a cognition; knowledge; acquaintance; enlightenment; learning. 4. Familiarity of actual experience; practical skill. 5. Scope of information; comprehension.

Vision (vīzh'ən), n. 1. To see in a vision; to dream. Visional (-sh'ən), a. Of or pertaining to a vision. Visionary (-sh'ən), n. 1. Of or pert. to a vision or dream; appropriate to, or favorable for, vision. 2. A person who has visions; given to reverie. 3. Existing in imagination only; imaginary.

4. OF TIME.

Y.	mo.	d.	h.	m.	s.
3	6	6	2	0	4
1	9	1	18	59	57

Seeds of Knowledge

declared, "to reshape the reform movement; to redirect it so that it reflects the understanding, the insight, and the vision of the professional classroom teacher."

Teachers Speak describes the profession as "a lifelong commitment and a lifelong learning process," and it emphasizes the importance of teachers' becoming leaders in preparing new colleagues for their careers. But it does not see the better preparation of teachers as an end in itself: The underlying premise of the report is that if teaching is transformed, student achievement can be as well.

Classroom teachers and university faculty went on to discuss what was needed to turn these principles into a program. What experiences might teachers-to-be find most beneficial and in what types of settings ought they occur? What kind of ongoing university-school relationships would be needed to create and sustain such a program? And what form should the university's own commitment to a new kind of teacher education—and, indeed, to a new vision of the teaching career—take? From these discussions, Trinity's five-year teacher education program slowly emerged.

The Schools, the Mentors, and the Clinical Faculty

Trinity has worked for a number of years with five San Antonio-area public schools to help them become professional development schools. These are the places where Trinity's teacher candidates observe and teach classes throughout their undergraduate years and where they spend their fifth year of study as interns—all under the guidance of classroom teachers who have been designated as mentors. (See *American Educator*, Winter 1996-97, for a story about Nathaniel Hawthorne School, one of the five professional development schools associated with the Trinity program.)

John Moore believes that the essence of teacher education lies in the school-university partnership. The university provides the foundation for a successful field experience; but it is the field experience that is essential in developing competent practitioners. "The university," says Moore, "is not where our education program happens. It's at the schools." As a result, there is an extremely strong—and reciprocal—relationship between Trinity University and the professional development schools.

The university pledges to provide its partner schools with teachers-in-training who are academically pre-

pared for the classroom, and to assist these schools in their education-reform efforts through staff development and university-led fundraising. Participating schools agree to assume responsibility, with the university, for the preparation and induction of new teachers. Experienced teachers in the schools become mentors, guiding undergraduate and graduate students alike through their real-world classroom experiences.

Because the schools and the university agree that teacher education is a shared responsibility to which each must contribute as an equal partner, the bond between the two is strong.

Trinity students spend their time in the field, both as undergraduates and as fifth-year interns, in the classrooms of excellent and experienced teachers. These teachers, some sixty in all, have been designated as "mentors" by the university and ap-

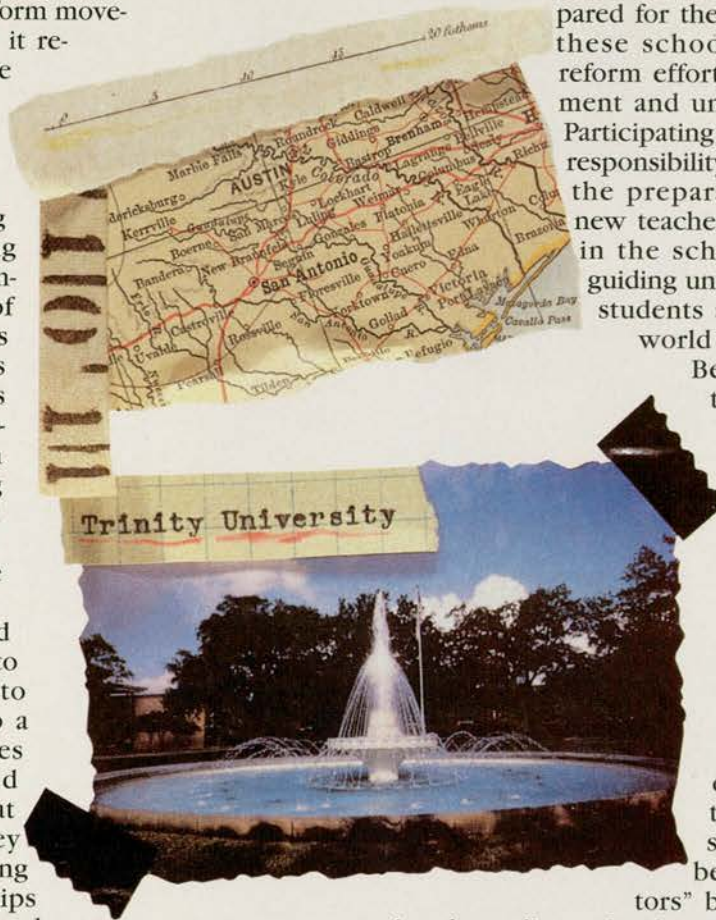
pointed as adjunct faculty in Trinity's Department of Education. Many are themselves graduates of the Trinity teacher education program. Others are nominated by their principals or request to be candidates.

The mentors' role is key. Trinity's teacher preparation curriculum includes no methods courses, per se. There is nothing in the course catalog called "Teaching Elementary Mathematics" or "Social Studies for High School Teachers." This kind of discipline-specific instruction rests solely in the hands of mentors. Trinity students learn to teach by teaching, beginning with one-on-one tutoring, working up to partial and then almost total responsibility for their classes.

Mentors are not paid (although, beginning in fall 1999, several extra paid days will be added to their contracts). They undertake this responsibility because they see it as a way to grow as teachers: This is "professionally enriching for me," says one mentor. "It's what's kept me in teaching," says another. Participation in the Trinity program "has made me feel like a valued professional," says a third. And they view the sort of apprenticeship embodied in the Trinity program as essential to developing teachers whose commitment matches their own.

In addition to providing critical support to prospective teachers, mentoring provides the expert teachers who take on this role both with ongoing opportunities to share what they have learned and to continue to learn themselves. Mentoring helps to keep excellent teachers in the classroom, John Moore explains, by helping to feed their intellectual curiosity.

In the Trinity model, clinical faculty take the place of university-based teacher education supervisors.



These professors, who occupy tenure-track positions in Trinity's Department of Education, spend half of their time (on average, one-half of the workday four days a week) in the partner schools. The other half of their time is occupied by the typical pursuits of university faculty—teaching, research, and writing. Clinical faculty take on many different responsibilities at professional development schools: They lead professional development workshops for Trinity students and experienced teachers; write grants to raise money for school-based reform efforts; substitute for absent teachers in emergencies; pick up donuts and make coffee for meetings. They become like one of the faculty.

Evaluating Trinity students is a dual responsibility. University faculty, of course, give students grades in their courses; and clinical faculty, to some extent, appraise their practicum work. But the key evaluation of students' in-classroom work comes from the mentor. If a mentor believes that a student needs additional help in a particular area, that opinion carries the day. Mentors, thus, believe they have a real stake in working with students, shaping their practice, and evaluating them rigorously but fairly.

First Experiences

The freshman year gives Trinity students who are considering teaching a chance to take beginning education courses, meet the department faculty, and get a first look at the schools in which they will begin to learn their craft—as well as to begin thinking about their academic emphasis.

Trinity offers no education major. Students who plan to teach at the secondary level must complete a major in an academic discipline. Prospective elementary school teachers enroll in a specially designed humanities program consisting of twenty-five to thirty courses, taken in academic departments. Many of these students specialize in a particular field and often complete a major or minor in one of them.

As freshmen, Trinity's teachers-to-be also take introductory education courses. One such class introduces them to contemporary education issues. Another, called "School and Community," focuses on ways in which schools become part of, or are divorced from, their communities. In these courses, students are introduced to an important component of all Trinity education coursework: the journal. In nearly every class for the next five years, students will be asked to keep a journal as a record of their ideas, reflections, and experiences. During their first year, students also participate in a series of field trips to the professional development schools where they will get their practical teaching experience.

As sophomores, Trinity students begin to understand the critical link between theory and practice as they engage simultaneously in coursework and get their first taste of teaching. In addition to classes in history, English, and other subjects, these students take one education class. "Child and Society" explores factors that shape the lives of urban children in particular, including gangs, substance abuse, and cultural diversity. Field experiences begin in the sophomore year with the first practicum. For three hours each week,

students work in a professional development school with Trinity faculty and mentor-teachers. This is the first of three such experiences; the others will occur in students' junior and senior years.

By the end of these three years, students have observed a wide variety of lessons, developed their own lesson plans, constructed student assessments, graded papers, assembled curricula, tutored individual children and small groups of students, and conducted whole-class activities. The goal is to get students to link what they are learning in their university courses with the practical realities of teaching.

Students receive direct—often daily—feedback on their teaching. Clinical faculty use university-based courses as well as their own classroom observations as opportunities to tease out problems, raise issues, and offer constructive and supportive criticism and suggestions. Mentors provide constant feedback, ideas, and critiques from their daily in-the-classroom perspective. Because students feel supported, they are willing to take suggestions and criticisms to heart. They know that to heed these comments is to become a better teacher.

The sophomore practicum invites students to focus on the school as a whole. The first two weeks revolve around the structure of the school. Students visit and observe resource rooms, the library, counselor's office, attendance office, special programs, and the like. They spend the rest of the time in the classroom of a mentor-teacher. The teachers-in-training work one-on-one with students, grade papers, administer tests, and learn how instruction is paced and planning is done. Toward the end of the semester, they must teach at least two lessons (or classes) under the watchful eye of their mentor.

Written assignments are designed to encourage students to be observant and reflective. Students prepare a written description of a lesson they have watched their mentor teach, develop their own lesson plans, and construct a paper on the culture of the school in which they are working.

Practicum students are never alone. They are assigned to professional development schools in cohorts, both in this first practicum and throughout the remainder of the program. This kind of grouping for field experiences provides students with a natural network of colleagues and offers a safe harbor in times of stress. It also means that these young teachers never learn to see teaching as a solitary enterprise; they immediately become comfortable with the demands, responsibilities—and enormous advantages—of collegiality and cooperation.

Making the Decision

Students are not formally admitted to the teacher education program until their sophomore year, after they have completed some academic and education coursework and had their first field experience. Admission is not automatic: Requirements for the MAT program include a cumulative 3.0 grade point average in the first two years of college, three letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with the student's potential teaching ability, a passing grade on or exemption from

the Texas professional skills test, and approval by the department and university faculty committees. It is not enough for students to be in good academic standing or to have taken the requisite series of courses. In order to become an official member of Trinity's teacher-to-be cadre, students must demonstrate both academic success and teaching potential.

The junior and senior years at Trinity include additional education coursework and two more stints in a professional development school. Courses focus on public education in the United States—with

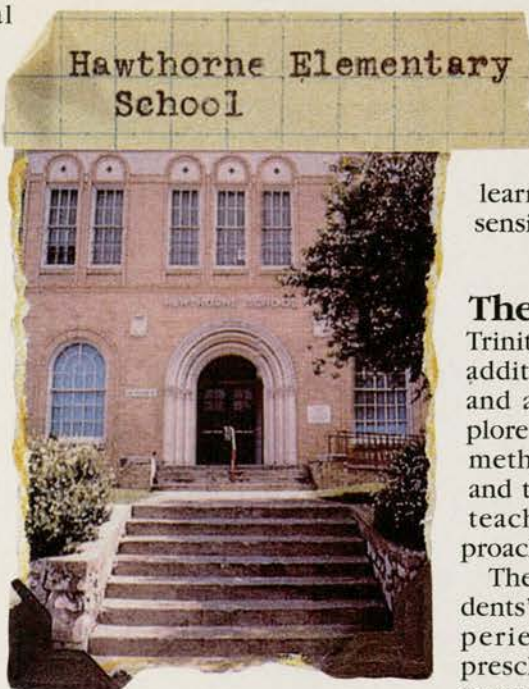
comparisons to education systems in other countries—and on Trinity-sponsored education reform efforts. Students also devote part of one semester to drafting their own agendas for school improvement.

