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Progressive Education in Transition: An Intellectual History

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PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION IN TRANSITION: AN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

by

CAROLYN J. PETHTEL FAUST

(Under the direction of William M. Reynolds)

ABSTRACT

Using a critical, intellectual perspective that is supported as a conceptual framework and provides a solid basis for historical study, this theoretical research focused on the historical evidence of sustained progressive forms of education. The developments within the field of curriculum studies during the late 1800s transitioned through changes in the 1950s and 1960s and the movement forward with the reconceptualization of the field in the early 1970s were discussed. This reconceptualization of the field in the early 1970s provided a renewed texture from which to move forward in critiquing and changing curriculum theory. By “understanding curriculum” rather than focusing on moving through educational designs and models, curriculum is “lived” and emerges. The progression in the work of scholars within the field carried the foundation upon which this research took place.

By providing new and renewed questions through provocation, the field was added to by continuing to keep the discourse alive. Educational theory makes available an interwoven historical perspective in which to engage in the endeavor, which presented and provided a perspective of what transpired and continues within the field. This study included evidence of modern opportunities where there was further development of curriculum conceptualization. Implications of progressivism in the work of shaping evolving pedagogy and the voices of current, active scholars was also provided along with the critics of such discourse.

Throughout this study, the intention was to seek to discover if progressive education continued in the field of curriculum studies historically through alternatives within the field in both public and private schooling. By taking a look into the rearview mirror historically of where public education in America has been and then situating ourselves within the conversation by returning forward to the present, one can gain further understanding of the tasks facing the teaching profession, the vast educational system in America, and the responsibilities we all hold to the world and international community at large. Through this research, a further understanding of the work that continues to disturb the waters of the field of curriculum studies was queried.

INDEX WORDS: Progressive Education, Alternative Education, Reconceptualization, Compassionate Curriculum, Educational History

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PREFACE

The discussion lingers. As we as a society at the local, state, and national level while living in the international global community have broken into the 21st century and now move forward into this new millennium, the education of today's youth, who are tomorrow's leaders, becomes ever more complex and harried. The further integration of technology into our personal lives along with every aspect of daily living has brought new questions and frontiers to be blazed through rediscovery. Our fast-paced lives produce novel dilemmas and different choices regarding our desire to live compassionate, responsible, and comprehensive lives within society and here on our planet. The need for discussion, more so vital than any other persons who have ever lived before with such rapid technological advances occurring at lightning speed, is very apparent.

Yet, as the questions have been raised time and time again, let us turn and gaze first into the history of progressive education and then turn the focus to what occurred within the field of curriculum studies during the late 1950s and through the 1980s before bringing the discussion to progressive education in the 21st-century classrooms of today. By beginning the work here with an understanding of the history of the Progressive Education Association and the major scholars within that facet of the field of curriculum studies, along with providing an understanding and query regarding the most influential changes in our country and in society over time, the conversation will be enabled to move forward into the deep waters that provide the fluidity for discourse. It is possible to situate the conversation there and then springboard forward to provide a critical understanding of the endurance of progressive education through alternative methods and means in public and private educational endeavors as history has unfolded. The foundations and early meanings of progressive education are important to understand in

our conversation here in order to begin to create the tapestry that makes up educational opportunities in the postmodern international community.

The late 1950s brought about many changes in the daily classroom as educators, through regulation of the federal government, produced models of instruction focused on increased learning in both math and science. In response to the Soviet Union's launching of Sputnik on October 4, 1957, a new and refreshed political and economic approach in the United States resulted in centering education on producing students who could respond to the needs of the country during the beginning of the Cold War. At the same time, early progressive education was blamed for the "soft" curriculum that was led by progressive men and women educators in both the public and private sectors. To many, the progressive curriculum was blamed for America's loss in political stronghold and an "intellectually-focused" education (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 236-237). As the discourse continues, the question of intellectually focused will occur through the research here into meaning and resolution within the field of curriculum.

As our country's history unfolded in the 1960s through civil unrest and a changing political climate, the challenges in public education continued. Many progressive ideas were established in private institutions, but public education endeavors were short-lived panaceas for larger problems. It was not until the early 1970s with the reconceptualization within the field of curriculum studies that once again the conversation regarding education turned to questioning the molding of practitioners with models and designs as compared to providing intellectual, open-ended conversation regarding curriculum theory. In this way, progressive education was revitalized in alternative forms. Through scholars in the field and implementation by educators both within and away from public school systems, a critical understanding of curriculum with

its many textures and facets was once again brought to the forefront, and the complicated conversation (Pinar, 2004, p. xii) continues even today.

Throughout this study, the intention will be to seek to discover if progressive education continues in the field of curriculum studies. Researching whether progressive education has continued to emerge through alternatives within the field and in both public and private schooling will be the focus that drives the conversation here. By taking a look into the rearview mirror historically of where public education in America has been and situating ourselves within the conversation and then returning forward to the here and now, one can gain further understanding of the tasks facing the teaching profession, educational leaders, our entire vast educational system in America, and responsibilities we all hold to the world and international community at large.

The work in the field need not tarry for time is of the essence, and the world is spinning forward as we speak and lay our words for others to read, ingest from the archive (Derrida, 1995/1996, p. 13), and then move forward with actions of change through pedagogical efforts and focused intent. As a researcher and writer, one can only speak with the voice that is provided at the time and through a search for answers. Let us begin that journey here with this voice and traverse the wide, deep waters that provide a critical inquiry into the history of progressive education through the field of curriculum studies.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Anytime one begins an endeavor, they must first of all find where they are situated within the discourse. Therefore, as a researcher, one must locate him or herself among the current work in the field and then point forward in the direction that is planned to be undertaken (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 22). In situating oneself within the discussion of progressive education, it is first imperative to find a compass point through creating meaning. Providing one single cohesive comprehensive definition of *progressive education* is indeed a complicated situation at best. As Norris (2004) stated in *The Promise and Failure of Progressive Education*,

If we were to gather 100 of the brightest educational minds in this country and ask the question “What is progressive education?” we might very likely get more than 100 different definitions, probably none of which could be considered right or wrong. (p. 9)

However, as one reviews the historic literature regarding the different tenets of progressive education, there are common concepts and ideals that run a thread throughout the conversation. Norris went on to relate to us that progressive educators throughout history into the present day described themselves as having the philosophies of

1) being child-centered; 2) providing practices away from the “traditional” norms of public schooling; 3) linking education to the natural process of childhood and to real life experiences; 4) opening education to the natural curiosities of human growth from childhood to beyond; and 5) allowing for students' individualities and nurturing of each individual's strengths while assisting with building support for weaknesses. (p. 13)

Although self-termed progressive educators provide these descriptions, there has continued to be throughout time controversy within the profession and criticism from politicians and outside observers regarding whether actual educational practices in individual schools follow any kind of progressive movement (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 231-251; Norris, 2004, p. 91; Pignatelli & Pflaum, 1992, p. 91; Zilversmit, 1993, p. 117). Carlson (2002) stated, "Of course, the very idea of progress, upon which progressivism has been so dependent, is increasingly suspect and can no longer have an assured meaning" (p. 21). Perhaps the question here then should be whether an assured meaning is necessary or needed, particularly when progressivism's foundation calls for an open-ended, exploratory curriculum and scholarly inquiries.

Delving for deeper meaning of progressive education, it is through the writings of Carlson (2002) that an examination of the nature of teaching and learning will springboard the discussion here. Carlson presented Socrates' analogy of "lighting up the cave" (pp. 28-29) in order to educate "elitist leaders for a utopian world" (p. 26). It is also important to note here that Carlson was responding to progressive philosopher Maxine Greene. He wrote,

The narrative of education as Enlightenment seemed to offer an alternative, one that could help her demystify the dominant culture and critique its treatment of women and other marginalized and oppressed identity groups. It took her some time, but she began to realize that in the university of "the Great White Father" a woman's voice was not equal to a man's. (p. 25)

As the analogy related, Plato followed his teacher, Socrates, by presenting this story to his own students. In the reflection, "taught humans" are in a cave held much as a prisoner might be. Positioned so that they can only stare straight ahead, they only see the shadows

cast by the fire on the walls in front of them. This is all that they know as “real” and as “true.” The question is asked, what would happen if one of them would be taken down from their shackles and forcibly pushed toward the fire and eventually out of the cave, being thus blinded by the light that they must see? It is theorized that, after getting used to the brightness and spending time looking through the light, the human then returns to the cave and tells others of what is beyond the boundaries. This changed human then leads others on the same path to enlightenment and being. Carlson stated, “Even though he is superior to those he leads, he must humble himself before the public and become the servant of the public good” (p. 29). In this early allegory, it is evident that the oppression of progressive, intellectual, and enlightened individuals was apparent and did not come without much anguish.

Thus begins the work of the individual teacher, according to the ancient writings. As one can comprehend, the teacher who has been enlightened in the brightness is charged with the modest task of bringing the truth or truths to others who may or may not be interested in receiving such knowledge. Some may prefer to continue to look straight ahead. The teacher is charged with leading the progressive discourse on life and living in order to shape and encourage the human mind. However, as Carlson (2002) stated, rarely is the individual even in these early times seen as an individual:

While some groups are understood to be already crawling out of the cave, other groups are understood to be just beginning their ascent or, even worse, unable to make the ascent because they lack the intellectual and moral strength because they are still ruled by desire and impulse, by “id” rather than “ego.” (p. 38)

Already a “chain of being” is begun: a structure of class and limitations in who is taught and what is taught. However, it is the task of the self-effacing teacher to maintain the

curriculum and continue efforts to those “elite” who can ascend and make the trek. The teaching of virtues for living life is the main thrust at this point in history; higher level intellectualism by “leaving the cave” was provided strictly in order to create leaders to provide for maintaining an orderly society for the masses to live.

As history is fast forwarded to the colonization of America and early efforts of pioneers to shape the “New World,” education continued to be a quest to produce “enlightened” individuals who would lead the country effectively. Primitive technology provided the inked quill and paper to write down ideas to share with others while creating a commonality of language. Oral discourse continued to stage opportunities for individual teachers to share ideas with others, many of whom served as students of selected dogmatic ideals and tenets.

It was the early Puritans in our country who understood curriculum as theological text (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002, pp. 624-625), and charismatic teachers indoctrinated their students with cultural reproduction of the times. Education was provided to youth to indoctrinate for compliance and thus also began the change in coursework of teaching elementary fundamentals; however, the building of intellectual thinking for society’s leaders was still saved for the privileged university level. This individual instruction pursued the emphasis on “development of piety with the goal of creating ‘the good society’” (Spring, 2001, p. 9). It was with these changes that the progression of pedagogy began its metamorphosis into a science for political control and economic endeavors. Governmental bodies, emulating those from the motherland of England, were developed as the colonies grew and regulation of public schooling began, including regulation of individual teachers along with prescribed curriculum and methods of educating in individual classrooms. The art of cultivating and leading one to

enlightenment emulated the ancient world as colleges were established to develop intellectual and stimulating conversation for the elitist class but most importantly for the education of political leaders as an emerging young country. Intellectual inquiry and freedom were saved for the few, for the majority of young learners education was a type of science to be transmitted and copied with no variance from the course.

In the late 1800s, America grew in population through immigration mostly from northwestern Europe. As will be discussed at length in chapter 2 of this dissertation, this influx brought about radical changes and challenges to education and the entire country. Semel and Sadovnik (1999) related that, before the turn of the century, the purpose of education was “seen in a variety of ways: religious, utilitarian, civic and, with Horace Mann in the Common School era, social mobility” (p. 4). With these changes, a new reform movement, called the progressive movement, swept across the country. John Dewey, an American philosopher, argued for the restructuring of schools to meet the needs of individual students and thus to build an efficient society. Dewey and other educators within the field became known as progressive educators. It is worth noting here that the work of progressive education and progressive educators of the time was not political in nature or in definition. Being child centered and providing for individual growth through hands-on experiences and natural curiosity and exploration provided the foundation for further progressive endeavors.

Dewey (1937) argued in *My Pedagogic Creed* for a restructuring of schools along the lines of “embryonic communities” (p. 7). It was with this call for the creation of a curriculum that would allow for the child’s interests and developmental level while introducing the child to the “point of departure from which the child can trace and follow the progress of mankind in history, getting an insight also into the materials used and the

mechanical principles involved” that Dewey’s vision was developed (Semel & Sadovich, 1999, p. 5). This child-centered, hands-on approach was at the very heart of the progressive education movement.

Beginning with the needs and interests of the student, the child would be allowed to participate in the planning of his or her own course of study. Through the project method, with included group learning as well, students would experiment and explore outcomes. Although his early visions in particular provided for a focus on social conditions and reformation, Dewey continued to grow in his own philosophies, and by the early 1930s, he saw where his major tenets had already been distorted. Students were slotted into social classes (much as Plato’s vision of enlightenment for the few), while others followed through predetermination. Dewey’s influence, however, was great in changing education at the time and setting a foundation for further progressive education endeavors historically and even today.

By thoroughly understanding the history of progressive education from the early 1900s and bringing forward the changes in the field beginning in the late 1950s, a critical viewpoint of what transpired challenges scholars in the field to find retrospection. Transitions in education as the Cold War ensued, the civil rights movement of the 1960s presented a focus on individual human rights and equity in education, and civil opportunities mirrored the changes in American society. New shores were reached in the late 1960s through the early 1970s and into the scholarly work today regarding the reconceptualization of the field of curriculum studies and use of critical frameworks in viewing and understanding the work of curriculum scholars. This provided further portage of the evolution of progressive education currently into the 21st century and includes all of its different facets and derivatives.

It is important to not proceed any further within this discussion of progressive education without further introducing these changes and challenges to the field of curriculum studies that began in the early 1970s. A thorough discussion of the shifts in paradigms will be developed in chapter 4 of this dissertation. Pinar et al. (2002) in *Understanding Curriculum* provided a detailed account of what transpired in the field during the time period (pp. 159-185). They related that, in 1970, the National Education Association published Schwab's *The Practical: A Language for Curriculum*, which hailed that the curriculum field was "moribund" (p. 176). Schwab began the call to curriculum theorists to change from theory to practical and quasipractical along with the eclectic. Others before him during this era who were concerned with the stagnancy of the field included James B. MacDonald, Dwayne Huebner, Ross Mooney, Eliot W. Eisner, Paul R. Klohr, and Herbert M. Kliebard. All of these curricularists believed that the field had become stifling and static, and it was here with Schwab's call to urgency before the field died completely that the reconceptualization of curriculum began.

It was also at this time that, rather than a transcribing of curricular models or practical solutions such as classroom efficiencies, the reconceptualization focused on understanding; understanding curriculum in all of its contexts is the key term here as in within contexts. As Pinar (1999) stated in *Contemporary Curriculum Discourses: Twenty Years of JCT*,

Curriculum studies had begun in the 1920s as a subfield of educational administration. The main function of this emerging discipline was to develop and manage curricula for a public school system in a period of rapid expansion. Consequently the early texts of the field addressed issues of development, including curriculum planning and evaluation. The term *Reconceptualists*

described individuals whose scholarship challenged this tradition--that is, suggested that the function of curriculum studies was [not] the development and management but the scholarly and disciplined understanding of educational experience, particularly in its political, cultural, gender, and historical dimensions. (p. 484)

The terms *reconceptualist* or the *reconceptualizing* of the field were not born by the scholars in the movement themselves; rather they were gleaned through papers that were produced by key persons involved at the time (Pinar et al., 2002, pp. 211-213). It is imperative to note here that there is no such term as reconceptualist, but rather there was the development itself within the field, which meant a shifting of paradigms, creating of new meanings, and questioning of the current notions within curriculum studies; this was a reconceptualization of the field itself. Although many of the major concepts of the process are based in early progressive education theory, it is through this frame or unframed work that the newly formed paradigms came into fruition to actually change the field of curriculum studies and influence the progression of educational theory. It was Dwayne E. Huebner who laid important groundwork in the early 1970s toward the reconceptualization of the field (Pinar et al., p. 213) and James B. Macdonald who, during the 1973 University of Rochester Curriculum Theory Conference, “cited limitations of developmental models in curriculum and education” (Pinar et al., p. 216) and continued the discourse forward.

With the establishment of the *JCT: Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* in 1978 by reconceptualist and originator William F. Pinar, who was influenced greatly by Paul Klohr (Pinar, 1999, pp. xi-xv; Pinar et al., 2002, pp. 219-220), and with a break away from the Association for Curriculum and Development’s conferences by establishing

with Janet Miller the Bergamo Conferences, the complex field of curriculum studies began a dramatic paradigm shift in full reality that continues today. It was and is through these venues that scholars can and could once again begin to have discourse and explore and understand curriculum in all of its complexities and mediums. While many in the curriculum field chose and have chosen to remain entrenched in focusing on curriculum models and design, the field even into the 21st century has taken on new voices and faces to continue to question education and its practices.

Continuing the discussion of progressive education or progressivism and what many term its revival and eminence in the 21st century, it will be important to discuss the orientations of theories that have been incorporated in the movement forward. As Pinar (2004) stated, “Curriculum theory is, then, about discovering and articulating for oneself and with others, the educational significance of the school subjects for self and society in the ever-changing historical moment” (p. 16). Rejecting, accepting, and examining historical and current theories within a critical context is of vital importance so we can continue to understand curriculum as it exists today.

In order to understand fully progressive education, it is imperative to provide this further consideration and discourse, and this research will prove to be evidential and of vital importance in providing an understanding that progressive education continues today albeit with alternative means than its original founders could ever have imagined. Further questioning of how progressive curriculum studies translate into actual classroom practice and curriculum development is occurring within the field even today just as it has transpired over time. It is by working from a critical theorist viewpoint that the waters will indeed be disturbed once again by the current of the discourse here.

Giroux (2000) related in *Stealing Innocence: Corporate Culture's War on Children*,

As progressive institutions, American schools often have been viewed as democratic public spheres where students could learn how to master the capacities for critical consciousness, learn how to engage in public debate, and alter structures of power that shaped their identity and social existence. (p. 147)

The phrase "as progressive institutions" lays our compass point for the journey we are embarking on within this study. It was repeated again in 2000 by Giroux and first written in the archives in modern history by George S. Counts in 1926 of the University of Chicago and Harold O. Rugg of Teachers College, Columbia University. These men brought forward the use of curriculum in order to reconstruct society. It was Bobbitt (1930), a former social efficiency proponent of the early part of the 20th century, who startled his colleagues by moving away from the idea of schooling being a preparation for "adult living" to "Education is not primarily to prepare for life at some future time. Quite the reverse; it purposes to hold high the current living. . . . Life cannot be 'prepared for.' It can only be lived" (p. 43). It was with these ideals of utilizing curriculum in our public schools as a "vehicle by which social injustice would be redressed and the evils of capitalism corrected" (Kliebard, 1995, p. 158) that the journey continued.

It is also here that once again there is a living curriculum rather than a focus on designing curriculum. In this manner, curriculum arises and progresses forward as we as students and individuals progress and evolve through time and in the present moment. One of the major concerns to be suggested here is that part of the problem with progressive education's demise and the constant conflict between scholars in the field is that progressive education itself became a model or design when translated down to

practitioners. It was never with that intent by the originators but rather to open curriculum and provide for intellectual inquiry--both for students and educators and for impacting society and the international community. At the same time when the Progressive Education Association was formed, progressive tenets came open for political debate and definition within a confined organization. Once again, rather than opening the conversation of critical pedagogy for ongoing inquiry among educators and other stakeholders, the majority of those involved in the field wanted strict answers and a laying down of doctrines rather than providing for exploring critical textures to create an understanding of curriculum. Pinar et al. (2002) stated, "Twenty years ago, when the contemporary field was still embryonic, it was clear that *understanding*--not curriculum development--would typify the primary modes of scholarship and pedagogy in the reconceptualized curriculum field" (p. 213).

For the purposes of this discussion, the term progressive education then, in this researcher's viewpoint and based on the research within the field, means locating alternatives to mainstream education or progression into moving from focusing on designs and models to understanding curriculum as a lived experience through an inquiry of critical perspective. It is with this dissertation that the open-ended meaning or meanings of the path of progressive education will be explored and historically analyzed along with providing evidence of present alternatives as they have manifested themselves (chapter 5). The research indicated that progressive education has always existed in a variety of forms through both public and private initiatives. Even in times of silent movement forward, progressive education and progressive educators have remained and continue to remain very much alive and active although by different means than the movement's original indoctrination in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The developments

in the field that continue today provide a compass point to persistently turn to and work within throughout this body of research.

By first gaining a thorough consideration of the history of progressive education and its movement through the latter part of the 18th century and into present times, the conversation can continue, which is the primary purpose in crossing the waters that lie within. This foundation will also allow for deeper discourse regarding the reconceptualization of the field during the latter part of the 1960s and into the early 1970s and beyond to contributions in the present day that have provided for progressing forward in the educational realm through alternative forms of education. The lack of utilizing a critical, historical framework in much of the research regarding progressive education, particularly between the challenging time period of the late 1950s and the mid-1980s as progressive education was thought to have been laid aside and then reborn through the reconceptualization in the field, is apparent, and evidence will be provided in this research. In this study, we run the river of curriculum as it flows. It will be the endeavor to fill that gap and also provide further discussion regarding present-day progressive education. This is the basis being provided for a need in this area of the field of curriculum studies and for the research through familiar and rediscovered areas in the current literature.

Through the use of critical theory, this dialogue can provide meaning for what has historically transpired and what can occur as progressive education moves forward in this inquiry. The work in this area is not without criticism (as shall be discussed); however, it is only through stirring the currents of the deeper avenues of curriculum that we can continue to keep the conversation flowing and dialogue open to understanding and in

view continuously in order to maintain a progressive course forward. Counts (1932a) in *Progressive Education* wrote,

Ordinary men and women crave a tangible purpose for which to strive and which lends richness and dignity and meaning to life. I would consequently like to see Progressive Education come to grips with the problem of creating a tradition that has roots in American soil, is in harmony with the spirit of the age, recognizes the facts of industrialism, appeals to the most profound impulses of our people, and takes into account the emergence of a world society. (p. 259)

This call for a compassionate curriculum and building a new social order (Counts, 1932b) through education holds true even in today's society and economic and political orders as our technological advances have continued to evolve and grow and now are leading us rapidly into the future (Counts, 1932a). Compassionate here is not meant in a romantic sense. Even the voice used later in this body of work is never meant to be romantic in nature but rather is a metaphorical and autobiographical voice in order to provide intellectual discourse and a thread from which to spring.

Reynolds (2003a) in *Curriculum: A River Runs Through It* explained the compassionate curriculum further by stating,

Sentimentality does not tarry. Compassion does. Compassion is more than the sentimentality of words, notes, and flowers. Compassion is something we do. Our compassion does not do anyone any good unless it is concrete and tangible. It is not sentimentality that simply expresses itself. Compassion is a type of praxis, not neglect. (p. 48)

Compassion requires attentiveness and action in our "being." It calls for an education that is open to what "is" in order to provide ethical intention and determination of what "will

be." As Reynolds stated, a praxis or unity of theory formed into practice. This is the intent of progressive education in all of its alternative forms.

A curriculum based in a compassion for being is one that provides many lenses in the telescope to proceed forward with progression. Curriculum may be viewed from critical textures to provide meaning and progression forward in our development of intellectualism in public and private education via alternative forms of providing for teaching and learning. It is here that the field of curriculum studies has continued to move into one of inquiry and openness to explore curriculum in all of its contexts and implications (Caine & Caine, 1997; Jardine, 1998; Pinar et al., 2002; Reynolds & Webber, 2004; Schlechty, 2000; Schubert, 1986).

It was Max Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School of social science in his 1937 essay *Traditional and Critical Theory* where the first meaning of using critical theory in understanding is attributed to have begun. Horkheimer was the foremost representative of the critical theory associated with the Institute of Social Research (or Frankfurt School; Pinar et al., p. 248). Together with Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Jurgen Habermas, and Herbert Marcuse, Horkheimer developed a further social consciousness enabling alternative thinking and viewpoints. Whereas the Frankfurt School was not a physical setting but rather a grouping of thinkers from the Institute for Social Research, their impact has been far-reaching and steadfast. Critical theory is a social theory that is oriented towards critiquing and changing society as a whole in contrast to the traditional theory oriented only to understanding or changing it. Originally a school of neo-Marxist social theory, social research, and philosophy, the group came together at the institute as severe critics of capitalism and also believing that Marx's followers had begun parroting only a narrow selection of his ideals. Other important modern contributors to the field

included Juergen Habermas and Roland Barthes. Peter McLaren's postmodernist interpretations allowed for new revitalization of critical theory (Pinar et al., 2002, pp. 510-514) along with Philip Wexler's work in the field (Pinar, 1999, pp. 128-150). It is through remembering and utilizing the major tenets of critical theory from the Frankfurt School that we will return to the struggle for American education through the early 1930s and the progression in educational theory.

The social reconstructionists and their opposition to social efficiency proponents were both concerned with changing society and, therefore, education. However, social reconstructionists were involved with critiquing society, using critical pedagogy rather than understanding it. As Kliebard (1995) stated, "schools had to address ongoing social and economic problems by raising up a new generation critically attuned to the defects of the social system and prepared to do something about it" (p. 161). The statement "something about it" is the key here. Providing an education to all that allows for opening conversations, complicated as they may be, providing premises for acting on our convictions and discoveries instead of lying passively, and allowing for the growth of intellectual questioning and theses continues the progression in providing a compassionate curriculum that is steeped in building for intellectual development and lifelong growth. As we move forward in this new millennium, our society, our students, and we as educators and scholars within the field are still undergoing a metamorphosis; we are progressing forward in a new progressivism.