Students in the junior practicum look particularly at what makes a master teacher. They are assigned to a different professional development school from the one they worked in as sophomores, and they are asked to concentrate on questions such as: How do veteran teachers begin a class lesson? How do they introduce new material? What kinds of management and discipline strategies do they employ? How do they move from one topic of study to another? How do they account for students' individual learning styles and needs?

Junior-year students again spend the initial part of the semester observing, and after having participated in the classroom routines, they assume some teaching responsibility, under the guidance of their mentor. They keep a journal in which they record their observations and reflections on topics such as classroom organization, teaching style, discipline and management, attention to individual students' needs, and classroom procedures.

As seniors, practicum students focus most of their attention on their students. The goal is to help these prospective teachers recognize and be sensitive to students' individual needs. Again, they spend time in the classroom of a mentor-teacher, assuming increasing levels of responsibility as the semester proceeds.

By the time Trinity students have completed four years of study, they have a broader and richer experience than their counterparts in most other teacher education programs. They have been introduced to many of the big ideas and issues in American education. They have a grounding in learning theory. They are developing professional habits of reflection and gaining an understanding of how to use research to enrich classroom practice. Final preparation for their upcoming



year of internship is a group of summer courses in which they study the history of the issues and debates about public school curriculum. The students explore contemporary learning theory and performance-based assessment, and they learn to design educational programs that are sensitive to the way particular students learn.

The Internship

Trinity students' fifth-year experiences include additional coursework, more journal writing, and a substantial research paper. Students explore the culture of teaching and schooling and methods for evaluating professional practice, and they confront their own assumptions about teaching by looking closely at how they approach their work in the classroom.

The internship, which is the heart of the students' fifth year, is an intense, in-the-schools experience that begins in August with the preschool teacher inservice. From day one, interns are expected to function as members of

their school faculty, albeit supervised and supported members. In the fall, interns spend four days a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., in their assigned school. They also attend classes taught by the mentors an average of two evenings each week. In the spring, interns are at their assigned professional development school five days a week, and they take one evening course at Trinity. The interns in a school meet frequently to discuss the activities in their schools and classrooms and to gain support, encouragement—and ideas—from their colleagues.

The relationship between interns and mentors is also collegial. One fifth-year Trinity student puts it this way: It's "cooperative...not 'let me show you how to teach.'"

"Interns are prepared before they get here," say the mentors. "They bring fresh ideas to the school, often based on the latest research. They force us to think about change."

Interns are simultaneously protected and pushed. Given the freedom to experiment and the permission to make mistakes, they are also held accountable for their professional actions. If a lesson doesn't go well, the student and mentor discuss what happened and how such a situation might be avoided or handled differently in the future. Students are not "rescued." They return to their teaching assignment the next day (or for the remainder of that day) and carry on, just as an actual teacher would. The difference is that interns have someone to go to for help, support, and encouragement.

Students describe the internship year as a "hybrid between support group and think tank." And, of course, they keep a journal as a record of this important year. By the end of their internship, Trinity students are familiar with the standards of competent professional practice and the ethics of good teaching. They have had their share of successes and frustrations in the classroom, but none has experienced the terri-

(Continued on page 45)

OF SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

BY MARY WARNOCK

SCHOOL IS for education, whatever the ability or age of the pupil. Education, properly so-called, must always look to the future and must supply children with something they will need, and would not have if they had not been to school. The goal of education is life *after* education. This does not mean that education must be narrowly vocational. School education need not equip children to cook cordon bleu meals; but it should teach them how to read a recipe (or anything else): how to weigh, measure, and adapt quantities and be intelligently critical of the instructions they are given. It should give them that upon which specific expertise can be built. Children cannot be taught how to form adult views; but they should be taught how to distinguish well-founded views from prejudices, good arguments from bad. The facts children learn at school will be forgotten; the opinions they hold will change. But that they can do something they couldn't do before is the proof that they are really being educated; and this is true whether the new skill is as complicated as building an airplane or as simple as tying shoelaces.

But we must regard school not merely as a place for acquiring new skills but as a social environment on its own, the first that most children become familiar with, after their own homes. It is at school that, for the first time, a child exists as an equal with contemporaries. Whatever we may be told about the responsibility of the family for moral education, there is no doubt that it is at school that most children learn that they must adapt their behavior to rules and conventions, that fairness is a fundamental value, and that individuals have no right to make exceptions for themselves. Each child must learn how he or she ought to behave and what behavior—bullying, aggression or dishonesty—will not be tolerated in the school environment. And so the teacher is a teacher of individuals, even if she spends most of her time facing a class. The impact she makes on a child is essentially that of one person on another. No amount of sophisticated electronics, no amount of distance teaching, useful though these may be for certain specific tasks, will ever be a substitute for the human interchange between the teacher and the individual pupil. It is a

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heavy responsibility for the teacher, one that requires confidence and deserves respect.

The teacher must be, professionally speaking, an optimist, an individualist, and a believer in free will. This is implicit in the nature of education itself. A teacher seeks not to change the circumstances which make up the world of a child, but to open up a whole new world to be explored. The teacher is not obliged to think of children as formed by their families, or income brackets, but simply as themselves, able ultimately to take responsibility for their own improvement, capable of learning that, with effort, they "could do better." This schoolteacher's jargon, so irritating to parents when it appears on the end-of-term report, actually encapsulates the teacher's philosophy. People can, if they will, help themselves along the educational road. Nobody need be without hope. When a teacher first encounters a child, she should be able to put out of her mind anything she may know about the child—who the child's parents are, how much of a nuisance the child's older sister was, that the child has been on probation. The teacher should strive to regard pupils as persons in their own right, able, if treated rightly, to learn, to understand, "to do better." A teacher should be ready to be surprised. She should never say, "Here is a child from a broken home, expect trouble." The optimism involved in teaching is precisely that you never know how far your pupils may go. I am not saying that teachers should be kept in ignorance of their pupils' social circumstances. I am saying that the teacher's particular professionalism consists in being able to regard a pupil as a free agent, not wholly determined by circumstances.

So the professional relation of the teacher must be, first and foremost, with the child, not with the child's parents or family or background. For the child coming to school is being offered the chance to start again, to be a new, independent, different person, no longer bound by the chains of his situation. And this is as true of the child from a prosperous home as for the child of deprivation. I well remember myself the joy and freedom of school, happy though I was at home. But at home I was the youngest of a family where success and good sense were expected. To be "schoolgirlish" was to merit contempt. At school there were no such constraints. There was nothing to stop me giggling with my friends, being enthusiastically religious, or getting a crush on my Latin teacher, all of which I did. At school, all equally have the opportunity of experimenting and trying out a new world. This is the function of education. □

PROJECT STAR

The Story of the Tennessee Class-size Study

BY JAYNE BOYD-ZAHARIAS

*Project STAR is "one of the most important educational investigations ever carried out and illustrates the kind and magnitude of research needed in the field of education to strengthen schools."*¹

IN 1945 when Helen Pate-Bain, the driving force behind Project STAR, graduated from George Peabody College for Teachers, in Nashville, Tenn., and started her teaching career, the average class size in Tennessee schools was thirty. For the next twenty years, she taught English and speech classes in grades 7 to 11. English classes always had thirty to thirty-five students, but speech classes, because they were an elective, were considerably smaller—about fifteen to twenty students per class.

Pate-Bain noticed that she accomplished much more in her smaller classes, and she began thinking about the impact of class size on student learning. Smaller classes, she decided, would make a big difference for all her students, but they would probably be even more important for children in elementary school. There were always several students in her seventh-grade classes who were not prepared to do the work. Pate-Bain believed that this resulted from the children's not getting an adequate educational foundation. Reducing class size in the early grades so teachers could give youngsters the individual help they need in learning the basic skills of reading, writing, and beginning mathematics could pay dividends throughout their school years.

When Pate-Bain began her crusade for smaller class size in the early grades, she was always met with the same response: "You can't *prove* that class size makes

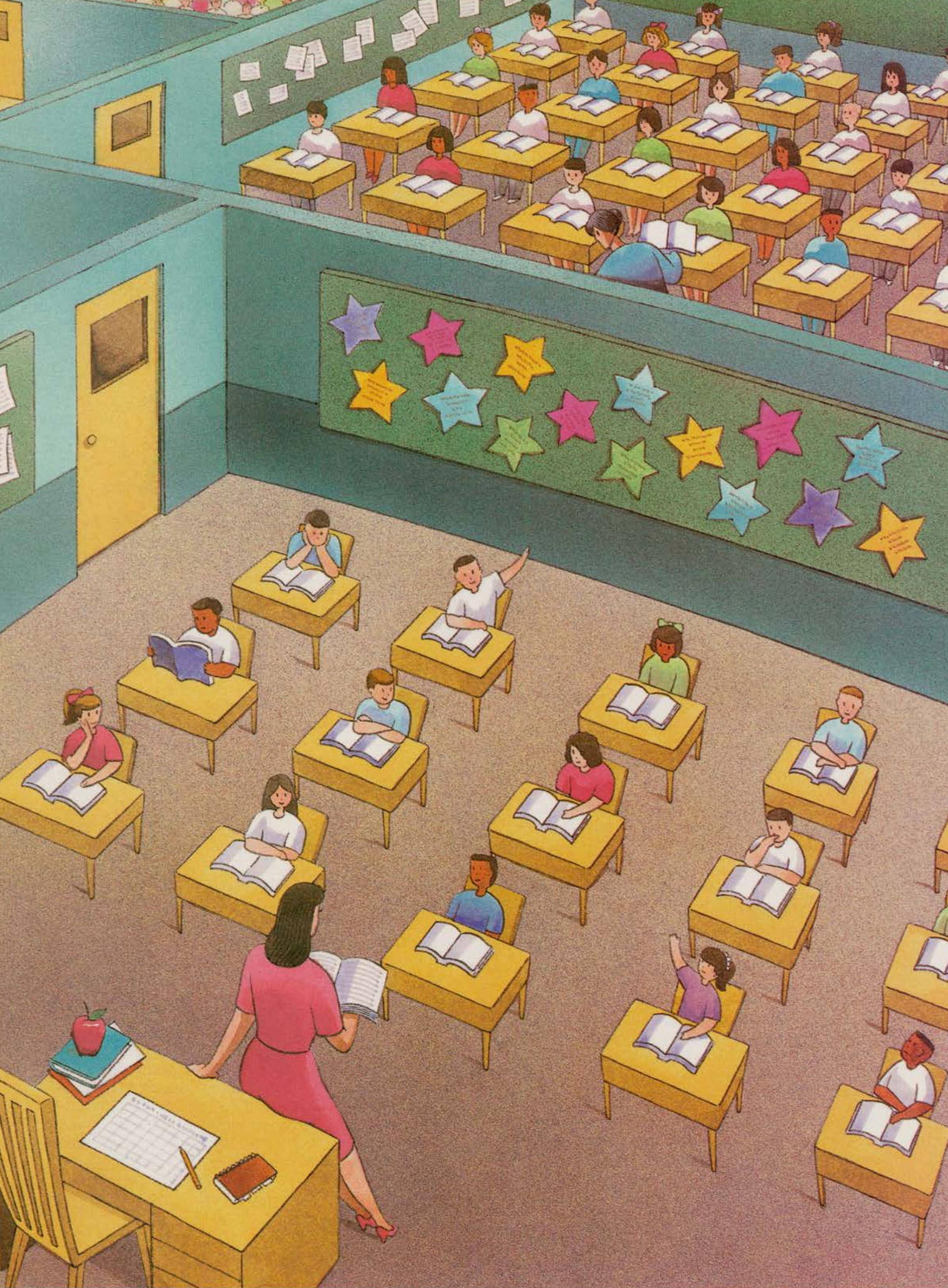
a difference in learning." This answer, though legitimate, was also very convenient for local school boards, and state and national legislators because lowering class size would have a big impact on school budgets.