Curriculum in Latin means "the race of life"--literally in the infinitive form *currere* "to run the race" (Asanuma, as cited in Pinar, 1999, p. 159). It is here that we can approach curriculum with a personal voice through consciousness and with lived experience. As is stated in *Understanding Curriculum* (Pinar et al., 2002),

currere, a phenomenologically related form of autobiographical curriculum theory. Grumet cited *currere* as a method and theory of curriculum which escapes the epistemological traps of mainstream social science and educational research. *Currere* focuses on the educational experience of the individual, as reported by the individual. Rather than working to quantify behaviors to describe their surface interaction or to establish causality, *currere* seeks to describe what the individual subject him or herself makes of these behaviors. (p. 414)

As we situate ourselves within the paradigms of approaching the field of curriculum studies into an inquiry, we can begin to run the race of life rather than merely to run courses of curriculum and studies for ulterior motives and means. It is through this lens that the researcher here will continue by taking a critical, historical perspective of progressive education within the field of curriculum studies. Navigating this set course, sliding through the slippery waters and riding the rapids high and mightily, we chart our way through the waters of education's history in our country in search of answers and progress forward with the times.

CHAPTER 2

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION: THE EARLY YEARS

First, let us leave the docking of our paradigms and begin with a discussion of the beginnings of progressive education by reviewing the literature previously set forward on the path of our inquiry here. It is through understanding the beginning of the progressive movement in education that we can find our place in the late 1950s and through the 1980s with ease and continue the conversation within the present day. The early years of progressive education mirrored the social and political environment within our country at that time, just as in the later years, and are important in this study as the basis for the roots of progressive education.

One of the most rapidly changing times ever in American history was the 30-year period from 1900 to 1930. The shifting from Victorian ideals to modern ones, which included industrial and technological advances, brought many challenges to our country and, thus, to the American public education system. With direct similarities in the present, this era held a place in history when changing businesses and industries began swiftly to form and re-form giant corporations that required a great number of qualified workers in order to move the growing economy forward. Corporations looked to schools for the socialization and skills needed, and schools began to respond through change.

In the history books (Appleby et al., 2005; Farah & Karls, 1999), this period of time also marked the beginning of the Age of Imperialism. Across the world and particularly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the fight among the industrialized nations for raw materials and manufactured goods brought the political arena to the forefront with the quest for an unequivocal sphere of influence and power. Colonies were seized, and the spread of culture and forced nationalism was rampant. It was also in this period

that Japan emerged as a leading industrial nation. With its economy stimulated, Japan grew into a mighty world power. For America, with the Monroe Doctrine and opening of the Panama Canal in 1914, our country achieved its own territorial gains. World War I then affected America's allies deeply with severe damage to their economies and many casualties; however, the United States emerged with a continued strong economy, and business and industry continued to grow (Farah & Karls, pp. 702-755).

Because of these vast economic changes in the world and our country, along with the resulting political and societal transformations, this period of time is known as the Progressive Era (Appleby et al., 2005). Just as the world's economy and political environments were in a state of change so was our national public school system. With this state of affairs, the public schools were looked to for provision of a reformation to provide for the future workers to move the country forward and societal stabilization. Educational and social reformers, such as John Dewey, Jane Addams, William T. Harris, George S. Counts, and Ida B. Wells, spoke out and became major influences in the transitions needed in order to affect public schooling and social reform. Some of their ideals effected change, while others did not produce immediate, apparent impacts. In many ways, the common school models developed and implemented during the Progressive Era are still in place in our public schools today. The public education system grew and changed along with our nation and its society, and there were a small number of educators who began to provide discourse out of lockstep with the "norm." These educators and their ideals became known and formed a progressive alliance that grew in association over the next 20 years.

A review of the scholarly literature relates that, before the Progressive Era in our country, a child's education consisted of 8 years of schooling during which students were

grouped together for instruction based on age. Only a select group of White males from affluent families went on to further educational endeavors. It was through constant monotone drills, harsh discipline, and verbatim recitation that instruction took place. Schools were dreary places that children thought of with drudgery rather than with relish and motivation. Only 6 to 7% of youth went on to secondary schooling in 1890 (Spring, 2001, pp. 254-264).

With the technological advances in factories and industries in the early 1900s, as previously discussed, many juveniles and adults were unable to find employment, and urban areas became rampant with delinquency, poverty, and crime. As Kliebard (1995) related, going to school became more appealing than being on the streets unemployed or spending the day in an impoverished neighborhood environment. Therefore, by 1900, over 11% and, in 1920, 33% of the population of youth between the ages of 14 and 17 were attending secondary schools. This percentage climbed to 51% by 1930 due to the changes brought about by the progressive reformation movement (pp. 7-8).

The curriculum of public schools during this time period also underwent a shift, which was an additional factor in enticing youth to return to formal schooling. With the influx of more young people to educate, the changes were indeed even more so needed and necessary. Teaching and learning began to move from rote memorization to learning by doing, and the secondary academic curriculum was expanded and revamped. The separation of high school curriculum into college preparatory and vocational and industrial training pathways was established. Even though both college preparatory and vocational and industrial courses of study were to be open to all students, this was not successfully achieved. According to Spring (2001), students continued to be “locked into their social class” (p. 257). Select students were enrolled into the college-preparatory

coursework, while students who were considered dullards or laggards were directed into the vocational or industrial pathway.

The federal government embraced this change of preparing students for their place in the workforce and heavily funded vocational and industrial education in order to prepare future workers to provide for and feed the economic growth. Social efficiency proponents, who believed that America's educational system should be modeled after the German public education system, were pleased as well. Agricultural education became interwoven into this new vocational education, and with the passage in 1917 of the Smith-Hughes Act, federal monies were attached (Kliebard, 1995, p. 123; Wraga, 1994, pp. 12-14). A growing and hungry nation needed to be fed through the work in the rural regions of our country as droves of people moved or immigrated to the urban areas in order to work in the capitalistic society. As well, the growing corporations needed workers who were reliable and well prepared to enter the workforce in order to provide for the growing capitalistic ventures. The movement of the populace led to many focused needs for further social and educational reforms (Spring, 2001, p. 268).

Two major forces in the changes involved in public schooling in the latter part of the 19th century were William Torrey Harris and Granville Stanley Hall. Both brought to the table divergent ways of thinking regarding the education of children. Harris was a humanist who believed the school's role should be to develop the intellectual mind and teach regarding the history and processes of Western civilization. He was resistant to the call for massive change in public schooling even though the United States, particularly in economic terms, was changing rapidly. Many teachers backed Harris and his rational approaches (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 30-35). It was through Harris, as the superintendent of the St. Louis school system, that public school kindergartens were first introduced. To

Harris (as cited in Spring, 2001), this was a way to pull children into school early in order for them to “save slum children from corruption” and provide for socialization because of his views that the “traditional socializing agencies like the family, church and community had collapsed” (p. 232). In turn, through educating children at such a young age, the home would be reformed, which would benefit society as well.

Hall, on the other hand, had visited Germany in 1880, and it was from there that he brought back with him the developmentalist viewpoint. He is considered the founder of the infamous child-study model although this ideology was originally introduced to American education by Charles Francis Adams (Pinar et al., 2002, pp. 88-90). Hall had the charisma to exert influence. He also had the backing to bring this model to the masses. This school of thought believed that the child naturally evolves and, in order to teach students, one must have basis by working through the child’s own natural impulses. Engaging students in the learning process was of vital importance in providing a relevant and successful education. It is interesting to note that Hall (1903) came to many of his conclusions through reviewing sexual impulses and, therefore, a need for physical activity based on these needs, particularly for boys. Hall (1903) stated,

The hunger for fatigue, too, can become a veritable passion and is quite distinct from either the impulse for activity for its own sake or the desire of achievement. To shout and put forth the utmost strength in crude ways is erethic intoxication at a stage when every tissue can become erectile and seems, like the crying of infants, to have a legitimate function in causing tension and flushing, enlarging the caliber of blood vessels, and forcing the blood perhaps even to the point of extravasation to irrigate newly grown fibers, cells and organs which atrophy if not thus fed. (p. 448)

Both vocational training and more time for play and recreation were included in the developmentalist point of view. Differentiated education was, therefore, a requirement as well because Hall (1901) believed that students develop at different rates and through predesigned ways from birth and origin. Separating students based on gender and ability level from a young age was advocated. In fact, Hall believed that females were inferior and should not have the same education as males. By separating the sexes at puberty, Hall (1903) stated that the "radical psychic and physiological differences between the sexes" (p. 449) could be dealt with best through differentiated curriculum for the two sexes. At the same time though, in contradiction, Hall was also a social reconstructionist, and he did not want to abandon the competitive classroom or an authoritarian role in discipline for classroom management purposes.

Both Hall and Harris provided influence for many changes in America's public school system; however, it was the philosophy of John Dewey who made more open the discourse of trends in educational reform during these times. Dewey was a "naturalist" philosopher; he believed that explanations could be derived in terms of natural phenomena. It was in his earlier training at the University of Vermont, his home state, where he had been exposed to the school of philosophy and where his interest was originally piqued (Field, 2001, pp. 1-10) Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* also had a great impact on Dewey, and much of his own ideology grew from this piece of work and his passion for evolutionary themes (Kliebard, 1981, pp. 68-81). He sent an essay to Harris who was at that time the editor of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. Harris accepted the essay for publishing, and this provided Dewey with the encouragement he needed to pursue his philosophical and educational goals.

Dewey believed that objects and events could be explained through applications accessible to our senses. He advocated the use of the scientific method in “every sphere of human activity” (Noddings, 1998, p. 24). Dewey also liked to contrast ideas in his writings, providing a possible revision of a concept and then question even the revision. This, he felt, caused an evolution in one’s thought processes and also left room to continue to grow as well. Dewey particularly believed in these tenets when it came to the philosophy of education. He believed that all other philosophies depended upon it. Philosophy of education and the democratic society became his major focus as the Progressive Era continued.

In Chicago, Dewey continued with his philosophical writing and was a major contributor to the American school of thought known as pragmatism. It was also during his tenure at the University of Chicago that he was able to apply his developing ideas by opening and operating his own progressive school, the “Laboratory School.” Between 1896 and 1904, John Dewey utilized a child-centered, hands-on approach to pedagogical practice. His school became a “symbol of school reform in general” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 27), and he became regarded as a likeable, successful educator and respected philosopher. The Laboratory School was a place where Dewey could test his theories and directly observe his progressive education ideologies.

Chicago was quite different than where Dewey had come from in Vermont through his youth and then as a young adult at the University of Michigan. As was discussed earlier, the rapid economic growth and industry boom in this urban environment created a place where the social conditions were deplorable. Dewey attempted to utilize the Laboratory School as a working model in which to hone his

philosophical beliefs into reality, which at that point had come to a means to change society through public education (Bowers, 1969, p. 73).

His idea was to create a “miniature community” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 54) with “a family spirit” (Dewey, 1902/1990, p. 175) where total control was possible over the child--where youth lived, worked, played, and participated wholly in the social community. The notion of “learning by doing” was the driving factor of the curriculum, and Dewey attempted to develop studies that would lead to this end while teaching basic skills such as arithmetic and mathematics in real-life experiences at the same time. Living and participating in this community would also nurture and create youth who would be ready to be working participants in the industrial giants. This could also be called “occupational” training (Kliebard, 1995, p. 55) although the common term used for this type of education was better known as *vocational and industrial education*. In total, learning to work as a group in order to achieve a finished product, vocational and industrial hands-on training, and a basic knowledge base to function as a literate adult were the basic goals of Dewey’s experimental school.

The Laboratory School was a pathway to experimentation in creating a new progressive education model; however, it never reached its full potential. Dewey did not get to expand his work to the creation of secondary curriculum as he had envisioned. After a dispute with the president of the University of Chicago, Dewey left to take a post at Columbia University as a philosophy professor where he continued to write, reflect, and build on his basic canon of educational philosophy, psychology, and liberal politics for the times. Dewey continued to influence education indirectly, published many works, and presented his ideas at educational and political agenda conferences. So what is meant

by progressive education with its formation and original foundation during America's Progressive Era? Dewey (1938) stated in *Experience and Education*,

Those who are looking ahead into a new movement in education, adapted to the existing need for a new social order, should think in terms of Education itself rather than in terms of some 'ism about education, even such an 'ism as "progressivism." For, in spite of itself, any movement that thinks and acts in terms of an 'ism becomes involved in reaction against other 'isms that is unwittingly controlled by them. (p. 6)

Although Dewey is noted to be one of the leading early educational philosophers and, when he died, was noted as the Father of Progressive Education, it is not apparent that he had a major impact in changing the ever-growing and immense public education system during the Progressive Era. Many of his ideals were distorted or were never enabled into full fruition (D. Tanner, 1991; D. Tanner & Tanner, 1990). We can conclude from the previous quote that Dewey never believed in naming any model of schooling in the first place though so herein lies the major cause that led to the demise of trying to inculcate his ideas into a compact ideology and model to be copied by the masses nor to be a series of projects (L. Tanner, 1997, p. 110). That was not his intention in his experimental school at all. As Kliebard (1995) stated, "his educational reforms remained confined largely to the world of ideas rather than the world of practice" (p. 76).

Dewey's friend Jane Addams, fellow writer and social activist, also lived in Chicago during this time period. Addams played a key role in changing education and addressing the issues of the underprivileged during the late 1800s. After visiting a settlement house in London in 1887, she finalized the idea then current in her mind, that of opening a similar house in one of the poverty-stricken areas of the rapidly growing city

of Chicago. In 1889, Ellen G. Starr and she leased a large home built by Charles Hull at the corner of Halsted and Polk Streets. Their purpose was to “provide a center for a higher civic and social life; institute and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises; and investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago” (Addams, 1910, p. 63). Hull House, as it was known, became the hub of the community. From kindergarten classes to club meetings for older students in the late afternoon and night classes for adults, the settlement house provided a host of activities for the community (Nobel Foundation, 2006)

As Addams’ reputation grew, she was invited to speak at many civic organizations and educational institutions. Much sought after, she spoke for rights and responsibilities in the industrial inner-city areas. Her love of the arts intertwined in her work and was included in the repertoire of the settlement house and further houses that sprung up in the major industrial cities. She spoke strongly against war and its causes. Like Dewey, Addams was a philosopher first and foremost, and her emphasis on women’s rights and feminism led her to be a strong proponent of the suffrage movement. She spoke of “compassionate conduct” in her introduction to the 1902 book, *Democracy and Social Ethics*:

he who believes that a wiser and saner education will cure our social ill, speaks ever and again of “the wisdom of the little child” and of the necessity to reveal and explore his capacity; while he who keeps close to the historic deductions upon which the study of society is chiefly found, uses the old religious phrase, “the counsel of imperfection,” and bids us concern ourselves with “the least of these.” . . . They designate those impulses towards compassionate conduct which

will not be denied, because they are as imperative in their demand for expression.

(p. 21)

With the mission of assisting people in learning to sustain themselves in a society as technology moved forward in a cosmopolitan setting, Addams worked diligently with social and civic leaders to provide for the growth of a collective society.

After sustaining a heart attack in 1926, Jane Addams never fully regained her health. Indeed, she was being admitted to a Baltimore hospital on the very day, December 10, 1931, that the Nobel Peace Prize was being awarded to her in Oslo. She died in 1935 3 days after an operation revealed unsuspected cancer. The funeral service was held in the courtyard of Hull House. Addams' effect on education and progression of schools as extensions of the community played an important part in our public schools even today (Nobel Foundation, 2006).

A young Black teacher by the name of Ida B. Wells modeled her work after Addams' Hull House after making many visits there (Crocco, Munro, & Weiler, 1999, pp. 19-45). Wells moved to Chicago in 1895, and as a leading woman activist in women's rights and social change, she mainly concentrated her efforts on the Black population. This was an area of passivity for both Dewey, who appeared to turn a blind eye to the country's bigoted notions and actions, and for Addams, who served all in the community but did not focus on the Black population until her later support of Wells through activism. Although there were not many Blacks in Chicago when Wells work first began as compared to the European White population group, Wells quickly established herself as a strong woman who spoke out against the inequalities of the treatment of the races both socially and economically. Wells began settlement houses

similar to the Hull House in Chicago's Black Belt and attended to the needs of that community while working towards political and social equity (Crocco et al., pp. 19-45).

Samuelson (1986) in his *Black Metropolis Thematic Nomination* wrote about the Black Belt's history:

By 1900, with a population of 30,050 persons, the South Side Black community began to take on the characteristics of a small "city-within-a-city," which paralleled the growth and expansion of the City of Chicago at large. A major factor in the growth of "black metropolis" after the turn of the century was its increasing access to financial resources due to the prosperity of the community. The unwillingness of the established white financial community to support its enterprises ceased to be an impediment to growth. . . . Growth was further intensified by an increase in the Black population by 148% between 1910 and 1920, a period often referred to as the "Great Migration" due to the great numbers of Blacks who left the South for greater opportunities in Chicago during that time. Despite the fact that it was in large part cut off from the economic and social mainstream of the rest of the city, Black Metropolis, with a population of 109,548 by 1920, had firmly established itself as a virtual self-contained metropolitan development. (pp. 26-27)

Ida B. Wells continued her work for many years, and her radical ideas often brought criticism. Wells was one of the first proponents in 1899 to call for an end to the discussion of segregation in public schools (Crocco et al., 1999). She called upon her colleague Jane Addams for support, and Addams responded through action and collaboration. At the same time, the women disagreed through perspective in other areas of race relations, and although both worked to dissolve stereotypes, their approach was

different in nature. Crocco et al. stated, “These differences in analysis highlight the complex ways in which Wells and Addams took up race, class and gender to subvert injustice through arguments that simultaneously reified dominant gender and race discourses” (p. 27). Both Addams and Wells were founding members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909 (Women in History, 2007) and continued for many years their work for women’s suffrage, immigrant rights, and advocates for the Black community through the political system.

Wells was married in 1895 to the editor of one of Chicago's early Black newspapers, Attorney F. L. Barnett, and her name was changed to Ida B. Wells-Barnett. It was in 1930 that Wells became disgusted by the nominees of the major parties to the state legislature, so she decided to run for the Illinois state legislature, which made her one of the first Black women to run for public office in the United States. A year later, she passed away after a lifetime of crusading for justice (V. Franklin, 1995).

Although society and social reform endeavors worked throughout the Progressive Era to provide for the needs of communities and address the issues of education, the public schools themselves played an important role in continuing to nurture individual literacy and shaping of citizenship. It was William Heard Kilpatrick who became known as a “major interpreter of Dewey’s educational philosophy” (Zilversmit, 1993, p. 13). There were differences in both men’s approaches; while Dewey was a philosopher, it was Kilpatrick who was a dynamic teacher who drew hordes of students into his university classrooms with his charismatic ability to speak. It was also Kilpatrick who introduced the “project method” of education where children pursued a topic of their own interest and became active, seeking learners in the educational process (p. 14). Dewey approached education from an intellectual point of view, and Kilpatrick emphasized the

practical and anti-intellectual aspects of education, which was also a crucial deviation and misinterpretation of Dewey's work. Still, the progressive education movement had its origins in the work of these educators and social reformers.

Marietta Johnson formed the Organic School in Fairhope, Alabama, which represented an educational concept based on developmentalist principles. Activities grew out of children's spontaneous interests and were based in the primary years on the teaching of folklore and fairy tales (Spring, 2001, p. 163); it was not until junior high school that students were taught formal school subjects. It was Johnson who went to progressive educator Stanwood Cobb with a proposal to start a national organization for experimental schooling. As with other females of the time who were and even still today are the primary providers of instruction in our public schools, her influence was important as progressive education continued to unfold in its dimensions.

Stanwood Cobb was the founder of the Chevy Chase Country Day School in Washington, D.C. A Harvard graduate, he specialized in history and philosophy of religion. After teaching for 3 years at Robert College in Istanbul, he published his 1914 book based on his experiences there. This book was "one of the first books in America to give sympathetic treatment to the Turk and to Islam" (Cobb, 1963, ¶1). Cobb was very impressed with "the inner spirit and the effect of this inner spirit in conferring some degree of dignity and tranquility to the life even of the common man" (Introduction, ¶9) that he found in Istanbul. His educational tenets included the progressive notion of living the experience by placing oneself in understanding the curriculum presented in formal historical studies. He believed that, through the use of a critical perspective when approaching studies of a people and region, further and deeper understanding could be induced.

Therefore, it was in 1919 that Marietta Johnson and Stanwood Cobb founded the Association for the Advancement of Experimental Schools. The organization's name was changed shortly thereafter to the Association for the Advancement of Progressive Education and then later to the Progressive Education Association (Kliebard, 1995, p. 164). Unfortunately, Dewey's original progressive ideals were often incorrectly translated into classroom instruction by members of the formal organization. His work was even misconstrued in their interpretation in intellectual conversation among the scholars of the field. Group activities were touted to be the focus of Dewey's philosophy of education along with hands-on activities and relationships to real-world experiences. Group activities allowed for ways to move individual students towards conformity rather than as the opening of new ways of learning and freedom of thought. Dewey never meant for cooperative learning activities to be used as control but rather as a means to develop one's own "motives and choices as a growth out of social situations" although that is exactly what occurred (Spring, 2001, p. 245).

Social education and the Social Education Association grew out of this different train of thought (Spring, 2001, p. 245), and many schools jumped on the bandwagon--not Dewey's bandwagon though as this was not representative of his philosophy as some would claim. There were other schools at the time though that did follow the theories of progressive education and provided for the growth of the movement. Although as in any organization there lives politics and rivalries, many of these schools, both public and private, were successful and thrived while other progressive initiatives failed due to reasons beyond differences in pedagogy.

Along with the Laboratory School, another progressive education venture that attempted to change the public schools was in the early 1900s with the public schools of

Gary, Indiana, where the head of schools, William A. Wirt, designed school buildings and curriculum that followed the child-play studies conducted during the early part of the Progressive Era. Wirt believed in John Dewey's principles, and he designed Gary's schools as places where children moved from room to room. In Wirt's opinion, this allowed for boredom to not set in and allowed for youth's bodies to have the needed exercise to grow. Natural settings around the schools were utilized for exploratory learning and sporting activities. He also expanded the school's curriculum to meet the needs of a variety of students' interests, including academics, artistic learning and projects, and vocational training along with other curriculum based upon students' interest. Students had a community interest in the schools and were also involved in not only the upkeep of the grounds but also in the organizational running of the schools through student government organizations (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 84-85; Zilversmit, 1993, pp. 56-63).

The Gary schools were successful, and visitors came from across the country to observe this progressive education endeavor in action. However, large urban areas did not embrace these changes--where would the workers come from to feed into the large factories and support economic growth? How would the large number of immigrants become inculcated into America's capitalistic society? Politics soon followed, teachers lacked a commitment to success, the Gary schools' curriculum was altered to meet the "norm," and Wirt was replaced as head of schools in order to facilitate the change process (Zilversmit, 1993, p. 63).

There were other schools at the time though that did follow the theories of progressive education and provided for the growth of the movement. Once again, it is noted that, although as in any organization there are politics and rivalries, many models

were successful and thrived. A case in point is a return to the Organic School founded by Marietta Johnson in Fairhope, Alabama. The Organic School utilized progressive strategies. Her school was nongraded, and spontaneous moments were taken advantage of for lessons and developing students' creative and emotional well-being.

Although both the Organic School and Cobb's Chevy Chase Country Day School were private, they both continued to pursue progressive pedagogy. In fact, Country Day Schools are still in existence today as private enterprises that hold to the same ideals of progressive educators in the early 1900s. It was with this philosophy that the schools provided and still provide a variety of learning experiences:

At La Jolla Country Day, as we prepare our students for a lifetime of personal growth, social responsibility and intellectual exploration, we regard the development of good character to be as important as the development of one's academic, athletic, or artistic ability. The moral and ethical tone of the school is maintained by a commitment to the Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship. (La Jolla Country Day School, 2007, ¶1)

Although the dominant assumption of historical educational history for many years portrayed women as carrying out the ideals of male progressives, it was argued in *Pedagogies of Resistance: Women Educator Activists, 1880-1960* (Crocco et al., 1999), that "these women extended progressive thought to issues of gender, race, and ethnicity in ways that dominant progressive ideologies did not" (p. 43). The work of social and education activists Ida B. Wells and Jane Addams is once again noted as providing a blueprint for social reform through not only their settlement houses but also through the

public education system particularly through expanding the school buildings themselves to provide for youth and community needs.

As many of the progressives, such as Dewey, Wells and Addams, worked within the public realm in order to effect change, there were a number of women educators who went off from the mainstream and out of the public sphere in order to form independent, progressive schools. Progressive thinkers, such as Margaret Naumburg (as cited in Sadovnik & Semel, 2002) in her 1928 work *The Child and the World*, continued to insist on the importance of emotional, artistic, and creative aspects of human development as “the most living and essential parts of our natures” (p. 38). Having been a student of Dewey’s while attending college, Naumburg was influenced to see progressive educational innovations. She became a Montessori teacher and later opened her own Children’s School, which expanded and changed its name to the Walden School around 1922.

Although the school tried to open its doors to all students through a scholarship program in order to maintain operation of the school, Naumburg relied on the paying parents of students for sustainability. The school’s main tenets were to provide an open, nurturing, homelike environment where all students, kindergarten through high school, had a close, professional relationship with their teachers. Curriculum evolved from the “needs of the students” (Sadovnik & Semel, 2002, p. 49). Naumburg stayed involved in the operations of the Walden School for many years as director, and there were many of the original staff who continued the school’s vision and leadership after she went on to continue her ventures in progressive education through other means.

Along with Marietta Johnson’s Organic School, which was previously introduced, and Naumburg’s Walden School, another progressive education venture in the early

1900s was Helen Parkson and the Dalton School. Parkson's school opened right after the Great Depression, and while funding was scarce, she was able to attract a steady stream of student enrollment (Sadovnik & Semel, 2002, p. 84). Parkson had a strong personality, playing a visible and hands-on leadership style. Following the nurturing and "mother-like" approach of the Walden School, the curriculum at Dalton School focused on the arts and individualized instruction. She even attracted many students with physical disabilities with this style of curriculum (p. 84).