In time, there were a number of small studies on the effect of reducing class size. Pate-Bain read Lynne M. Johnson's pilot study that was carried out in South Carolina², and she visited Indiana's Prime Time demonstration project in 1982.³ She found Gene Glass's synthesis of the many small studies of reduced class size⁴ particularly useful. Basing her view on his analysis, she concluded that one teacher with fifteen students in the classroom would produce much better learning *and* be financially feasible.

In 1984, when she was an associate professor at Tennessee State University, Pate-Bain received a small grant to study reduced class size (one teacher per fifteen students) in grades 1 through 3 at a Nashville elementary school. The results were positive, but student mobility reduced the sample size, and by the end of third grade, it was so small that Pate-Bain knew researchers, administrators, and politicians would not place much credence in her results.

How could she finance a study with a large sample? Pate-Bain went to the main source of money for public education in Tennessee: the legislature. She spent a year making personal visits to Tennessee legislators, presenting her findings, and trying to sell them on the need for a large-scale study of class size. Legislators had already been discussing the class-size issue in the context of Gov. Lamar Alexander's Better Schools Program. Money was the crucial consideration for the legislature, and it was money that tipped the balance in favor of STAR. Legislators were convinced that a large-scale study of class size would at least let them know if smaller classes actually would benefit students, and would help them decide where to spend future education dollars. So they agreed to fund Project STAR (Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio), a study that would consider the effects of class size on students in grades

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K-3. The legislature provided \$12 million, the majority of which—more than \$9 million—was to go for what Pate-Bain calls “the most important piece of equipment” in classrooms: teachers. In this era immediately following *A Nation at Risk*, many states started to make changes in their education systems, but none made a substantial contribution to education research like the one that Pate-Bain led in Tennessee.

The Study Design

The STAR experiment was designed by a group of researchers including Pate-Bain and other academics and members of the Tennessee Department of Education. Some of its key features are:

1. *All Tennessee schools with K-3 classes were invited to participate. Giving every school a chance to join the study helped to ensure a diverse sample.* It also ruled out the possibility that critics could attribute class-size effects to STAR researchers’ having “chosen” certain schools.
2. *Each school included in the study had to have a large enough student body to form at least one of each of the three class types—small (thirteen to seventeen students), regular (twenty-two to twenty-six students), and regular with a full-time teacher aide (twenty-two to twenty-six students)—in order to accommodate the within-school design.* The within-school design provided a built-in control for differences among schools in areas like resources, leadership, and facilities. As a result, class-size effects could not be attributed to these differences.
3. *Seventy-nine schools in forty-two systems met the within-school design requirement, and the original STAR sample comprised more than 6,000 students per grade level.* The large sample lent credibility to the results. It also allowed for the inevitable reduction in the size of the sample because of student mobility.
4. *Schools from inner-city, rural, urban, and suburban locations were included in the experiment.* This feature of the study, which the legislature mandated, guaranteed that the sample would include children from various ethnic backgrounds and income levels.
5. *Students and teachers were randomly assigned to their class type.* The random assignment made certain that differences in the students’ test scores could be confidently attributed to class size. It would not be possible to assert that the researchers had placed all the smart children within a particular class type, or that the best teachers were given a particular class size. The random assignment of classes to one of the three categories was one of the strongest features of the STAR study.
6. *Investigators followed the standard procedures for confidentiality and human subjects’ research.* Only principal investigators and their staff had access to individual student information. Results were always reported at an aggregate level so that no indi-

vidual child’s demographic or test-score data could be discerned.

7. *No children were to receive fewer services than normal because of the experiment.* This, too, was required by the legislature, but it was an easy condition to fulfill: Without STAR, all of these children would have been in class sizes ranging from twenty-two to twenty-six (or larger). Therefore, the study did not “harm” any children.
8. *Student achievement was to be tracked by standardized tests, which were carefully monitored.* During testing, monitors ensured that test instructions were followed and that teachers did not coach or help students taking the tests.
9. *An outside consultant was contracted to perform all primary statistical analyses.* Jeremy Finn, a professor of education at the State University of New York, Buffalo, served as the primary statistician. An expert in the field, he had not been involved with the study or the principal investigators before the Tennessee Department of Education contacted him. This additional safeguard guaranteed impartial results.

On paper, these nine key factors may appear fairly obvious. In fact, having them all in place was (and still is) a rarity in education research. Experiments that do so are expensive and take a long time to bring to fruition. And as medical researchers also know, an experiment involving human subjects raises special problems. In our case, we also had to get the schools involved in the study to agree to the terms of the research, and that was not always easy. For example, some schools that planned to participate had to drop out because their principals would not agree to the random assignment of students and teachers. These administrators had a system for assigning children and teachers, and they wanted to stick to it. Other schools did not want to administer the achievement tests, so, again, they could not participate in the study. The strong controls maintained by the consortium meant that all statistical variables, except for class size, could be factored out of the analyses. Therefore, any achievement effects could be attributed to class size.

The consortium decided to measure student achievement using the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT), a nationally normed standardized achievement test, and the Basic Skills First (BSF) test, a criterion-referenced test designed to measure areas that matched the Tennessee state curriculum. Both of these measures were already being used by some school systems across Tennessee. The primary STAR analyses used the total math and reading scores from the two tests.

Carrying out the study involved its own set of complications. For example, at the beginning of the study, laws requiring school children to have Social Security numbers were not in place. If we were to follow students from year to year, we had to have an identification number, so the consortium decided to request that students put their birth certificate numbers in the spaces designated on the test booklets for the ID number. However, there was a problem. Birth certificate numbers were eleven digits, and test spaces for ID

numbers only allowed for nine digits. We tried to head off potential confusion by sending instructions with the tests, telling teachers to cut off the first two digits of their birth certificate numbers, but the instructions were not always followed. This created a nightmare for the data processing staff. Student data had to be checked and matched not only by ID, but also by name, birth date, gender, and ethnicity.

Then, at the end of the first grade, the state decided to switch to Social Security numbers for the primary student ID. This amplified our problems. Now, the data processing team was faced with tracking two sets of IDs and matching up the modified nine-digit birth certificate number with the Social Security number. Tracking the two ID sets was a difficult process, but it ultimately resulted in a better method for following the STAR students: STAR researchers would now be able to track students through high school and beyond.

Early Results

In the fall of 1985, with the STAR design in place, 6,328 kindergarten children and 329 kindergarten teachers were randomly assigned to one of the three class sizes. Children were to remain with their initial class assignment through the end of the third grade, the 1988-89 school year.⁵ Except for the fact that some of these children were in classes of fifteen, all followed the normal routines established by their specific schools and school systems.

There was one aspect of the study that researchers could not control for—students coming into or leaving a class. Because kindergarten was not mandatory in Tennessee during the 1985-86 school year, the first year of the study, the enrollment of first-graders during year two of STAR, brought an influx of new students to the study. Similarly, when students moved out of STAR schools, they were no longer part of the longitudinal sample. However, STAR researchers had foreseen these problems. When students moved out of STAR schools, they were no longer part of the study. The new students entering STAR at the beginning of first grade were included in the study, and the research proceeded as planned. The influx of new students throughout STAR increased the total number of STAR participants to more than 11,000.

During spring of each year, the STAR students took the SAT and BSF tests. Kindergarten results showed that the small-class students outscored their peers from the larger classes, and the differences in scores were statistically significant. During the following years of the experiment, in grades 1 through 3, test results continued to show statistically significant differences between small and regular-size classes. The outcomes on both the SAT and BSF always favored the small classes. (See Figures 1 and 2.)

Smaller classes made the biggest difference for inner-city, low-income minority children. However, *all* students benefited from the experience, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or the location of their school.

The state of Tennessee took seriously the findings

about the benefit of small classes for low-income and minority children. In 1989, it established Project Challenge, which provided funds to the sixteen poorest counties (based on per-capita income) for reduced class sizes in kindergarten through third grade. This project was not an experiment like STAR; it was a policy application of the STAR findings, and it got excellent results. Charles Achilles, a member of the consortium that created the original STAR design, followed student achievement in these counties (1997)⁶ and found that “on average, the Challenge systems that started the 1:15 treatment in 1989 ranked well below the state average. By 1995 they ranked near or above the state average.”

There were never strong research findings favoring the regular-size classes with full-time teacher aides. This component had been added at the request of legislators, who reasoned that it costs less to employ an aide than a teacher. However, Tennessee at that time, had few standards or requirements and little training for aides, and Pate-Bain believes that this is probably why the STAR research did not discover significant differences favoring the classes with aides.

At the end of each year of the study, in order to keep the Tennessee legislature informed, Pate-Bain vis-

Figure 1
STAR Reading Percentile Ranks
Kindergarten–Grade 3, 1985-89

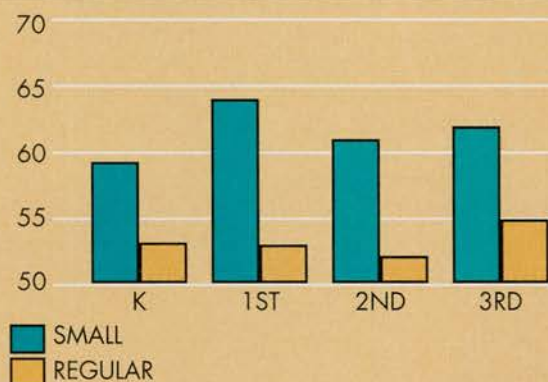
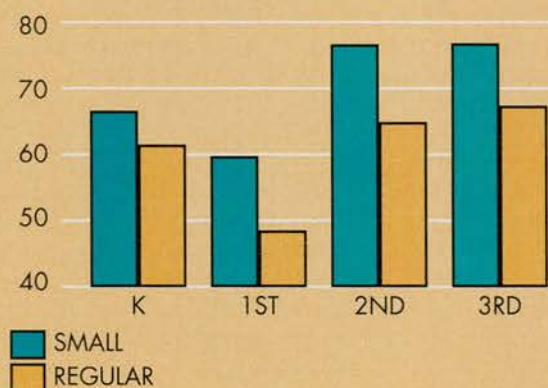


Figure 2
STAR Math Percentile Ranks
Kindergarten–Grade 3 1985-89



ited members individually to give them an update on our findings. She liked presenting the research in language that could be easily understood by parents, teachers, legislators, and school board members, and she would ask her staff to convert scores into grade equivalents. However, until this year, STAR findings were never published in this format.

We now have results from recent re-analyses of the effects of small classes in grades K-3, presented in terms of months of schooling. Students in small classes exceeded their counterparts in regular classes in every grade and were about a half year (from 2.8 to 4.7 months) ahead in their schoolwork by the end of grade 3.⁷ (See Table 1.)

Table 1
Advantages of Attending a Small Class in K-3
Reported in Months of Schooling

	Reading	Math	Word Study Skills
Kindergarten	.5 months	1.6 months	.5 months
Grade 1	1.2 months	2.8 months	.8 months
Grade 2	3.9 months	3.3 months	5.7 months
Grade 3	4.6 months	2.8 months	4.7 months

Pate-Bain and other STAR researchers devised procedures to continue monitoring the progress of STAR students when the children went on to fourth grade and into regular-size classes. At the same time, Jeremy Finn, the program's independent statistician, began a related study in which he investigated the effects of smaller classes on student participation. He found that fourth-grade students from the smaller classes were more engaged in class and school activities than the students who had attended the larger-size classes in kindergarten through third grade. The small-class students showed greater initiative, participated more willingly, and put forth greater effort in their fourth-grade classes.⁸

Follow-up

What happened to the STAR students as they proceeded through school? Pate-Bain thought that the benefits that came from being in a small class would last, even through high school. But it was also possible that, in the end, students who had small classes in the K-3 years wouldn't do any better than the children in the standard-size classes. The STAR experiment would not be completed, and its results certainly would not be conclusive, without this follow-up. But gathering the records needed to carry it out was laborious and expensive. In 1995, Pate-Bain, who had "retired," and I formed Health and Education Research Operative Services (HEROS), Inc., to start collecting and analyzing data about students who had been part of STAR. Again, with the help of Tennessee legislators and the Tennessee Department of Education, along with funding from private foundations, we were able to continue collecting data from grades 5 through 12 on the STAR students and enter these data into the master database.