However, the research (Crocco et al., 1999; Norris, 2004; Rippa, 1997; Sadovnik & Semel, 2002; Semel & Sadovnik, 1999) indicated that the demise of many of these early independent, progressive schools can be mainly attributed to poor leadership styles, unsound financial decisions or unattainable funding, and an inability to maintain an enrollment while in competition with free public education. This appears to be true whether the school was led by women or men such as Cobb as they served in roles of founders, directors, and principals. As for Helen Parkson, she was a strong personality in a new world of female activism. Her leadership style and public relations abilities caused some problems in maintaining the viability of the Dalton School, which mainly catered to children of the elitist society. This, along with some poor financial decisions, caused Parkson to resign in 1942. She went on to become a noted radio and television broadcaster, and in the 1950s, taught at the City College of New York while writing three books. She only returned once to visit the Dalton School; however, her legacy lived on for many years and continues today with her contribution to the ideals of progressive education.

Another example of the demise of poor leadership styles, along with the entering of the ever-present politics of running a private or public school especially where new

innovations are developed and implemented, lies in looking briefly at Carmelita Chase Hinton and the Putney School. Hinton was a dynamic adventurous stout woman. She traveled extensively as a young adult and in her travels was called to provide a school that would expand the progressive movement with offering students a laboratory experience much like Dewey's. Hinton chose to use a working farm as her site for curriculum and social discipline of learning cooperative work. Unlike the "life adjustment" programs (Zilversmit, 1993, pp. 96-97) after the Great Depression in public education, Sadovnik and Semel (2002) wrote that "Carmelita Hinton often told students, 'I didn't begin my school to help you to ADJUST to the world; I began it so that you could CHANGE the world'" (p. 117). Her adherence to the virtues of her own generation while attempting to socialize students into a changing society often made her the laughing stock of not only her students but her own teachers in the school as well.

It was Hinton's dictator leadership style that finally led to her downfall as a school leader (Sadovnik & Semel, 2002). Teachers complained of salary scales, long hours, and no say in the running of the school or its curriculum. It would appear that many of Hinton's teachers were short term after being exhausted by the rigors of the school's schedule. Although this did not bother Hinton and she believed each new face brought "freshness" to Putney School, it was an administrative nightmare with vast effects across the morale of the teaching staff and also affected the students as well. Favoritism along with the personality characteristics of an eccentric woman soon turned the politics of the school into a free-for-all. While teachers formed a Faculty Association and demanded a say in the curriculum and better pay along with hours for rest, Hinton responded by placing an ultimatum (pp. 119-120). She later rescinded the ultimatum for compliance or termination; however, she had already lost credibility with the faculty.

This led to a bitter strike which struck Hinton to the core, but it also brought about many changes to the school and enabled it to continue to thrive. With her retirement in 1955, she left behind a progressive school that served many capacities in meeting the needs of students and a steady enrollment.

From these few brief examples of the early “founding mothers” and others as early educational leaders, it is apparent that the ideals of progressive education had taken a foothold in the pricey private school arena. Although women’s roles continued to be changed in society in general and in the public school environment, there remained a prolonged dilemma of whether curriculum provided for progressive ideals in action in the individual classroom. As educators, one can understand further the many “voices” of teachers within the profession in the well-researched book by Hoffman (2003), *Woman’s “True” Profession: Voices From the History of Teaching*. From the early days of forming an educational institution, women’s roles as teachers have brought challenges to the gender. From working under the gaze of mainly male supervisors to making decisions regarding marriage during or after teaching tenure to surviving the elements and perils of being sent out West to the new frontiers in order to continue the expansion of America’s educational system, women’s roles were and continue to be defined by the dominant male power structure. It would seem from the evidence, when women ventured into male roles within the institutions, they then take on male traits, which are then a very real detriment to striving endeavors, and politics begins to rear its ugly head in response.

Nevertheless, the influence of the early 1900s and emphasis on females as teachers with a set morality role are important facets in the discussion. The contributions of women, whether as educational leaders, founding mothers of independent institutions, collaborators with other males and females in progressive endeavors, or as spokespersons

for curriculum expansion and school reform, have impacted our educational systems over time.

Once again, while a variety of urban and rural, public and private progressive schools operated under the auspices of being progressive during the Progressive Era, it is not apparent that the participants understood or put into practice the true progressive concepts of Dewey and other progressive education reformers. Once again, semantics and varied interpretations were apparent in real-life schooling. John Dewey in an address in 1928 raised many questions about the Progressive Education Association and its direction (Dewey, 1938). Dewey took exception to the social efficiency model of school reform that continued to survive in the majority of public schools across the country. He also took exception to the seemingly student participatory curriculum visible in most progressive schools. He argued that the common use of utilizing IQs and standardized test scores to measure individual students and their schools' progress was just another way of taking a traditional school and making it hold up to the scientific method of efficiency. It was through observing that some schools were taking things to the other extreme that Dewey criticized and brought back into focus child play and its overuse as well. He stated that child play in the progressive education arena did not mean a free-for-all in the school environment as was being utilized by some progressives. This was never his intent. Freedom for the child through educational endeavors was to be done in an organized manner with an end in mind (Dewey, 1938, pp. 61-65). By asking the association to take a stance and maintain the philosophies of progressive education versus traditional education, he hoped to keep the main tenets of the ideology alive. As one can imagine, the political discourse continued.

So, if historically it is evident that progressive education did continue to have its place in public schools during the Progressive Era after Dewey's model Laboratory School, it is important to note here that it is not only a matter of semantics once again to determine the original meaning of the term progressive education. The question is more whether teaching and learning actually changed in any schools as Dewey and other progressive reformers had envisioned. Yes, the Laboratory School was one such attempt at dramatically changing educational programming and was aimed at replication in the public schools. However, what some termed as progressive education in public schools actually was merely an addition to the existing static curriculum or the school building itself rather than an actual transformation of education (Caine & Caine, 1997; Norris, 2004; Spring, 2001; Zilversmit, 1993).

It is also obvious that early progressive educators strongly believed that curriculum should maintain its focus on the individual student and, as Dewey so adamantly believed, not only allow for the building of trained youth to enter the workforce but also in order to influence and develop each student's intellectual abilities (Dewey, 1928, p. 201). It was through this student-centered model, rather than work in "-isms," that select educators worked towards the motivation of students to learn through real-life applications, which would thus allow them to be successful in their lifelong pursuits no matter which career path they decided to follow: postsecondary education or business or industrial trade workers.

Traditional academic subjects, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, were expanded at the high school level in progressive schools to include science, advanced mathematics, and classical languages for all students. One of the most significant transformations, however, became of viewing the child as an individual. The major

consideration regarding students before the Progressive Era was one of how they would fit into their “slot” in society. The progressive educator’s perspective was one of looking at the child aesthetically although not with the blindness of child play but rather with responding to building individual moral character and directing free will in a positive manner, and this Dewey believed as well (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 44-55).

Thus, applied learning activities were included in progressive schools’ lessons where, indeed, real-life experiences were simulated. These lessons might include such learning strategies as developing mock stores for selling goods where a child could learn to make change and model other aspects of the retail environment (Kliebard, 1995, p. 62). This change in curriculum was very much influenced by Dewey’s original work at his Laboratory School. In science classes, students used actual machines in order to see how they worked instead of just reading about them. Field trips became popular with nature visits to suburban or rural areas. Urban students also were taken to visit factories or businesses, allowing children to obtain and look at the real-life world of work for the purpose of experiencing where one might work after formal schooling. It was also, however, during this period of progressive education that students were still labeled and identified for their lot in life of either a vocation or college studies even though this would be considered against the “pure” progressive’s idealism.

The Great Depression began in 1929 with the crash of the stock market, and public schools were once again challenged to provide a complete and comprehensive education. Businesses and industries were in total disarray; thus, our country and cultures were in need of direction and rebuilding. As is a constant recurrence throughout history, the public school environment would also be called upon to meet the needs of the nation and society. There were no longer jobs for the youth leaving secondary education or for

working adults for that matter. The call for continued reformation remained, and the Progressive Era economically and politically came to an end (Appleby et al., 2005, p. 570). Restructuring of our schools and nation began anew. Although many believed that progressive education also died a slow death at this time, it was not to be for there were still a group of educators who kept and continue to keep the ideals alive in a variety of forms and facets of which the work here will provide evidence. Yes, the question lingers even today about whether teaching and learning actually changed into practice in the public schools as Dewey and other progressive reformers had envisioned. However, as the research has indicated thus far in this dissertation, what some have termed as progressive education over time has merely been an addition to the existing static curriculum or the school building itself rather than an actual transformation of education in the public sphere. It continues to be the contention here that progressive education flourished through alternatives in education. Progressivism continues to flourish in new ways and with different facets than expected.

So where does that leave us as educators in the discourse provided here? How did the history of progressive education in the early 1900s build the foundation for further progressive work in curriculum studies in the modern era and into the multifaceted global society of today? Is progressive education still thriving or has it continued to fail to bring forth true educational change and withstand the challenges of time? As Pinar (2004) stated, “Curriculum theory is, then, about discovering and articulating for oneself and with others, the educational significance of the school subjects for self and society in the ever-changing historical moment” (p. 16). Through finding the continued discourse within the field in the modern world of the late 1950s through the 1980s and then turning to the current field of curriculum studies and reconceptualization of education, the search

for answers and nonanswers that lie within and between the lines and outside of the boundaries of bureaucracy continues.

CHAPTER 3

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION IN TRANSITION

Progressive education with its footings in the work of early educators and curriculum theorists, dared public and private schools to provide America's youth with an education that would provide for further intellectual stimulation and application rather than just rote learning and repetition. The history of our nation continued to be mirrored within the school systems and their curriculum choices. It would be remiss here as the discussion is turned to the transitions that have occurred within progressive education over time to not spend a short while in the middle years before the Cold War began.

The 1940s was an era where the country and, therefore, education were faced with many sacrifices and societal changes. With the beginning of World War II, "the war finally put an end to the Great Depression. Mobilizing the economy created almost 19 million new jobs and nearly doubled the average family's income" (Appleby et al., 2005, p. 749). This also meant that, with so many White men in the military, employers began to recruit women and minorities into the workforce. This was a radical change from previous practices and actually brought the beginnings of furthering civil rights, which would be intensified in later years. Both married and single women were recruited into industry and business in order to provide supplies and armory for troops fighting in two different theaters of wartime action in Japan and Europe. A country having just gone through reformation after an economic depression once again pulled forward with its intense nationalism, and the focus was on providing for wartime efforts.

Although factories were hiring mainly White women, the resistance to hire other minorities still existed. With the threat of a march on Washington to protest these practices, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 on June 25, 1941, which

declared that there was to be no discrimination in hiring practices based on race, creed, color, or national origin (Appleby et al., 2005, p. 750). He also created the Fair Employment Practices Commission. Political mandates can require hiring opportunities, but the resistance among workers led to violence and fighting among the ethnicities. Additionally, with new jobs open, our nation was on the move once again in order for people to migrate where the work was available. Although the north saw some movement from the southern population, the greatest migration was to be to the west. With the population shift, housing, schools, and community centers had to be built for the influx. The substandard building efforts and employment shifts that resulted were to cause further problems and issues of concern during postwar times.

With the nuclear family disrupted for wartime efforts, the unprepared public schools were turned to for addressing new issues in educating America's youth.

Zilversmit (1993) wrote,

The war itself had a profound effect on education. Aside from postponing needed school construction, war industries had provided many inducements for teachers to leave the profession. . . . The exodus of women into the work force fostered a new interest in day nurseries and early childhood education. At the same time, the draft had revealed that many American youth were neither physically nor psychologically fit; educational leaders recognized that they would have to pay increased attention to health education, physical fitness, and mental health. (p. 91)

Linking day care for factory and business workers with providing an early education for young children enticed many women to partake of these opportunities. Still, few students stayed in school past the eighth grade at this time, and a teacher shortage grew due to the lack of professionals entering the field with the wartime economic efforts.

Progressive educators and other educational leaders struggled with the war's disruption on the current efforts for social reformation and reconstruction of the country associated with rebuilding after the Great Depression. When hostilities first broke out in Europe, these progressive radicals spoke out against the United States getting involved in the foreign war. Having always concentrated and maintaining the importance on the individual fostering of thought and social change, factions of the Progressive Education Association criticized each other and grappled to build a philosophy for education during wartime (Bowers, 1969, pp. 181-198).

In December of 1942, "The Mission of Education in This War" from the progressives' *Frontiers of Democracy* included their wartime goal of education:

Thus our war aims and our educational aims are part and parcel of one and the same effort: We wage war to fight off enemy attacks upon our civilization and the democratic way of life; we educate to upbuild what the war is to save--humanity, its ethical standards, and its hopes for world law and order and for an inclusive and truer democracy. . . . It is this vision which education must uphold. To make this vision so real in the minds and hearts of people that it shall prevail, this is the supreme mission of education during wartime. (p. 70)

Most of the progressives were able to agree with this philosophy for wartime education although some feared that the public would utilize the efforts as an excuse to move away from education that stressed "current living" (Bowers, 1969, p. 192). William Heard Kilpatrick (as cited in Brameld, 1956) continued to be a visionary and progressive leader who addressed this issue by responding that teachers and administrators would need to "dig down deeper into the secret of learning, how it exists mainly to serve present living, how it comes best as one does really live, lives heartily and creatively" (p. 205).

In 1945, World War II drew to a close. The devastation in Europe and the rain of atomic bombs on Japan impacted the entire world as military force and political aims impacted the whole international community as never before. As the American troops returned home, a rebuilding of a new economic and social order began. The United Nations was created, and 50 countries participated in designing its original charter. For some educators, there was a revitalized sense of mission (Bowers, 1969, p. 193). Dewey had envisioned education for social reform, and his philosophy was harmonious with other progressives who embraced the postwar changes as an opportunity to promote international understanding. Zilversmit (1993) stated in *Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930-1960*,

Those who had accepted the progressives' idea that teachers could play a role in improving society saw a clear mission in the postwar world: educate the next generation for peace and international understanding. The philosophy of progressive education was easily applied to the promotion of a new internationalism. At its best progressivism stood for acceptance and even the celebration of individual differences. (p. 98)

After the war, there was a call in education for "new" content, and methods were embraced by the National Education Association while the Progressive Education Association split apart into factions. It was by this means that the disagreements between the progressive philosophies of child centeredness and social reconstruction continued. The Progressive Education Association's side publication *Frontiers of Democracy* was found to be too radical for many members, and without being lucrative, it was dissolved. The varied definitions of progressive education veered away from the original tenets as new models and designs were sought to provide for the changing society (Bowers, 1969,

pp. 196-198). Progressive education's philosophies did not die at that time though as schools reorganized to meet the new influx of teachers into the profession and the massive increased enrollment of students. Bowers stated, "It merely signaled the end of the loose alliance that politically minded educators had had with American liberals over the last ten years" (p. 198). Progressive educators and philosophers turned more towards a theoretical base from which to continue to incorporate and meet the needs of social reconstruction and activism through individualism and reformation. It was through the intervention of the federal and state governments into the public realm that progressives were forced to begin their turn to academia to pursue further their efforts in struggling for an intellectually stimulating education for all youth. This does not mean, however, that progressive education ideals and active educators did not continue to influence and be heralded within public education.

The life adjustment education curriculum was born on June 1, 1945 (Kliebard, 1995, p. 212). The current secondary school curriculum was under fire for its inadequacies in preparing nonacademic youth for future social efficiency. Drifting from academic studies to a focus on the "concerns of young people and the need to prepare them for citizenship" (Zilversmit, 1993, p. 97), the core curriculum was to be replaced with "adjustment" coursework "organized around the personal and social problems common to young people of the school" (B. Franklin, 1986, p. 153). Progressives of the time pushed for more attention on guidance and counseling programs, and an increase was seen of each of these in public schools. It is the progressives who are attributed with backing and creating the life adjustment movement. Bybee (1997) stated,

Progressive educators introduced the term "life adjustment" to describe programs for secondary schools that built on the "important needs of youth" expressed in

the Educational Policy Commission's report, *Education for All American Children* (1951). Life-adjustment education focused on the needs of students in "general tracks" and proposed a curriculum of functional experiences in areas such as the practical arts, family living, and civic participation. (p. 6)

Many critics believed that such rhetoric about the curriculum seemed to neglect aspects of the disciplines that were vital. These critics believed that the life adjustment curriculum "watered down" the basic fundamentals of an academic education by not focusing on the basics and classical coursework. Although the life adjustment movement gained much publicity and discussion at symposiums, it is not evident that the curriculum was utilized in practice. School administrators, who were mainly business leaders and not trained educators, did not believe in allocating resources for the curriculum, and the practice was never put into full fruition but was utilized only in isolated local systems across the country (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 217-220).

The end of *The Frontier of Democracy* publication brought about a significant change in the Progressive Education Association itself. No longer wanting to be associated with radical thinking, the membership declined even further. Blaming the war for the plight of continuing child-centered pedagogy, the association fought internally for a direction forward. Although many wanted to continue with "educational experimentation" (Bowers, 1969, p. 202) and Harold O. Rugg maintained that addressing class struggles should continue to be the focus of the organization, the board of directors conceded that a "less aggressive posture" was needed (p. 203). Turning to "education for complete human living" (p. 203), the association voted by mail ballot in the spring of 1944 to change its name to the American Education Fellowship. The politics involved in

any organized initiative led to many problems in finding a new voice in progressive education based on the major tenets and social activism. Bowers stated further,

The association's preoccupation with the rudimentary problems of survival meant that it had ceased to be a leading interpreter of progressive education. The PEA had abandoned the field so completely that no effective voice remained to challenge the social reconstructionists as the only important theorists in the progressive education movement. Earlier the social reconstructionists had failed to attract a large following because of their extremism and because the classroom teacher had acknowledged the PEA's leadership in methodology . . . classroom teachers who had been either unsympathetic or indifferent to the idea of a class struggle but who were more receptive to the idea of a community-centered school that fostered "democratic living." (p. 204)

By disassociating itself from experiential and social reformation education, the formal association was able to protect itself from being targets of accusation of communism and radical thinking, which were anti-American. World War II had changed the world, and America was on the threshold of many challenges and changes as well.

The Cold War began in 1946 with the clash between the communism and capitalism. The politics and economic imperialism brought about a race for weapons and national securities (Appleby et al., 2005, pp. 718-806; Kliebard, 1995, 226-230; Spring, 2001, pp. 358-368). This, in turn, affected national public and educational policy. While the struggle between the progressive liberals and more conservative educators continued, the federal government stepped in further and through legislation mandated a focused curriculum to provide for building political and military strength. Education was under fire as the conservative right-wing political groups spoke fervidly for public and political

response to the nation's protection and other policy goals. They even believed that the schools had been infiltrated by communists. Spring (2001) stated,

Right-wing groups demanded the removal of anti-American literature from the schools and the dismissal of left-leaning teachers. At the same time, those committed to victory for the United States in its technological race with the Soviet Union accused the public schools of being anti-intelligent and charged that professional educators had led the schools to ruin. (p. 358)

By concentrating on curriculum that emphasized science and mathematics, it was believed that the country could produce enough scientists and engineers to win the technology race with the Soviet Union. This meant that the focus of education turned to cultivation of human resources for the benefit of national and foreign economic policies rather than on preparing individuals for protecting their own individual human rights and building individual intellectual growth in all students.

With the pressures of abiding to popular society's opinions, many teachers and administrators left the American Education Fellowship for membership in other more conservative education organizations such as the National Education Association. On June 25, 1955, the American Education Fellowship's remaining members voted almost unanimously to dissolve the group. In order for progressive educators, both practicing and theorists, to survive and continue their work toward social change, many of them disassociated themselves with the terminology of progressive at that time. So much had happened through attempts to reach a massively growing public school system that the original concepts of progressive education's theories were hardly recognizable (Bowers, 1969, pp. 226-232). However, progressivism did survive through alternative forms during this time period. The main ideals remained active in various educational endeavors and in

the scholarly work of many throughout the next several decades even as public education was seized for political and economic means once again.

It was Vice Admiral Hyman G. Rickover who carried a great deal of influence with Congress and spoke out regarding the American education system. Although holding students in secondary education was a major theme after the war, Rickover believed that the schools neglected the intellect and those students who were gifted and talented. If America was to keep up with the Soviet Union in particular, there was a radical change needed in building scientific and educational areas of education (Kliebard, 1995, p. 227; Rickover, 1959, p. 153). While Rickover would perhaps not agree, Kliebard (1995) related that his thinking was one of social efficiency:

The development of the intellect was not so much a good in itself or a way of giving the individual a way of mastering the modern world but a direct avenue to victory in the Cold War. That, more than the standard humanist arguments, had strong popular appeal and helped convert what had been a rather limited battle between academicians and professional educators over control of the curriculum into a matter of urgent national concern. (p. 227)

Rickover's voice was a definite influence in what was to transpire as the technological age began although public education would have many hurdles to cross in finding its ways to provide for a modern curriculum and meeting the needs of all students.

As has been stated, by the mid-1950s, specifically with the Soviet Union's launch of the world's first earth-orbiting satellite on October 5, 1957, progressive education and the founding members of the Progressive Education Association lost their original voice (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 236-237). The *soft* curriculum (as it was termed by Rickover and criticized by many others), which was led by progressive men and women educators and

steeped in the educational philosophies of John Dewey in both the public and private sectors, was directly blamed for America's loss in political stronghold and the loss of an intellectually focused education. In 1958, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act where, in the first paragraph, the intention was made clear:

The Congress hereby finds and declares that the security of the Nation requires the fullest development of the mental resources and technical skills of its young men and women. The present emergency demands that additional and more adequate educational opportunities be made available. The defense of this Nation depends upon the mastery of modern techniques developed from complex scientific principles.

The American school curriculum was seized into a trust for the public good once through federal mandate. Although many declared a failure of progressive education to lead the nation into the future, it is clear that the effects of the movement brought into the forefront many issues of education that will remain victories forever impacting the practices of pedagogy. The nature of the child, human development theories, and issue of schooling in relation to social change along with the beginnings of the civil rights movements can be attributed to the cause (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 229-230).

With the turn in public education in the late 1950s and early 1960s and as teachers were sent in droves to workshops to learn new methods of inquiry and hands-on experiences particularly in the sciences (Zilversmit, 1993, pp. 115-118), the focus was not the same as during the changes brought forth in the Progressive Era as America began its industrial progress. There was a different race to be won after all, and proponents of capitalism wanted to be sure to regain their place in the world economy and advanced military developments. Politics played an everlasting role in the advancement of

education into an environment to produce intellectual stimulus. Students and teachers in the public education sector were turned into an instrumental type of “machine” once again for the common good of society and to further economic endeavors both nationally and in the global world.

With this in mind, the federal government became more involved in local education through providing funds aimed at specific public schools’ curricula. The National Defense Education Act (1958) did outline a fivefold increase for educational activities of the National Science Foundation. First, the foundation was created to provide emphasis in research in science and engineering. Although it was created in 1950, it was not until the National Defense Education Act in 1958 after Sputnik that funding was provided to allow the agency to provide an encompassing research-based ability (National Science Foundation, 2006; Spring, 2001, p. 361). Second, the National Defense Education Act provided grants to states to improve assessment programs and guidance and counseling services. It was by this method that the federal government’s goal was to identify gifted students who could assist in the Cold War activities. Additionally, funding for increasing the number of science and mathematics teachers and equipment needed to run the programs was allocated for public schools to apply for through grants. With the increase of graduate fellowships as part of the package too, it was hoped that the teaching profession would be better able to provide students with the curriculum needed for a technologically developing nation.

However, as has occurred often in the educational field, even with all of the workshops and training that took place, and as the Cold War ensued, little sustained changes in instructional practices occurred in individual public school classrooms. For 6 to 8 weeks, teachers would deliver and assess using the new hands-on inquiry methods.

Energized and fresh with excitement and filled with a renewed love for the art of their profession, they incorporated their newfound learning only to return eventually to old and comfortable methods from the early days of American education. Part of the dilemma of turning back to traditional methods and practices was due to bureaucratic ferrying and frontline educators' comfort in returning to archaic methods of instruction. Teachers were not restricted in their teaching methods; however, local control of curriculum was maintained. Coursework was increased to include a classical education with increased emphasis in the sciences and mathematics as called for by the federal government. Progressive public kindergartens were employed, and school guidance and school psychologists were hired at more schools across the nation (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 227-230).

One of the major catalysts in significant changes in organization for the nation's public schools was through school consolidation. The conditions of school buildings after the war efforts were deplorable, and there was a significant difference and inequity regarding the amount of funding utilized in rebuilding the schools between the races and social classes. With the economic impact of building more schools, many local districts went into consolidation. This was particularly seen in the rural areas but was not limited there (Zilversmit, 1993, p. 116). Although the claim of better trained teachers and facilities was to lead to an increased intellectual education and particularly serve the gifted and talented students, this unrelenting disparity between classes and races of people brought a culminating chasm within society and thus within education. With all classes and races coming together to fight the war as the nation began rebuilding and recovery, everyone wanted equal opportunity to the renewed "American Dream," a vision of living comfortably and with freedoms never before seen. Therefore, the emphasis of education during these times, beginning in the 1950s but coming into true fruition in the

early 1960s, shifted to one of providing for the prosperity of society and also inculcating the various cultures into the schools by providing an equal and equitable education for all.

The civil rights movement of the 1960s pushed desegregation into the public schools, and a different “war” was now in place--the war on poverty and equal and equitable rights for all citizens. Women who were married were to return home after the war to take care of households in order to provide jobs for the White men returning to work. During the civil rights movement, women once again stood up for their rights and fought for job equity and further employment opportunities as well. It was a new day, and a new nation was evolving but not without resistance by those in power and who wanted to keep the status quo.

It was the mass media evolution of the 1950s that also played an important role in the civil rights movement. Local problems quickly were able to become national problems for focus and attention (Spring, 2001, p. 391). Even when political leaders, especially presidents, had in the past been able to ignore the pressure for political involvement in such issues, with the mass media, there was no hiding from the calls for justice. At the same time, various organizations and high school and college students across the nation became involved in the struggle for civil rights on behalf of all people, and it was not long before the entire nation was involved in the massive changes that were needed to continue to build a progressive society to meet the needs of all of its people. The seeds for change were planted in the 1950s, and it was through the Montgomery bus boycott that Black people began their open cry for independence (Kasher, 1996; King, 1958; Williams, 1987; Wright, 1991).