First we had to determine what types of data were

available, how they could be obtained, and some of the questions that could be answered from these data. In 1997, Pate-Bain, Elizabeth Word (director of the STAR consortium), and I conducted a pilot study as preparation for a major follow-up study. We found that positive results continued for STAR small-class students through grade 10.⁹ This was encouraging. However, the biggest benefit of the pilot study was that it gave us a good idea about the procedures we would need to use in collecting the various types of data on a large scale. Although standardized test scores were readily available from the Tennessee education department, we could get other crucial data only from individual school districts (e.g., type of high school diploma and grade-point average) or even individual schools (e.g., participation in extracurricular activities and reasons for dropping out of school).

In 1997, the Tennessee education department provided us with the standardized test score data for STAR students from grades 5 through 12, and Finn and Achilles conducted analyses of the long-term effects of small classes using the new data. They found that in grades 4, 6, and 8—after all pupils had returned to regular-size classes—STAR students who entered small classes in kindergarten had better long-term outcomes than those who began in first grade. Also, there were statistically significant differences in achievement between students who attended small classes for one, two, three, or four years. Long-term effects were significant on some tests in some grades (4, 6, and/or 8) for pupils who attended small classes for *three years*, and on all tests in all grades for pupils who attended small classes for *four years*.¹⁰ (See Table 2.)

Table 2
Long-term Advantages of Attending a Small Class
for Four Years (K-3)
Reported in Months of Schooling

	Reading	Math	Science
Grade 4	9.1 months	5.9 months	7.6 months
Grade 6	9.2 months	8.4 months	6.7 months
Grade 8	1 yr. 2 mo.	1 yr. 1 mo.	1 yr. 1 mo.

The new data provided by the state department of education also included information about retention for STAR students. They show that the children who attended small classes were approximately 2.5 percent less likely to have been retained during grades K-8 than those who attended the larger classes. If money is the issue—as the people holding the purse strings always told Pate-Bain—these results suggest that smaller class size pays off: The average cost of one year of schooling in Tennessee is about \$4,600, so each time a child fails a grade we're spending an extra \$4,600 on that particular child.

Pate-Bain and I have also been collecting information and records about STAR students from their high school years. As we realized from the 1997 pilot study, the process is laborious and involves phone, fax, mail, e-mail, and personal visits to schools. At this point we have collected more than 3,000 student records from

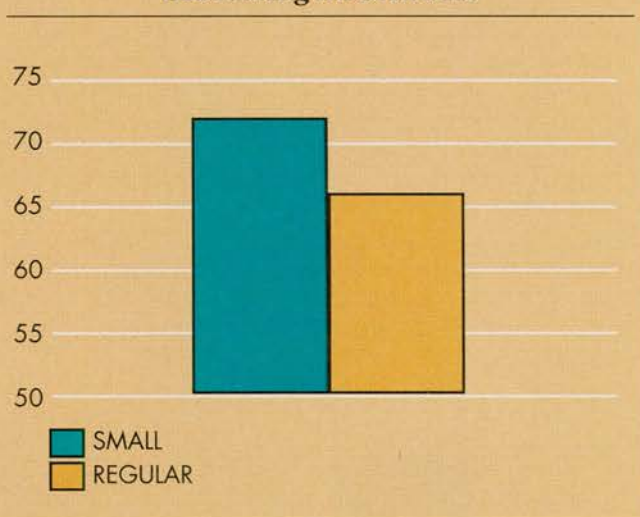
individual schools and school districts, and over 8,000 from the state department of education. We will continue collecting high school records on STAR students through 1999, and if funding permits, we will try to track down students who have moved out of state. Since the database does not yet include all the records we eventually hope to have, findings about STAR students' performance in high school are not yet final. However, given the thousands of records already in the database, we feel confident that the conclusions we reach will be reliable.

Our preliminary findings show that STAR students who attended small classes in K-3 were more likely, as high school students, to be enrolled in advanced classes and honors courses (e.g., foreign languages, geometry, and honors English) than STAR students from the larger classes. They were also more likely to rank in the top 10 percent of their graduating class and to receive honors diplomas. The most statistically significant results from our preliminary findings relate to graduation and dropout rates: Approximately 72 percent of the students from smaller classes and 66 percent of the students from larger classes graduated on schedule in spring 1998. (See Figure 3.)

This goes hand in hand with our finding that students from small classes are less likely to drop out of high school. There is approximately a 5 percent difference between the number of students from small classes who dropped out and the number of students from larger classes who dropped out. (See Figure 4, page 36.) This is another area where we can show the financial advantage of small classes—this time for the

students themselves. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a high school graduate earns over \$5,000 per year more than a high school dropout. And this figure does not take into account dropouts who do not become employed and/or who receive welfare.

Figure 3
Percentage of STAR Students
Graduating on Schedule



Do smaller classes in the early grades have any impact on college attendance? Alan Krueger, a professor of economics at Princeton University, recently conducted a study to determine which STAR students took

SAGE: A Small-class Experiment in Wisconsin

In 1996-97, Wisconsin initiated Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE), a five-year program that seeks to improve the academic achievement of children living in poverty by reducing the student-teacher ratio in K-3 classes to one teacher for every fifteen students. Like STAR, the Tennessee class-size experiment, the Wisconsin program is a controlled experiment; unlike STAR, it calls for changes in addition to the reduced student-teacher ratio. SAGE schools had to agree to provide students with a rigorous academic program and after-school activities, and teachers with professional development. SAGE schools also agreed to institute accountability measures. SAGE is in effect in 30 schools throughout Wisconsin. Schools selected to participate receive up to \$2,000 for each low-income student enrolled in a SAGE classroom.

SAGE students are tested in reading, language arts, and math using the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). Results thus far, are promising. The following findings come from a report by principal investigator Alex Molnar (*Smaller Classes and Educational Vouchers*, Harrisburg, Pa.: Keystone Research Center, June 1999):

- In 1996-97 and again in 1997-98, SAGE first-graders scored significantly higher in all areas tested, with effect sizes in the range of 0.1 to 0.3.
- From spring 1997 to spring 1998, SAGE second-graders' scores increased more than those of students in comparison schools but not by statistically significant amounts. Over the first two years, SAGE second-graders showed statistically significant gains in language arts, mathematics, and total score but not in reading.

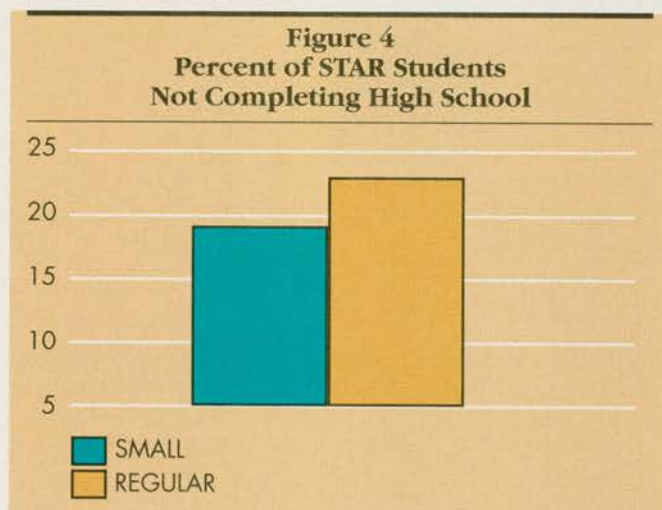
- The benefit of the SAGE program is especially strong for African-American students. In 1997-98, African-American students in SAGE classes increased their average total score by 52 points, compared with 33 points for African-American students in control schools. These higher scores in SAGE schools narrowed the achievement gap between white and African-American students; at the same time, the gap in comparison schools widened.

- In 1997-98, there was no significant difference between student achievement in SAGE first-grade classes with one teacher and up to fifteen students and another SAGE option—first-grade classes with two teachers and up to thirty students. If this finding is sustained in subsequent years, it would mean that school districts lacking the resources to build new classrooms could get the benefits of smaller classes by adding teachers to their larger classes.

- Interviews of teachers and principals, classroom observations, and other qualitative comparisons of teachers in SAGE and regular schools suggest that SAGE teachers know each of their students better, spend less time managing their classes, have more time for instruction, and are more likely to individualize their instruction.

More information about SAGE and copies of preliminary reports are available on the SAGE web site (<http://www.uwm.edu/SOE/centers&project/sage/>). See also Molnar, Smith et al., "Wisconsin's SAGE Class Size Reduction Program," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Summer 1999.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or American College Testing (ACT) college entrance exams and were, therefore, planning to attend college. He found that approximately 44 percent of students in the smaller classes did so, in comparison with 40 percent of students from the larger STAR classes. The effect of smaller class sizes, as measured by students taking college entrance exams, was most dramatic for minority students. African-American students who had the advantage of small classes in their K-3 years took these exams far more often than black students who had attended the larger classes (40.2 percent for students from small classes, compared with 31.7 percent of students from standard-size classes). Further, small classes appear to close the black/white ACT/SAT testing gap by more than 54 percent.¹¹



Our research on class size is not complete. We will continue collecting high school data for STAR students through 1999. These data will allow us to fine-tune our preliminary work and to take a good look at many other small-class outcomes, such as type of diploma—regular, special education, or honors—attendance, type of coursework, and retentions. We also plan to follow these students after high school to look at factors such as college graduation, employment, welfare, and incarceration rates. Perhaps, when these results are in, we will be able to attach a true monetary value to small classes that will put an end to critics' continuing questions about their cost. But our research has implications beyond financial issues, important though they are.

The U.S. has been in the midst of a serious and long-term effort to reform our schools. Our biggest challenge is to improve learning for all but especially for minority students. Their achievement continues to lag behind, creating a situation that is terribly inequitable and full of danger for them and for our society. The evidence from STAR shows that small classes in the early years help all children, but that low-income, minority children benefit especially. To date, there is no other plan for reform that can offer this kind of assurance. We do not contend that smaller class size is a panacea. But it is a powerful and proven way to start. □

Endnotes

- ¹ Mosteller, F. (1995). The Tennessee study of class size in the early grades. *The Future of Children: Critical Issues for Children and Youths*, 5(2), pp. 113-127.
- ² Johnson, L. (1978) South Carolina first-grade pilot project 1976-77: The effects of class size on reading and mathematics achievement. Office of Research Report Series Vol. 1, No. 35, Columbia, S.C.: South Carolina Department of Education, p. 112 (ED 021 252).
- ³ Mueller, J.D., et al. (1987). *Project Prime Time: Final report of Indiana's class-size experiment*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University.
- ⁴ Glass, Gene V., and Smith, Mary Lee. (1979). Meta-Analysis of Research on Class Size and Achievement, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, vol. 1, no., 1, pp. 2-16.
- ⁵ Because of teacher and parent complaints about student compatibility, many students from the regular and regular-aided classes were randomly reassigned between these two class types at the beginning of first grade. Since there were no regular-aided effects in kindergarten, this did not contaminate the study. During the entire study, only 100 small-class students (out of more than 11,000) were reassigned to one of the other class types.
- ⁶ Achilles, C.M. (March 1997). What does it take? Presentation at the Plain Talk About KIDS Conference. The Los Angeles Center for Development and Learning (LACDL).
- ⁷ Finn, J.D., Gerber, S.B., Achilles, C.M., Boyd-Zaharias, J., (May 1999). Short and long-term effects of small classes. Paper presented at the conference on Economics of School Reform. Copies available from J.D. Finn (finn@acsu.buffalo.edu).
- ⁸ Finn, J.D. (1998). *Class Size and Students at Risk: What is known? What is next?* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, OERI, National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students; Finn, J.D. (August 1993). *School Engagement and Students at Risk*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics (93-470); Finn, J.D., and Cox, D. (Spring 1992). Participation and withdrawal among fourth-grade pupils. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29(1), 141-162.
- ⁹ STAR Follow-up Studies (Sept. 1997).
- ¹⁰ Finn et al. (1999). *Op. cit.*
- ¹¹ Krueger, A.B. and Whitmore, D.M. (April 1999). Executive Summary: The Effect of Attending a Small Class in the Early Grades on College Attendance Plans (akrueger@princeton.edu).