Cozzens (1998), who was a senior in high school with great insight, wrote, The Montgomery Bus Boycott officially started on December 1, 1955. That was the day when the blacks of Montgomery, Alabama, decided that they would boycott the city buses until they could sit anywhere they wanted, instead of being relegated to the back when a white boarded. It was not, however, the day that the movement to desegregate the buses started. Perhaps the movement started on the day in 1943 when a black seamstress named Rosa Parks paid her bus fare and then watched the bus drive off as she tried to re-enter through the rear door, as the driver had told her to do. Perhaps the movement started on the day in 1949 when a black professor Jo Ann Robinson absentmindedly sat at the front of a nearly empty bus, then ran off in tears when the bus driver screamed at her for doing so. Perhaps the movement started on the day in the early 1950s when a black pastor named Vernon Johns tried to get other blacks to leave a bus in protest after he was forced to give up his seat to a white man, only to have them tell him, "You ought to knowed better." The story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott is often told as a simple, happy tale of the "little people" triumphing over the seemingly insurmountable forces of evil. The truth is a little less romantic and a little more complex. (¶1)

This young student captured the essence of what transpired during this time period. The conversation was neither simple nor romantic. People were fighting for basic rights allowed for by the Constitution and away from White male supremacy. As we know, this struggle would continue for many years and even today is still fought in various forms on a daily basis.

The civil rights movement crossed boundaries of gender, race, religion, and national origin. Women during the movement brought about the termed *second wave* of feminism. While the first wave of women's rights through the suffrage movement of the late 1800s to early 1900s focused on absolute rights and officially mandated inequalities, the second wave of the fight for women's rights brought about changes that were unofficial. By that, it is meant that women were struggling for economic rights and freedom from discrimination in a variety of forms. The movement was also not limited to the United States but spread across Britain and Europe (Georgetown University, 2007). The movement also encompassed the call for equal and equitable rights for other groups, including but not limited to religious organizations and groups and different ethnicities, and brought about the first focus on sexual orientation rights as well.

Although the war on civil rights was fought openly and with grand voice by many across the nation, it was also the students of our nation's universities and colleges who played an important role in bringing about change. Even high school students became involved in the controversies. The intensified involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War during the 1960s provided fuel to the fire for a nation's call for peace. It was the Students for a Democratic Society that held its first meeting in 1960 at Ann Arbor, Michigan, where Robert Alan Haber was elected president and students formally began their quest for a new and modern approach to unity of voice. The Students for a Democratic Society (2007) stated,

Its political manifesto, known as the Port Huron Statement, was adopted at the organization's first convention in 1962, based on an earlier draft by staff member Tom Hayden. This manifesto criticized the political system of the United States for failing to achieve international peace and for failing to address social ills in

contemporary society. It also advocated non-violent civil disobedience as the means by which student youth could bring forth a “participatory democracy.”

(n.p.)

While the students spoke out with others for nonviolent means of changing society and creating an international community with world peace, the challenges of keeping the revolts nonviolent in their early inception was difficult at best. “Sit-ins” were staged by Black organizations and students across the country, and police in riot gear often were brought in to end the demonstrations. This violent reaction to what was intended to be peaceful demonstrations for civil rights escalated many events into ones of rioting and tear gas. By the end of the 1960s, a new generation had paved the way for further discourse, and although changes were slow, progressives were able to affect a difference.

In 1964, the federal government passed the Civil Rights Act where institutions in receipt of federal funds cannot discriminate. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was created also in 1965, and the federal government continued to further regulate job discrimination based on race, religion, gender, and national origin (Appleby, et al., 2005, p. 879; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2007a, 2007b). Progressive educators and progressive practices during this time period continued to exist although their voice in educational policy was changed. White middle-class college and high school students and organized ethnic leaders continued to impact an ever-changing and growing society dramatically. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, a new and renewed counterculture and left-wing politics had been formed that continues to have a force in political and societal changes and challenges to the norm even today.

Progressive educators continued to choose a variety of forms to provide alternatives to the mainstream educational systems. As in the early history of education,

many of these endeavors occurred outside of the public education system in private for-profit and nonprofit enterprises. Miller (2006) of the Alternative Education Resource Organization related,

It was during the 1960's that alternative education grew into a widespread social movement. During this decade, of course, countercultural themes that had always been marginal and virtually invisible--racial justice, pacifism, feminism, and opposition to corporate capitalism--exploded into public view. Mass demonstrations, alternative lifestyles and publications, and the urban riots and assassinations of that period led to a deep examination of modern society and institutions. Educators and other writers--including Paul Goodman, John Holt, Jonathan Kozol, Herbert Kohl, George Dennison, James Herndon and Ivan Illich --launched passionate attacks against the "one best system" and its agenda of social efficiency. The period between 1967 and 1972, especially, was a time of crisis for public education, when student demonstrations, teacher strikes, and a deep questioning of traditional assumptions shook the system to its core. In these few years alone, over 500 "free schools"--nonpublic schools based on countercultural if not revolutionary ideas--were founded. Open classrooms and magnet schools (public schools of choice) were introduced. And the spirit of Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel began to seep into academic and professional circles, leading, by the end of the 1970's, to approaches that came to be called "humanistic" and "holistic" education. (¶7)

At the same time, as Miller introduced, public education did provide for progressive, alternative means of education through creating magnet schools and open classrooms.

Open education began in the mid-1960s and led in the early 1970s to classrooms that were physically designed without walls (University of Vermont, 2002). Often all that separated students who were grouped for instruction was a chalkboard or portable bookshelves. Open education returned to the progressive values of students guiding their own instruction through hands-on activities and freedom of exploration and discovery (Huitt, 2001). Pedagogical efforts were to be included that provided for teacher freedom in working with students to drive curriculum and instruction. Cuban (2004) stated,

The open-classroom movement mirrored the social, political, and cultural changes of the 1960s and early 1970s. The era saw the rise of a youth-oriented counterculture and various political and social movements--the civil-rights movement, antiwar protests, feminist and environmental activism--that questioned traditional seats of authority, including the way classrooms and schools were organized and students were taught. (p. 68)

However, even with the physical changes in schools and supposed existence of an open instructional delivery, the public schools still found little actually changed in the curriculum.

Norris (2004) related,

The problems and inadequacies that most children bring to school did not change or go away simply because it was decided to massively redesign the concept of instructional delivery. Simply creating school buildings, physical structures, and curriculum designs that embraced the ideas of open education and expecting the rest of the world to change to meet it is the same flawed logic as painting a wall that is supported by rickety or inadequate framing. The new wall color cannot fix the problem behind the wall or cause the wall to better serve its purpose. (p. 103)

These “inadequacies” were once again blamed on progressive educators’ misguided intentions rather than on the true issue of schools and society being unable to adapt to nonstructure and the wish to always maintain malleable components of educating America’s youth. This humanist viewpoint of progressive education brought resistance by the political parties that constantly desire to preserve control of knowledge and its dissemination to the public.

Magnet schools or schools of choice first came about in the late 1960s. These schools were influential in responding to the protests of racially segregated schools. Called “street academies,” some of the beginning magnet schools, according to Waldrip (2006),

emphasized the basic subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but they also included the history of African Americans, what the civil rights movement was all about, and how schools could be tied to community needs. Some of these led to more permanent structures. Harlem Prep, for example, was first funded by foundations, businesses, and industry, which became one of the public schools of New York City. (¶5)

At the same time, magnet schools provided not only an alternative to racial segregation but also facilitated an avenue for students to select a focused course of study of interest to them. Isaac Dickson Elementary School in Asheville, North Carolina, is a prime example of an early magnet school that is still operating. The mission statement of the school is “a child-centered, progressive approach to learning. The staff believes that real life experiences and a ‘learning by doing’ approach is the cornerstone of this experiential school” (Isaac Dickson Elementary School, 2007). The federal government supported school choice by offering planning grants to school systems and individual schools.

Although many magnet schools were opened across the country, quite a number went into the planning stages but did not come into complete fruition. It was with these early magnet school initiatives that educational vouchers were first introduced (Waldrup, 2006).

Progressive educators during the late 1960s and early 1970s also opened private, independent schools that embraced progressive ideals and were untouchable from the political realm. Many of these schools are still alive and thriving even today. Just as in the early 1900s, these private ventures kept the ideals of progressive education alive through producing active, collaborative, learner-centered environments. Examples of such schools are many and include the Foxfire Schools in Rabun County, Georgia. Foxfire philosophy and educational programs are true progressivism. After its initial school thrived, other schools across the country sent teachers and administrators to be trained in the methods and student-focused learning activities in order to carry out the approach effectively. This practice continues even today (Foxfire Fund, 2002).

Remember the Country Day Schools introduced in chapter 2 that are numerous across the United States? Many more independent Day Schools began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Park Day School in Oakland, California, is also a current progressive school that began around the same time period. The Park Day School (2006) provided the following information about their school's pedagogy:

Park Day School adheres to a progressive educational philosophy. Several decades of research and professional experience inform the progressive education view of how children learn. This view differs in very basic ways from the more traditional view of learning held by most educators in this country. In the traditional view, children learn primarily by having knowledge or skills

transmitted to them in an ordered sequence, using uniform methods, by adults who have already mastered the knowledge or skills.

By contrast, the progressive view is that each child learns best not by passively consuming knowledge, but by actively constructing his or her own understanding of material based on prior knowledge, skills and experience. In progressive education, the child plays a more active role in his or her own learning, so teachers focus on the characteristics of each learner in addition to the quality of academic content. (¶1-2)

Many progressive schools during this time once again failed due to lack of funding or poor leadership just as in the early 1900s. However, it is obvious from the vast research and numerous examples available that progressive education continued to thrive long after the fall of the Progressive Education Association.

Progressive education through the 1970s took on many different faces and alternatives from the mainstream education, and progressive pedagogy continued although in isolation from the immense national public school systems' community. The most important change within the field of curriculum studies was born in the early 1970s through curriculum studies scholars. As was discussed in chapter 1, the reconceptualization of the field of curriculum studies was and continues to be a vital and imperative change in viewing education as a compassionate and open-ended curriculum.

In a comprehensive overview and detailed discourse of the paradigm of understanding curriculum through different critical contexts, Pinar et al. (2002) published *Understanding Curriculum*, which provides the current field of curriculum studies' perspectives and frameworks. Bringing together both theoretical and practice within the field, the reconceptualization of curriculum studies links the historical to contemporary

practice. Pinar et al. stated, “Scholars are acutely aware that curriculum work occurs in time, in history, and this self-consciousness regarding the historicity of curriculum work, theoretical or institutional, has helped support the increasing interest in historical studies of curriculum” (pp. 42-43). As one surmises, history and time are occurring constantly and instantaneously even as we read and lay down words right here. Changes over time allow for new insight and reflection upon the course of curriculum, which returns us once again to *currere* or “to run the race” (Asanuma, as cited in Pinar, 1999, p. 159).

In the early 1970s, this contemporary endeavor to understand curriculum through autobiographical and biographical text, *currere*, was met with controversy. It is through this work, however, and the work of the many scholars of the field who embraced these concepts that progression forward in education continued and continues today. It is the new progressive education of the present time that provides alternatives to stagnant intellectual development and education of our students. This approach to curriculum through a personal voice by the lived experience was shouted down by political education historians in the beginning of its work and was not widely accepted; however, it is alive and well today as we will discuss and delve into with the next chapter.

Through the launching of the tiny Sputnik satellite, the beginning of the Cold War, and senseless killings of the Vietnam War, the struggle for individual equality and equity through the civil rights movement, emergence of the counterculture, and beginning of the reconceptualization of the field of curriculum studies, progressive educators and progressive thinkers have continued to nudge our intellects and find alternatives in educational inquiry. By disturbing the waters of the political and economic systems in our country, the education of our country’s youth continued to be a vehicle for changing society and building a compassionate consciousness for the international community

during the 1950s through the early 1970s. At the same time, progressive education and progressive educators were in transition. However, the major tenets stayed intact, and many endeavors continued to provide opportunities for alternatives to mainstay public education efforts.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION: RENEWED FACETS AND PERSPECTIVES

The 1970s brought about many changes economically and throughout society in both America and the international global community. The radical 1960s changed the nation, and the civil rights movement empowered many cultures through giving a voice to the battles for equal opportunity and education for all. Although there was progress in changing the modern culture, at the same time, many social struggles continued although with different contours than in previous eras. The early 1970s were a time of prosperity. Boyer et al. (1990) wrote in their historical volume *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People* that

In contrast to the political activists of the sixties, the generation that came of age in the seventies seemed cautiously intent on personal goals and financial success. These years also saw an unprecedented number of women enter the work force, enroll in professional schools, and launch careers. Black Americans joined the middle class in record numbers, while ethnic pride and a sense of new possibilities stirred the American Indian population. (p. 1134)

Rapid economic growth and technological advancements spurred society forward into a new era but not without leaving an impact. The division between the economic classes deepened over time and continued to taunt the war on poverty. Technological advances began to challenge a new world order and provided for new dilemmas in both arenas of private and public education.