Project STAR required a great deal of effort and cooperation from everyone who made up the STAR consortium, including its director Elizabeth Word of the Tennessee Department of Education; principal investigators C.M. Achilles, currently a professor at Eastern Michigan University; John Folger of Vanderbilt University; Fred Bellote of the University of Memphis; and John Johnston, who replaced Professor Bellote when he retired; primary statistician Jeremy Finn of SUNY Buffalo; and research associate Nan Lintz of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Those making STAR follow-up studies possible include Elizabeth Word; Deborah Gilliam of the Tennessee Department of Education; and HEROS research associate and database expert DeWayne Fulton, who has worked on STAR since the beginning.

Tennessee Department of Education personnel who have been essential include Ben Brown and Lynisse Patrick.

POINT OF ORDER

The article that follows is one of the nominations for the great achievements of our millennium solicited by the editors of the New York Times Magazine. Some of the Greats are at least partly fanciful, like the best fashion (novelist Alison Lurie says the zipper) and the best invention (semiologist Umberto Eco nominates the legume, which he says saved Europeans in the Dark Ages from perishing because of malnutrition). Some are entirely serious, like lawyer and novelist Scott Turow's nomination for the best trial of the millennium (it took place in 1670, when an English jury refused to be coerced into bringing in a guilty verdict against William Penn and a fellow Quaker). Alberto Manguel's celebration of the best punctuation mark of the millennium, the period, is both fanciful and serious. What would we do without the period? What did we do? Manguel invites us to look at the significance of something we seldom think about but that changed the way we read, write, and even think.—Editor

BY ALBERTO MANGUEL



IMINUTIVE AS a mote of dust, a mere peck of the pen, a crumb on the keyboard, the full stop—the period—is the unsung legislator of our writing systems: Without it, there would be no end to the sorrows of young Werther, and the travels of the Hobbit would have never been completed. Its absence allowed James Joyce to weave *Finnegans Wake* into a perfect circle, and its presence made Henri Michaux compare our essential being to this dot, “a dot that death devours.” It crowns the fulfillment of thought, gives the illusion of conclusiveness, possesses a certain haughtiness that stems, like Napoleon’s, from its minuscule size. Anxious to get going, we require nothing to signal our beginnings, but we need to know when to stop: This tiny memento mori reminds us that everything,

Alberto Manguel is a writer, translator, and editor. He is the author of A History of Reading (Penguin, 1996). This article first appeared in the New York Times Magazine, April 18, 1999, and is reprinted with the author's permission.

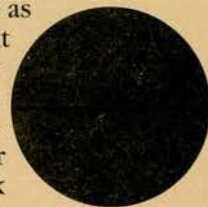
ourselves included, must one day come to a halt. As an anonymous English teacher suggested in the 1680 “Treatise of Stops, Points or Pauses,” a full stop is “a Note of perfect Sense, and of a perfect Sentence.”



HE NEED to indicate the end of a written phrase is probably as old as writing itself, but the solution, brief and wonderful, was not set down until the Italian Renaissance. For ages, punctuation had been a desperately erratic affair. Already in the first century A.D., the Spanish author Quintilian (who had not read Henry James) had argued that a sentence, as well as expressing a complete idea, had to be capable of being delivered in a single breath. How that sentence should be ended was a matter of personal taste, and for a long time scribes punctuated their texts with all manner of signs and symbols—from a simple blank space to a variety of dots and slashes. In the early fifth century, St. Jerome, translator of the Bible, devised a system known as *per cola et commata*, in which each unity of sense would be signaled by a letter jutting out of the margin, as if beginning a new paragraph. Three centuries later, the *punctus*, or dot, was used to indicate both a pause within the sentence and the sentence’s conclusion. Following such muddled conventions, authors could hardly expect their public to read a text in the sense they had intended.

Then in 1566, Aldus Manutius the Younger, grandson of the great Venetian printer to whom we owe the invention of the paperback, defined the full stop in his punctuation handbook, “Interpungendi ratio.” Here, in clear and unequivocal Latin, Manutius described for the first time its ultimate role and aspect. He thought that he was offering a manual for typographers; he could not have known that he was granting us, future readers, the gifts of sense and music in all the literature to come: Hemingway and his staccato, Beckett and his recitativo, Proust and his *largo sostenuto*.

“No iron,” Isaac Babel wrote, “can stab the heart with such a force as a full stop put just at the right place.” As an acknowledgment of both the power and the helplessness of the word, nothing else has served us better than this faithful and final speck





LIFE MAGAZINE PAGE COURTESY OF HANK WALKER/LIFE MAGAZINE

PICKETING IN FRONT OF ONE OF THE GRADE SCHOOLS IN ST. PAUL, MINN., STRIKING TEACHERS TRY TO COOK A THANKSGIVING TURKEY IN

TEACHERS STRIKE

Polite picket lines in St. Paul protest low pay in U.S. schools

Schoolteachers everywhere in the U.S. have long fumed over the widening gap between the cost of living and their meager, fixed salaries. Regarding their profession as a public service, they have largely refrained from organized revolt. But last week the teachers' union of St. Paul, Minn., members of an A.F.L. teachers' union, had had enough. They went on strike. Bundled into snow suits and heavy coats, they filed sedately around the city's 77 schools, clutching politely worded placards and

staging mild publicity stunts like Thanksgiving turkey over an... They were cheered by the news also striking at Fort Dodge, Minn., and in Nashville, Tenn. Across the country, the governor and county officials granted higher salaries to public employees. But at week's end St. Paul holds the purse strings

'STRIKE FOR BETTER SCHOOLS'

On Nov. 25, 1946, three days before Thanksgiving, teachers in St. Paul, Minn., walked off the job. It was the first strike by teachers in U.S. history, and it was a big surprise to people in St. Paul who were used to teachers' falling in line and accepting the wretched conditions and poor pay they had put up with for years. Perhaps these people were especially surprised at the walkout because a large majority of the teachers were women—members of the "gentler sex"—and the strike leaders were women, too. But the St. Paul teachers, who had seen the failure of all their attempts to bring about change, voted overwhelmingly to strike. They stayed on the picket line through zero weather and more than five weeks without pay until they won what they had gone out for—and, incidentally, gave birth to collective bargaining for teachers.

We owe special thanks to Cheryl Braunworth Carlson whose dissertation, *Strike for Better Schools: The St. Paul Public School Teachers' Strike of 1946*, was a compendious and fascinating source of information about the strike. We also consulted "The History of the St. Paul Federation of Teachers" (1968) by Michael J. McDonough, who was president of the St. Paul Federation of Men Teachers at the time of the strike and one of the strike leaders; and a Minnesota Historical Society interview with four St. Paul teachers, three of them veterans of the strike, which was conducted by James J. Dooley in 1974.

We are greatly indebted to Cheryl Carlson for the historic photographs used in this article, as well as for the opportunity to photograph one of the picket signs carried during the strike, which is now in the archives of the St. Paul Federation of Teachers.

—Editor

People all over the U.S. found out about the St. Paul strike when Life magazine carried this photograph of teachers cooking a Thanksgiving turkey on the picket line.

BY KARIN CHENOWETH

ST. PAUL, MINN., twin sister to its larger and in some ways more sophisticated neighbor, Minneapolis, was still a rough-and-tumble city in 1946, proud of its pioneer legacy and spirit. But with a large Catholic population, which for the most part sent children to Catholic schools, and many absentee business owners who opposed any increases in property taxes, the public schools struggled to be considered a serious enterprise. At that time, St. Paul was the last of the big American cities without an independent school board, and running the schools was simply a political job. The mayor chose, from among the six elected city commissioners, a commissioner of education, who might have no particular knowledge about or interest in the schools. The commissioner hired the superintendent and oversaw the hiring of all school employees, including teachers. Given the city's legacy of political corruption, this meant that throughout the Depression, teachers had to pay for their jobs both with money and with electioneering or other favors. The situation had improved by 1946 because teaching jobs were more plentiful and teachers harder to find. However, the commissioner still expected to have his landscaping and other personal chores done by grateful appointees.

Financing public education in St. Paul was almost an afterthought. Schools were not considered different from any other public service, and they had to fight for their share of the budget along with road maintenance and the police and fire departments. To make matters worse, money was always in short supply. The city charter set a per-capita limit on the property tax, which funded all city services, including the schools. The limit could only be changed by a 60 percent majority of St. Paul citizens, and in 1946, it was still \$30: the level set in 1919. Attempts to increase the per-capita were staunchly and successfully opposed by business interests. Education money from the state, which would have helped relieve the schools' serious money problems, went directly to the city's general

fund to be divided among all the city's services.

It is not surprising, then, that many St. Paul schools were old and poorly maintained. In a 1970 interview, Lettisha Henderson, chair of the teachers' negotiating committee during the strike, remembered that several schools had been condemned by the fire department and public safety officials. Because the district could not afford to varnish the wooden stairs and floors, custodians oiled them each year before school began, making them fire hazards. When snow fell—as it often does in Minnesota winters—it would come in through poorly maintained windows. A substitute teacher interviewed by Cheryl Carlson in 1995, recalled that his school had no soap, no towels, and no toilet paper in any of the lavatories: Children had to bring their own from home. And it was not uncommon for elementary schools—even large ones—to have only one toilet for the boys and one for the girls. The underfunded school district did not even provide textbooks, and teachers often paid for the books and supplies of their poorer students out of their own paychecks.

Teachers' pay was meager at best—for teachers with a B.A., it ranged from \$1,300 to \$2,600 a year. Many were hired as temporary teachers at a daily rate, sometimes for years at a time, because it was cheaper than hiring them permanently. Because salaries were higher elsewhere, St. Paul was losing a large number of its credentialed teachers to other cities, and at the time of the strike, roughly 20 percent of the full-time teachers did not have college degrees.

To make ends meet, many teachers held second jobs at Montgomery Ward, Sears, the post office, or in factories or bars. Most of the teachers were women, who were expected to leave their permanent jobs once they were married, though they were often hired back in substitute and temporary positions, without any chance for pensions and tenure.

And to add to the terrible conditions for teaching and learning, class sizes were rising in the years right after World War II, so many teachers had fifty students in their classrooms.

Growing Militancy

By 1946, the teacher union movement in St. Paul had a long and distinguished history. The St. Paul Federation of Women Teachers was organized as AFT Local 28 in 1918, soon after the AFT itself was established; and the St. Paul Federation of Men Teachers came into AFT in 1919 as local 43. One of St. Paul's early teacher union leaders, Florence Rood, was elected AFT's second president in 1923. St. Paul teachers enjoyed the protection of tenure, and Rood had led a successful fight for pensions 30 years before. But the union had not been successful in its efforts to change the system for funding public services, which kept the schools poor. In the early 1940s, a number of other groups joined the union in its efforts to do something about the shameful conditions in the St. Paul schools.

A 1946 campaign proposed five amendments to the

city charter, one of which would have raised the per capita to \$34. (Another would have established a school board separate from the city administration.) The amendments, which had the support of the League of Women Voters, the College Women's Club, the PTA, and other St. Paul labor groups, as well as the teachers' unions, seemed to have a good chance of passing. However, the amendments would have increased taxes slightly, and business interests and other groups that wanted to keep property taxes low made an all-out effort to defeat the charter amendments—and they succeeded.

The only newspaper that supported the proposed changes to the charter and consistently covered the teachers' complaints about conditions in the St. Paul schools was the *Union Advocate*, a paper for St. Paul union members that is still in operation. The *Advocate's* support helped to cement the relationship between the teachers and the local unions. Though they were long-time union members, many teachers preferred to think of themselves as professionals rather than part of the trade union movement. The fact that their complaints were understood and championed by a union paper helped change that attitude. Teachers would also find the support of their union brothers and sisters crucial in the events to come.

When the charter amendments lost, the teachers were back to square one, with poor pay, deteriorating working conditions, and a totally unresponsive political structure. Its casual indifference to teachers' legitimate needs was epitomized by what John Ryan, in a 1974 interview, said was "always the answer" to requests for a salary increase: "We know you should have a raise. We would like to give you a raise. Just one simple thing. Tell us where to get the money, and we'll give it to you."

Of course, with the \$30 cap on the property tax, there was never any money. St. Paul teachers had not had a salary increase in three years—and they were already paid less than the teachers in any other city of a comparable size. Soon after the defeat of the amendments to the city charter, teachers were told they would have to take a week's salary cut before January 1947.

Perhaps this was the last straw for the union leadership because they embarked on a course that few of the St. Paul politicians or businessmen who routinely ignored the schools and their teachers would ever have expected—union leaders started thinking and talking about the possibility of a strike. But would the membership go along? On Oct. 29, the turning point came. The Joint Council, which was made up of the executive boards of the men and the women teachers' unions, called a meeting of union members. It was attended by 1,000 teachers, and all but six voted to empower the Joint Council to act as a bargaining agent for the teachers and, if necessary, to prepare for a strike. The strike deadline was set for Nov. 25.

This was a risky business. Although the nation had seen its auto workers, miners, and railroad workers strike, there had never been a teachers' strike. Even the American Federation of Teachers had a "no strike" policy at the time. And of course many thought that teachers—of all people—would never walk off the job. According to the history of the strike written by

Karin Chenoweth often writes on labor and education issues. She lives in Silver Spring, Md.

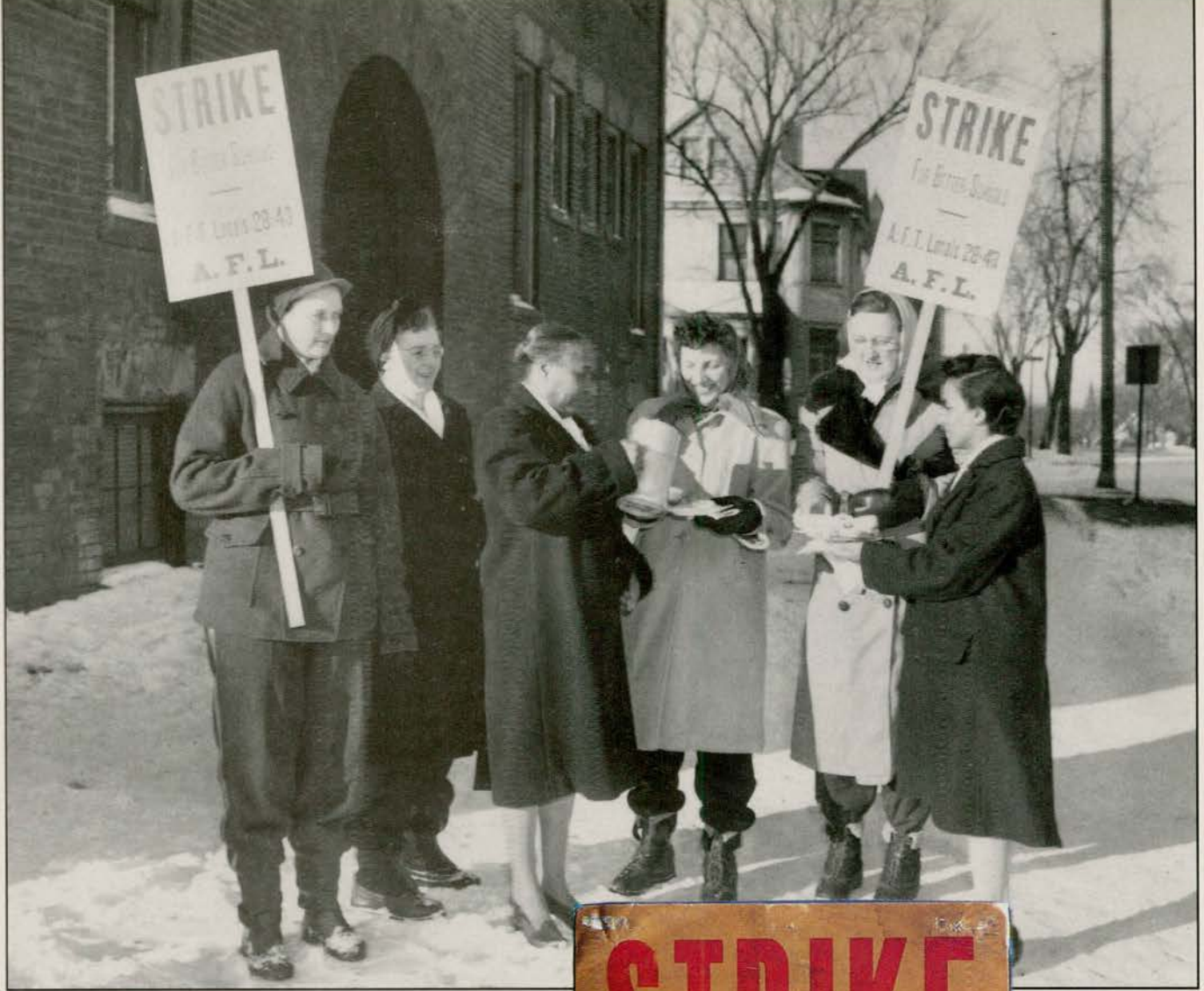


PHOTO COURTESY OF MINNEAPOLIS MORNING TRIBUNE

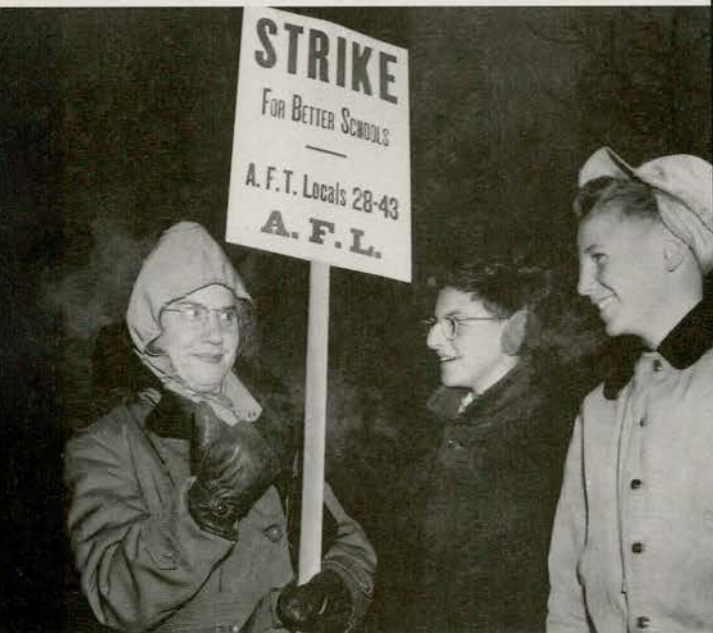
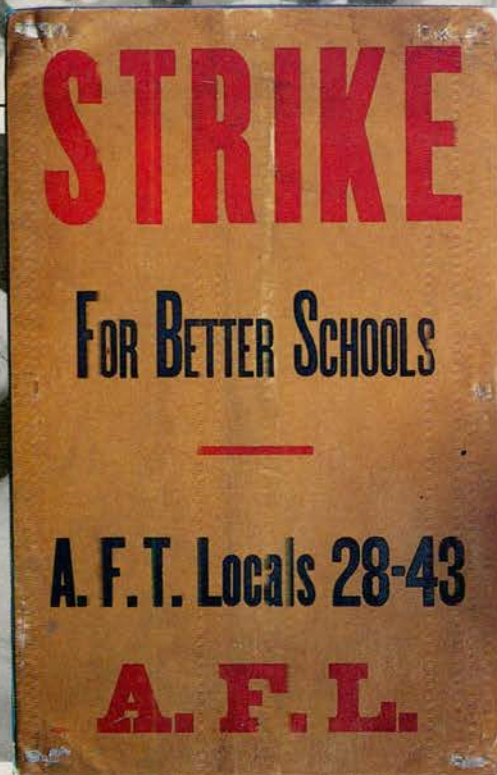


PHOTO COURTESY OF ASSOCIATED PRESS



PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROB LEVINE

There was broad support for the strike in St. Paul. (Top) Women from the community come out in sub-zero weather to serve coffee and doughnuts to striking teachers. (Left) Two students join their teacher on the picket line. (Above) One of the posters carried in the strike.

Michael J. McDonough, who was president of the men teachers' union at the time of the strike and chair of the picket committee:

Bets were made in the City Hall that even if the leaders would declare a strike, very few of the teachers would obey. For years teachers were kept in line by promises to do something about the schools, class size, and salaries. These promises were made and never implemented, and the teachers remained docile. Up to this time, the teachers had never even threatened a strike. Everyone was of the opinion that they were too timid and individualistic and would never go so far as to go on strike.

School administrators, who did not want to take any risk, however small, tried to play on the doubts and fears felt by many teachers—especially those close to retirement. On Nov. 19, the school administration ordered all the teachers and principals to the city auditorium. Teachers were told that if they went out on strike, they would lose their jobs, their teaching licenses, and their pensions. But the union had already prepared teachers for tactics like these with a flier explaining that such threats had no legal basis. So the teachers listened in silence to the attempts to intimidate them. Afterwards, on their way to a union meeting, they passed a tire company. All the employees stood on the street clapping and cheering as the teachers walked by. This was the first sign of the general approval with which the strike would be met.

At the union meeting, Mollie Geary, the chair of the Joint Council, announced that the strike would begin the following Monday. In a speech that was reprinted in a local paper the next day, she talked about the strike goals, which went far beyond a salary increase:

The strike will continue until the city government accepts its full responsibility for the establishment of a decent, modern public school educational program and takes positive action toward the accomplishment of that objective. This is not a strike for salaries alone. Their every salary request could be met tomorrow, but the teachers would not accept unless that offer were accompanied by unchangeable proof that the other shameful needs of the St. Paul school system will be met.

St. Paul needs more teachers to relieve crowded classes and give every child a fair chance at instruction, a thorough-going modernization of its teaching equipment, adequate supplies, proper health service for the pupils, and expanded visiting teacher service. It needs proper maintenance of its school buildings, and it needs a long-term, carefully planned program of replacement and new construction.

Until these things are assured beyond a question, St. Paul teachers will remain on strike. They owe that to the 30,000 public school pupils of St. Paul.

Frank Marzitelli, secretary of the Bakery and Confectionery Workers Union, and some other local union leaders also spoke at the meeting and gave teachers who still might be worried about losing their jobs a shrewd piece of encouragement: "Don't let them kid you, because they cannot find 900 teachers to fill your jobs. You do what we tell you, follow our instructions, and you have nothing to worry about." Albert Hanzel, who remembered these words when he was interviewed in 1974, credited the other unions with getting the strike "rolling": "Personally," he said, "I think if it hadn't been for the support of labor, we never would have gotten off the ground."

Strike!

On Nov. 24, during one of the coldest winters in memory in a city known for bitter winters, the teachers struck. Things were well organized. Picket signs were distributed at central points in the city, and each teacher was assigned two-hour picket duty. Those who couldn't picket because of physical ailments served coffee at rest shelters.

There was considerable anxiety about school principals. They were union members, but would they support the strike? Many teachers didn't think so. But when Albert Hanzel asked his principal, what he planned to do, the reply was, "Well, Mr. Hanzel, I'm not going to see the teachers going around my building picketing without my carrying a sign with them." And Hanzel said, "he was there at seven o'clock every single morning." Hanzel's principal was not alone in supporting the strikers. According to union records, fewer than twenty-five teachers and principals, out of the total St. Paul staff of 1,165, crossed the picket lines and went to work. As the strike went on, those walking the picket line were even joined by two sympathetic professors from the University of Minnesota.

Teachers were surprised and heartened by the broad support they got from the community. Teacher Nora Kelly remembered that:

It was ten [degrees] below [zero].... And the neighbors around felt so sorry for the women, that the men would come and carry the picket [signs] for us, and we would go into their homes, and they'd have coffee for us and then we'd go back out after we got warm. The children would come along with us and visit. They liked to see the teachers carrying the signs, because we were helping them.

This support showed that the union had been successful in convincing many people that the strike was not just about higher pay and better working conditions for teachers but was indeed what the picket signs said, a "strike for better schools."

On Dec. 12, the *Union Advocate*, carried an article entitled, "The Shame of a City," which said, "Today, the entire nation knows that St. Paul has been decadent in its educational stewardship. Truly this is the shame of a great city if ever there was one." The *Advocate's* claim that the strike had become a national story was no exaggeration. When strike leader Mary McGough spoke on national radio, her statement, "The teachers' strike in St. Paul aroused an apathetic public to an awareness of what it means to have classrooms without teachers," was picked up by newspapers all over the country. And *Life* magazine—which was famous, at the time, as a source for picture stories about all the great national and international events—featured a photograph of St. Paul teachers cooking a Thanksgiving turkey on the picket line.

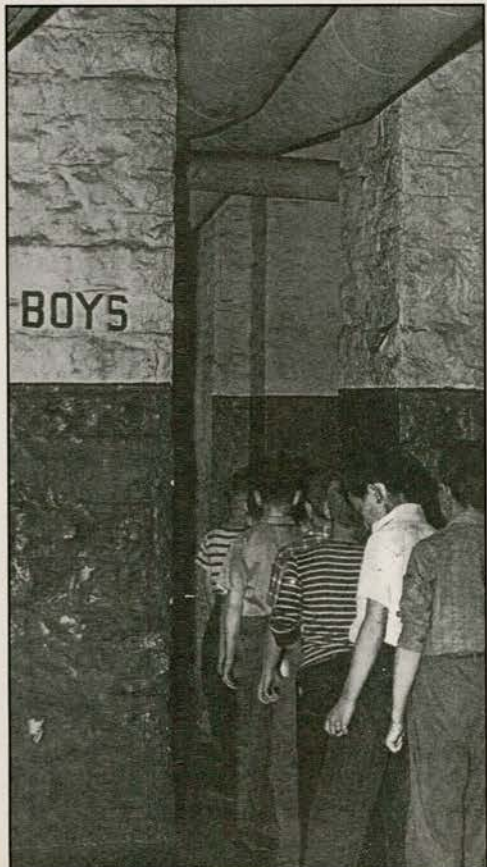
Thousands of letters supporting the strikers and more than \$20,000—much of it from other union locals—poured in from around the country. Some of the money was loaned to hard-up teachers to get them through the no-paycheck weeks, and some went to pay for advertisements in local papers that would not run stories including the teachers' viewpoints. Teacher John Ryan remembered a \$1,500 check from the AFT local in New York:

That was something that buoyed the teachers up very, very much in spirit, because everybody looks to the New York teachers federation. It was a big and powerful federation. And when we had their moral backing, why, we figured that's it.

The teachers stayed out for five weeks and three days. What the strikers remembered especially in later years was the bitter cold. But they also talked



Photographs of St. Paul schools taken in the early 1940s document some of the conditions that led to the strike. (Top) Many classrooms, like the one shown here, were still heated with individual coal stoves. (Left) School lavatories, like the one these boys wait in line to enter, were often primitive and poorly equipped.



about the quality of their leadership: Recalling Mary McGough, Albert Hanzel said, "There wasn't a single thing that any of the councilmen could argue with [her] but what she had it up here, when they had to be looking it up in books." And Margaret Kelly remembered that the strike leaders "operated then, not like timid women any more, but as very sure of themselves...they did their homework and they were able to influence the other teachers...they didn't look like they were prima donnas, just doing it for show or a name...they were really doing it for a good cause."

In the end—after several disappointments, as the city council seemed ready to meet the teachers' conditions but then drew back at the last minute—the council agreed to put a charter amendment on the ballot proposing changes in the tax structure to permit a separate school budget and to increase the per-capita expenditures to \$18 for schools and \$24 for all other city services (in contrast to the old \$30 for all services, including schools). The charter amendment passed with the necessary 60 percent of the vote in the spring of 1947.

The immediate results of the strike and subsequent charter amendment gave the teachers what they had been demanding. Buildings were fixed, supplies became available, and there was no more talk of cutting teachers' pay. In fact, salaries rose significantly, and by 1948, they were comparable to salaries in other cities of equal size. And at the urging of St. Paul teachers, the state passed a law stating that jurisdictions failing to provide textbooks would be ineligible for state funds. The strike also got the attention of cities all over the country which, alerted to the militancy that could be aroused by ignoring teacher issues, began giving their teachers unsolicited pay raises. Eventually, in 1965, St. Paul got a separate school board.

It took a lot for St. Paul teachers to go out on strike—and stay out until they had prevailed. And what they achieved with their courage and resolve had an effect far beyond the St. Paul schools. Thanks to them, teachers' unions all over the country had a clear example of how the solidarity of teachers, coupled with the support of other unions and parents, could improve both working conditions and the education of children.

Describing the impact in a message to the St. Paul Federation of Teachers on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, Al Shanker said, "The St. Paul Fed...made history in 1946 with the first teachers' strike in the nation. The issues were so familiar that they sound like today's headlines: job losses, 6 percent pay cuts, forced furloughs. Local 28 won the strike—and paved the way for collective bargaining all over the country."

In a 1974 interview, Margaret Kelly, who taught in St. Paul for decades after the strike, emphasized a different but equally important lesson taught by the St. Paul strike. The strike, she said:

...had an impact clear around the United States. It was felt in every little school and every little community, and nearly all the schools in those areas were having...the same type of problems. Education was not financed correctly, or it wasn't financed to the advantage of students. And that is the reason [for the strike]. It was not for salaries alone that teachers were interested; it was in the working conditions, in the things that they could do for students who were being deprived. □

TESTS

(Continued from page 23)

pass or fail students. Aligned standardized instruments can be used on a sampling basis, or without assigning individual scores, for school accountability purposes and tracking achievement changes, as they have been in the past. If tests are used to judge teachers and schools, they should measure gains in achievement, value-added, not just levels of knowledge.

This position will leave a lot of people concerned that while testing and grading are left up to the teachers, they have not been well prepared to conduct quality assessments. They are taught little about day-to-day classroom assessment approaches in teacher education programs. Nor is much professional development offered. If we continue the current emphasis on standardized testing to hold teachers and schools accountable, the alternative of equipping teachers to do their jobs will continue to be neglected.

We are in danger of focusing too much on highly structured systems—largely for outside control—and not on the teacher as a professional.

We give doctors the professional competencies to treat patients; all patients with infections are not given standardized examinations by third parties to see at what rate their infections receded. It is, and will remain, the teacher who delivers the “content,” who aligns his or her assessment methods to this content, and who judges performance. The elevation of the teaching practice to a teaching profession that has our confidence cannot be avoided through these formal exercises taking place outside the classroom, as important as they may be when properly used. If we examine this problem realistically, for all the rhetoric and activity of the 1990s, we have not begun to remake the profession. A reading or re-reading of John Goodlad’s *Teachers for Our Nation’s Schools* would be a good place to start.

There are many today who believe that American education was better thirty, forty, or fifty years ago. Some have pointed to McGuffey’s Readers and made comparisons with Dick and Jane. People remember demanding teachers who took no nonsense in the classroom, and meted out punishment surely and swiftly. Examples of outstanding teaching abound, such as the one-room school in Kentucky, that the writer Jesse Stuart describes in *The Thread That Runs So True*. He describes how he taught his charges, who won a contest in the city schools. If there *was* such superior teaching and learning in the old days, it was done without the standardized testing we know today. That is something worth thinking about.

We can move toward more professionalism in teaching and toward respecting the judgments teachers make about their students’ learning. At the same time, we can move, in Albert Shanker’s words, toward “less frequent

but far better testing.”

Shanker was a proponent of good testing with consequences to the student and to schools. Americans must demand higher standards in testing, as they are demanding higher standards in education generally.

Standardized testing, used properly, may tell us whether the standards-based reforms are working. In and of itself, testing is not the treatment.

There are worrisome trends in the American testing enterprise. Standardized testing has produced more and more numbers, and has fed a quantitative approach to managing the education system.

But we are short-changed in terms of the information that we are getting to help teachers and schools improve student performance. At the same time though, there are some hopeful signs that the situation will improve. And there are prospects for harnessing assessment in the service of learning if we are willing to face squarely the situation we have created. □

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TRINITY

(Continued from page 28)

ble loneliness of many first-year teachers who are given a class and expected to sink or swim. Trinity students have had an opportunity to talk over—with one another, with their mentors, and with university faculty—their good days and their bad. The students know what they already do well and are aware of areas where they need to improve. And when they talk shop, discussing and assessing the relative merits of various pedagogies and models of teaching, their conversations are grounded both in research and practical experience.

The Finale

The analogue to the master's thesis for Trinity MAT students is the portfolio, in which they present their philosophy of education, and reflect on their years of teacher preparation and their internship experience. Although each portfolio is different, typical elements include a sample unit or set of lesson plans; course syllabi; a written statement of the student's philosophy of education; the fifth-year research paper; photos of students whom the intern has instructed and samples of student work; a videotape of the intern teaching; a resume; records of professional presentations; publications; and other relevant documents such as letters of commendation from the parents of their students, mentors, and principals. At the end of the year, each student presents his or her portfolio at a ceremony attended by education department faculty, the mentor-teachers, and the entire group of interns. Portfolios remain the property of the interns, who are encouraged to take them along on job interviews in order to

demonstrate to prospective employers the depth and breadth of their professional expertise.

Trinity's teacher education emphasizes academic preparation in discipline-based subjects and education theory, but it also pays considerable attention to the how-to's of teaching. There is no attempt to provide students with the "right" answers to complex educational problems. Initially, students may find this approach frustrating or surprising, but they eventually learn that one of a teacher's greatest challenges is constantly to adapt to changing circumstances and even to invent new approaches and strategies to meet these circumstances.

Learning takes place in context. Students have many and repeated opportunities to learn by doing, to put into practice what they have studied in their university classes, and then to reflect on their experiences. The interaction between university-based courses and in-the-classroom experiences is conscious and deliberate. The program is at once research-based and experiential.

Trinity graduates believe that, in order to be successful in their classrooms, they must be active in the communities where they work; they must engage with students' families; and they must remain active in their profession by continuing to read, write, research, and present. Perhaps, at its core, teacher preparation at Trinity is about building a kind of professional capital. The university goes beyond preparing skilled, knowledgeable, and competent individual teachers. By investing in the development of cohorts of school-based mentors who practice in a network of professional development schools, and by equipping novice teachers with a broad notion of professional obligation and the foundation on which to construct their own collaborative professional culture, Trinity is contributing to a growing bank of practitioners who are committed to educational change in the public schools. □

New Developments

IN ITS continuing efforts to improve teacher education and teaching quality, Trinity undertook two initiatives in the 1998-1999 school year and will launch another in fall 1999. These center around strengthening the school-university partnership and assisting mentors to be even more effective with interns and in their own classrooms.

1. *Strengthening (or Renewing) the School-University Partnership.* In the several years since Trinity developed partnerships with the professional development schools, these schools, and their districts, have undergone a number of changes in leadership—in particular, several new superintendents and many new principals. Trinity and its partner school districts had never committed to writing the mutual roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the university and the professional development schools. This year, for the first time, a formal document—developed largely by mentors and Trinity clinical faculty—spells out these mutual obligations as a way of ensuring program continuity.
2. *Enhancing Professional Development for Mentors.* Trinity provided to each PDS a \$15,000 grant to enable mentors to write proposals for the kind of professional development they need to improve their own mentoring and teaching skills. The university then funded each of the proposals.
3. *Advancing Excellent Teaching.* Beginning in fall 1999, Trinity will sponsor the Trinity Forum for the Advancement of Teaching. One teacher in each of the nineteen San Antonio-area school districts will be selected to be a Forum fellow (and will receive a day a month of release time, funded by Trinity). The fellows, together with teachers from the professional development schools, will meet once a month with experts in the field of teaching—among them, TheodoreSizer, founder of the Coalition of Essential Schools; James Kelly, president of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; and Barbara Kelley, the first teacher chair of the National Board—to discuss issues important to improving the quality of teaching.

MURDERERS

(Continued from page 9)

this approach has no basis in the realities of child development.

When it comes to the feeling part of morality, boys who kill are at a special disadvantage. The key to moral feeling is empathy, which is an openness to the feelings of others that allows a person to appreciate what an action means emotionally to someone else. But when a boy's own emotional life is closed off and locked away, when he can't accurately and openly feel his own feelings, it is unlikely that he has much of a basis for being empathic with others. Of course, this is a problem for males generally in our society, as Terrence Real's work so vividly demonstrates.¹⁶ In this sense, the emotional blockage so characteristic of violent boys is partly a result of their maleness in American culture.

But added to this generic problem is the fact that most violent boys have specific unresolved issues of trauma from experiences of abuse and rejection at home, in addition to their exposure to violence and victimization in the community, on the streets, and through the mass media. In psychological terms, this means many have a history of dissociation, the emotionally self-protective strategy of choice for children facing trauma. This adaptation shuts off and compartmentalizes feelings, and very likely inhibits empathy.

Twenty years ago, a study by Gregory Jurkovic and his colleagues found that the most dangerous violent juvenile delinquents display very little empathy.¹⁷ In his widely read book *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman defines emotional intelligence as the ability to read emotions in others, to communicate effectively in the nonverbal realm, to manage the ups and downs of day-to-day life, and to have appropriate expectations for relationships.¹⁸ Empathy is one of the foundations for emotional intelligence, and emotional intelligence is at least as important for life success as intellectual intelligence. Goleman puts it this way: "The empathic attitude is engaged again and again in moral judgments, for moral dilemmas involve potential victims." A boy who has organized his inner life around the need to protect himself from his feelings of victimization and unworthiness is unlikely to pay attention effectively to the feelings of others, especially to their feelings as victims. This psychological defense mechanism is an important source of deadly petulance, that arrogant stance in which an individual feels justified in responding to insult with lethal violence. Violent boys are so desperately defensive that they overcompensate with arrogance. It's not because deep down they really feel superior to everyone else that they assume the prerogative of deciding who lives and who dies, but because deep down they feel so empty and worthless. In talking with violent boys, I find validation for this interpretation. For example, although the youth prison's program offers "victim awareness" programs, the boys find it hard to make use of these programs because their own victimization remains largely unacknowledged and certainly unaddressed. Conneel says, "What about me, man? What about what I have gone through? I mean, I want to talk about what hurts me,

and all they want to talk about is the people I hurt. I won't do it. The whole program stinks."

Adolescent Melodrama

As children pass into adolescence, they are particularly vulnerable to melodrama and sentimentality. This finds benign expression in their attraction to stories of doomed lovers. This is why so many adolescents saw the movie *Titanic* over and over again and why Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is a perennial favorite among teenagers. Thirty years ago when I taught in a junior high school, we took the entire ninth-grade class to see the Zeffirelli version. The tears flowed, even among the most delinquent kids in the class—in fact, *particularly* among the most delinquent kids in the class. And this melodramatic sentimentality can actually be a resource in dealing with children. Several child therapists of my acquaintance have reported that they found their work with girls enhanced when they were able to make use of *Titanic* as a parable, as a reference point in discussing their client's own life. Boys like *Titanic*, too, but they are much more likely to find their parables in *Rambo*, *Blade*, *Boyz in the Hood*, *Terminator*, and *Dirty Harry*.

Impulsiveness and self-centered thinking are the other hallmarks of adolescence. Teenagers do act rashly, and they do see the world as if it revolved around them. By and large, they do believe, with Shakespeare, that "all the world's a stage." But teenagers more than adults tend to believe that they are always the star of the show. This is why teenagers find it nearly impossible to leave home for school in the morning without carefully considering their appearance. After all, *everyone* will be looking at them. Sociologist Erving Goffman identified this "imaginary audience" as an important influence in adolescent behavior.¹⁹ Most of the time, in most teenagers, this self-centeredness ranges from cute to exasperating, but when the script of the play in which the teenager is a star is a violent tragedy, people die. The lost boys are teenagers, but they are starring in a horror show while more fortunate teens are starring in situation comedies or championship games. Television shows and movies play a role in providing teenagers with the scenarios for their performances.

Protection and Moral Teaching

Once youngsters get melodramatic moral ideas into their heads, they need the moderating influence of adults to bring them back to moral reality. Many American kids, troubled or healthy, don't receive that protection. Unfortunately, there is a breakdown in childhood protection all around us, a breakdown that hits violent boys hardest because they are most in need of protection.

In some cases, this breakdown takes the form of adults who care for kids by training them to shoot down living beings—albeit usually with the intention that they limit their shooting to animals. The breakdown also comes when adults saturate kids with vivid media images glorifying violence as the legitimate solution to all problems and provide them with point-and-shoot video games that desensitize them to the act of

killing. It comes when adults fail to take seriously and respond effectively to early signs of trouble that often are quite dramatic—for example, threatening statements, revenge fantasies, and acts of cruelty to animals. And finally, the breakdown in childhood protection comes when adults leave children too much to their own devices—home alone, either literally or figuratively. All this leads to a breakdown of adult authority and greater reliance by kids on peer influences and the violent culture of the mass media, a recipe for moral retardation. When this happens to boys in general the result is sad, taking the form of alienation, aggression, and the obnoxiousness that we so commonly refer to as disrespect for one's elders. But, most dangerously, when it happens to vulnerable boys, it exposes them to a do-it-yourself morality. And when it occurs in the context of shame and existential crisis, killing becomes the right thing to do "on stage" for such a boy's imaginary audience, no matter how big a mistake it may be off stage, where the real-world consequences must be faced.

Moral development is the process through which children learn the rules of conduct in their society and learn to act upon these rules. But this learning must take place in the heart as well as in the head. Without adequate adult buffering and limit setting, the moral behavior of children is left in the hands of children themselves, where their own feelings and thoughts are the last line of defense.

What can adults do to protect boys from negative moral development and teach them good moral sense? Let me outline a few steps:

■ First, adults can *stimulate the development of empathy*. To behave morally, children need to develop empathy, the ability to feel what others are feeling. Empathy helps them to connect abstract principles of morality with real-life situations and feelings. Without empathy, there is always the danger that morality will become moralistic, a caricature of caring in which an individual's distorted perspective on what is right and wrong becomes a self-justifying rationale for violence. After the shooting stops, the fallacy of their moral reasoning

often becomes clear to kids who kill, but by then it is too late.

■ Second, adults can *protect boys from degrading, dehumanizing, and desensitizing images*. Go to almost any movie theater showing an R-rated film full of horrible violence and aggressive sexuality, and you can see young boys entering the theater. This exposure is a corrupting influence on the foundations of moral development.

■ Third, adults can *stimulate and support the spiritual development of boys*. While going to a church or synagogue is no guarantee of receiving caring moral instruction designed to increase empathy, a boy's involvement in a nonpunitive religious institution does help. Psychologist Andrew Weaver at the University of Hawaii has reviewed the evidence linking religious and spiritual experience to adolescent behavior and development, and he has found that this experience does buffer children from the cultural and social poisons of modern life. It is important that the religious experience be nonpunitive, that is, that it put the message of love center stage.²⁰

All of us operate in two moral systems: one set of ethical principles for the people we consider insiders, a second set for outsiders. But troubled, violence-prone boys differ from most of us in how they decide who is inside and who is outside the circle, in where they draw the line. Where they draw the line is a matter of personal history and circumstances as much as, or perhaps more than, it is a matter of choice. Incarcerated boys often remark that when they were on the streets, they lived to survive and behaved accordingly but now that they are (safely) institutionalized, they can afford to consider other moral options. They may find it scary to switch moral systems, because doing so requires that they have trust and faith. Though often in short supply, neither is totally absent. Building trust and faith in the first place is the foundation for preventing youth violence. Finding ways to nurture them in boys who have already killed is the key to their moral rehabilitation. □

(Continued on next page)

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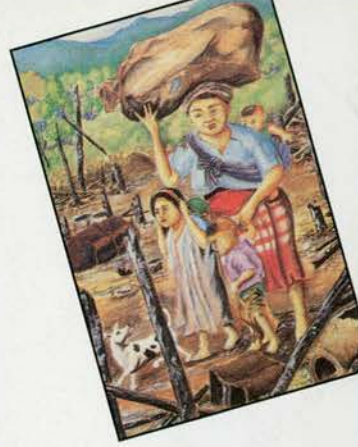
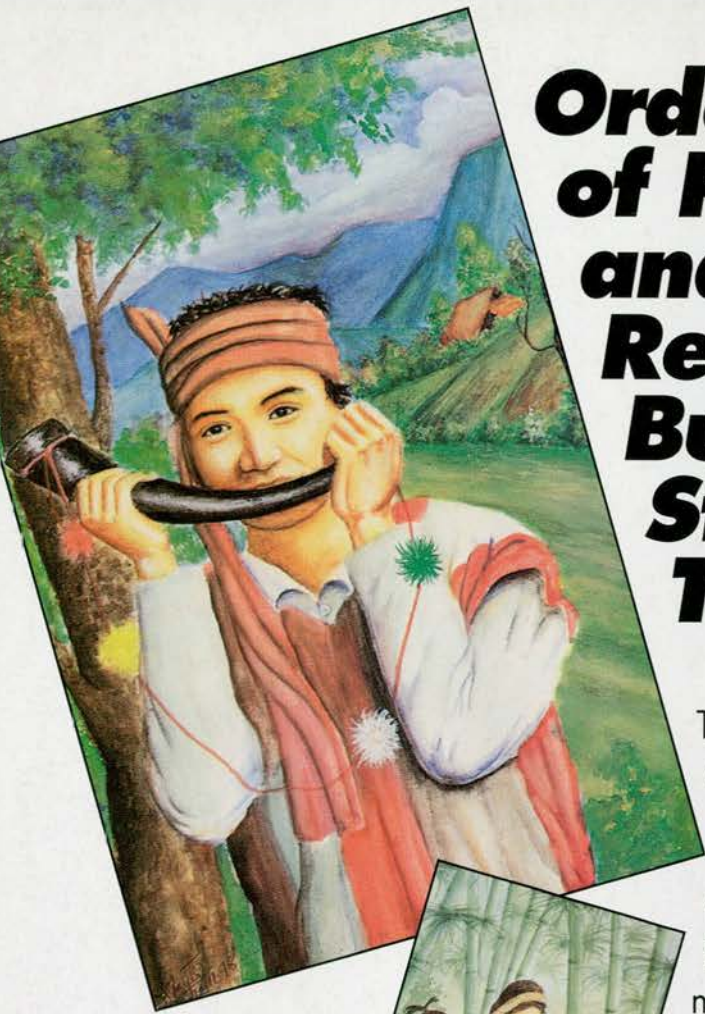
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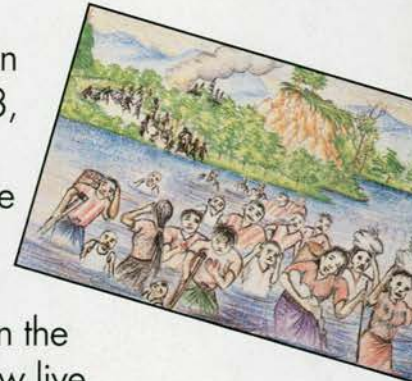
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