It cannot go without saying that, at the same time, the ecological system of our planet responded to the systemic changes in economic endeavors and brisk expansion of

utilizing the earth's resources to meet the needs of society. Todd and Curti (1977) related the following:

By the mid-1970's most Americans were aware that the nation's amazing economic growth had caused increasing pollution of the most essential of all the natural resources--air, water, and soil. Clean air in many cities had been replaced with smog. Some rivers had been turned into virtual sewers. The sea and the land had become dumping grounds for garbage and other solid wastes. Fertile farm land had been bulldozed to build highways and housing developments. Much of the once beautiful American countryside had been destroyed. (p. 737)

Thus, a changing society and the country's economic growth provided fertile ground for causation and effect of the trepidation of providing for both public and private education of modern youth. This heightened apprehension challenged educators, both in practice and scholarly endeavors, to meet the needs of a vast and shifting educational system.

Many progressive educators, including James Banks, Christine Sleeter, and Carl Grant (Gorski, 1999; Spring, 2001, p. 408), remained at the heart of the discourses that transpired regarding inclusion of the various cultures of society. They continued to provide impetus and response for the changes that were needed in studying curriculum and its affects on the changing nation. Spring (2001) wrote,

It was argued that the integration of different histories and culture into the curriculum would empower members of dominated and oppressed immigrant cultures by providing an understanding of the methods of cultural domination and by helping to build self-esteem. . . . The study of a variety of cultures had an important influence on textbooks and classroom instruction in the United States. (pp. 408-409)

The concept of a multicultural education was born although it was not until the early to mid-1980s that scholarly work produced further educational equality by pursuing curriculum changes. In the beginning, changes were “by simply adding token programs and special units on famous women or famous people of color” (Gorski, 1999, n.p.). However, with the growth of the curriculum studies field in this direction, the need for change by viewing curriculum through a critical perspective became very apparent.

At the same time, politics and economics continued to drive educational policy and curriculum during the late 1960s and into the 1970s. The changes took place within the field of curriculum studies as progressive educators continued to shift with the times. The movement forward in providing for a viable curriculum, along with the heated debates that transpired, is apparent in the research (Hlebowitsh, 1993; Pinar et al., 2002; Spring, 2001). The scholarly work and challenges of attempting to change practices and paradigms that arose during this time period are evident even in the present day. However, it was the federal government’s persistent attachment of monies to educational endeavors that maintained and continues to maintain control of what transpired across the states and school systems within our country. Ultimately, what was to be taught in public schools was impacted by the ever-present political interventions and attempts to maintain control and shape an evolving society.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was legislated in 1965. Spring (2001) related,

The ESEA was signed by President Johnson on April 11, 1965, in the one-room schoolhouse near Stonewall, Texas, where his own education had begun. For the occasion, his first schoolteacher was flown in from retirement in California to stand at his side. The most important section of the ESEA was Title I, which

provided funds for improved educational programs for children designated as education deprived. (p. 374)

The cycle of generational poverty brought about as immigrants moved to America in the late 19th and early 20th century was attempted to be broken. The relationship between economics and high educational achievement (Spring, 2001, p. 375) was the focus of this endeavor along with providing for the rights and responsibilities of schooling students with disabilities and other minority groups. This original ESEA was to have an impact far-reaching into the future and is still in play even today as the struggle for an intellectual, open-ended, progressive curriculum continues.

As was previously noted in chapter 1, it was in 1970 that the National Education Association published Joseph J. Schwab's "The Practical: A Language for Curriculum," which hailed that the curriculum field was "moribund." Schwab charged that curriculum had become too theoretical and needed a re-energizing by focusing on "the practical, the quasi-practical and to the eclectic" related Pinar et al. (2002, p. 176). By deliberation (opening further discourse) surrounding the issues of curriculum and into practice instructional methods and delivery, which has its origins in the work of John Dewey, educators and curriculum theorists of the time began to further question ways of viewing curriculum from a critical viewpoint. Pereira (2007) related,

The object of curriculum deliberation is to reach a warranted decision about what to do in a particular context (although sometimes the decision may be to do or change nothing): what to teach these students in this time and in this place and in view of the particular circumstances prevailing. Although the decision needs to be justified, the grounds for justification are seldom clear at the outset. Such decisions cannot be justified by a formal chain of reasoning; for example, by

deducing what is appropriate to teach from a set of propositions about how children learn. Nor can they be justified, except in the most simple and therefore non problematic cases, by appeal to a set of procedures which can be routinely applied; for example, by showing that proposed activities follow from the recommendations of some philosopher, central authority, or expert unfamiliar with the situation. They can only be justified by demonstrating that they are the result of rational consideration of an adequate number and variety of alternatives. (n.p.)

With this conceptualizing of alternatives to teaching curriculum and querying of a variety of perspectives, the field responded by turning to understanding curriculum in all of its critical textures. By empowering teachers to view teaching and learning through a variety of dimensions (Pinar, 1999a, p. 484), education becomes an experience that is “lived” and responds to the environment in which it finds itself.

During this time period, there were other educators along with Schwab who were concerned with the stagnancy of the field, which included James B. Macdonald and Dwayne Huebner. Macdonald, a professor of education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, wrote in the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development’s publication in December of 1974 regarding the changes in society and its cultures,

Our recent social and cultural crisis reflected what we interpreted as a strong desire for human rights and social justice. These forces have resulted in reexamining the class structure, working on racial and other minority civil rights, concerns about women’s liberation, students, and the general thrust of “emerging nations” for a decent quality of life. The key concepts here would appear to be

liberation and justice through the right of self-determination without serving the interests of “others.” (p. 169)

The concept of the living reality of schooling and assisting students by allowing them to be free to develop their own thought systems and values along with creativity continued the progressive education train of thought. Rather than teachers being provided curriculum to stand and impart with the intention of student regurgitation, the phenomena of an open-ended curriculum where new and fresh perspectives are individually and intuitively reached (Pinar et al., 2002, p. 180) was a novel and rejuvenating notion. Into the 1970s and the next decade, this reconceptualization of curriculum theory through understanding not developing curriculum models and designs would raise many issues within the field, and the field was revitalized with the discourse that ensued.

Dwayne Huebner was a professor at Columbia University during this time period and a major scholar in the work of the reconceptualization of curriculum studies. Huebner continued the conversation by contributing to the field through his work from the mid-1960s to the present. Particularly, Huebner (1987) spoke of the temporality of time--of man’s place in the world at this point in being. In “Curriculum as Concern for Man’s Temporality,” Huebner wrote,

The responsibility of the curriculum person, then, is to design and criticize specialized environments which embody the dialectical relationships valued in a given society. . . . Education is a manifestation of the historical process, meshing the unfolding biography of the individual with the unfolding history of his society. The past becomes the means by which the individual can project his own potentiality for being. (p. 329)

Pinar et al. (1999) related that “Huebner created a literature quite different from the dominant ‘scientific’ orientation, drawing upon language analysis, existentialism, phenomenology, theology, and political science” (p. 182). He along with the other scholars provided a shift of paradigms in ways of viewing curriculum through different lenses. It was C. A. Bowers (as cited in Pinar et al., 1999) who linked the alternative school movement of the 1960s and the work of the child-centered progressives by alluding to Freud and Rousseau (p. 185). These progressive, intellectual educators were to have a far-reaching impact in changing the field of curriculum studies.

Once again, there was a call to provide for curriculum deliberation. An understanding of curriculum through a variety of perspectives would allow for teaching of students and advancement of allowing curriculum to unfold through natural processes. Ross Mooney, Eliot W. Eisner, Paul R. Klohr, and Herbert M. Kliebard also joined the discourse that ensued and brought varied aspects to the conversation (as cited in Pinar et al., 1999, p. 180). As curricularists believed that the field had become stifling and static along with Schwab’s call to urgency before the field died completely, it was here that the reconceptualization of curriculum studies began.

It is worth reconsidering and repeating from chapter 1 that the term reconceptualist or the reconceptualizing of the field was not born by the scholars in the movement themselves, rather it was gleaned through papers that were produced by key persons involved at the time (Pinar et al., 2002, pp. 211-213). It is imperative to note here too that there is no such term as reconceptualist, but rather there was the development itself within the field, which meant a shift of paradigms, creating of new meanings, and questioning of the current notions within curriculum studies: a reconceptualization of the field itself. Although many of the major concepts of the process are based in early

progressive education theory, it is through this framed or unframed work that the newly formed paradigms came into fruition to actually change the field of curriculum studies today.

The creation of the *JCT: Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* in 1978 by reconceptualist and originator William F. Pinar and the established Bergamo Conferences provided a venue whereby scholars could provide a forum for sharing concepts and laying further groundwork in bringing the field forward. Traditions out of the mainstream of any school of thought are always met with controversy. The challenges for reform to the field of curriculum studies based in the very ideas of the critical meanings and perspectives of education were met with much outcry (Pinar et al., 2002, pp. 231-239).

Traditional curriculum theorists and even those involved in the changes that followed through the progressive educators and who were involved in revitalizing the field of curriculum studies were fractured. Educators such as William G. Wraga and Peter S. Hlebowitsh were quick to attack the new paradigms directly and went on further in time to announce that even the so-called reconceptualists were ideologically at odds by the 1990s. Wraga and Hlebowitsh (2003b) wrote in summary of what developed over time:

Beginning in the 1970s, a new generation of curriculum scholars pronounced the historic curriculum field “dead” and launched a self-styled “reconceptualization” of curriculum studies. However, by the 1990s, even as “reconceptualized” perspectives dominated the academic curriculum field, internal ideological feuding and external critique fractured even the Reconceptualist camp. Presently, with the appearance of several new curriculum associations and conferences, and with little evidence of interest in communication among the various factions often

represented by these affiliations, Cuban's (1995, vii) recognition of "the stubborn disarray that marks the academic field of curriculum" in the US continues as an apt characterization of the field. (p. 426)

Wraga and Hlebowitsh (2003b) continued by writing, "Thus, the reconceptualization, which involved a conscious and calculated repudiation of historic forms of curriculum development, cannot in any historically accurate sense of the word be considered a 'renaissance'" (p. 434). The main challenges and characterization of the progression forward in understanding curriculum through a variety of critical perspectives is pointedly at "theory into practice." However, it is by challenging and querying thoughts and continuing the complicated conversation (Pinar, 2004, p. xiii) that there are no restrictions on focusing on intellectual growth and how curriculum is a lived experience not within control of politics and through prescribed models and designs.

By delving further into reconceptualizing the way that curriculum is theorized and then taught and learned, different perspectives and frameworks were put into play. For example, through using the phenomenological framework in understanding curriculum and the field of curriculum studies, researchers could seek to understand life as it is lived "not merely as it is theorized" (Pinar et al., 2002, p. 408). To extract meaning from those experiences and how the interconnectivity of those experiences relates to the inner world of the person in practice by both teacher and student and then out of bounds within the public realm provides for a truly lived curriculum that unfolds as education progresses.

Sumara (1996) reflected in his book *Private Readings in Public: Schooling the Literary Imagination* that we continuously are searching for the "hap." He stated,

By focusing on the running of the course, *currere* acknowledges the importance of the chaotic, the ambiguous, the serendipitous, the unanticipated, the

unexpected, the surprise, the discovery, and the way in which any event, any relationship in some way affects the continual laying of the path of experience. (p. 176)

The coined word “hap” of Weinsheimer as Sumara passed on in his writing allows one to understand that, in setting the foundations of research and scholarly work historically and then viewing through critical lens the phenomenon as it occurred, one is able to understand when there is a "happen onto something, in the haphazard guess, the happenstance situation in happiness and haplessness. . . . The Hap eludes the hegemony of method” (p. 176). There is an evolution of meaning or meanings through the study of the lived experience. It is into this realm that curriculum comes out deeper and higher and into a true intellectual inquiry.

Once again, the "hap" plays a role providing an understanding of the inquiry into curriculum through the historical lens and in the lived experience. Pinar et al. (2002) summarized Jardine by describing the following: “Phenomenology embraces the world as we live it, but in the process, invites us to change the way we live. “Our taken-for-granted notions of self-understanding, reflections, and practical competence are all reconceived in phenomenological inquiry” (p. 413). In the discussion of *currere* and reconceptualization of the field of curriculum studies in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the discourse regarding distancing oneself from the experiences themselves in order to bring a fresh perspective to the complicated conversation was an important paradigm shift.

As has been introduced, the changes in the field did not occur without much heated discussion between the scholars and political historians of the time and into the present day even. Pinar (1999) and Wraga (1998, 1999) continued their open parlay of questioning whether scholarly work was indeed affecting practices in the public schools

even into the 1990s. Hlebowitsh (2005) spoke of the generational work of curriculum studies and how social reconstruction through controlling what is taught in schools continues to address the needs of society rather than the focus on progressive notions in education. He wrote,

Not surprisingly, some curriculum scholars continue to see the curriculum field as a historical creature (a miscreant, even) still burdened by the ideas and principles inherited from its social efficiency derivations. Pinar and others (1995), for instance, see these vestiges in what they view as the field's continued obsession with only procedural and prescriptive matters in the school experience, and in its accompanying failure to generate new theoretical lines of understanding. They have little hesitancy in proposing that the curriculum field's main problems still reside at the historical door of the field, believing that the orientation of curriculum studies has been stuck in a simplistic management-style interplay between forming curriculum objectives and telling teachers how to carry them out. And they are confident enough in this view to proclaim the need for the field to repudiate its history and to reconceptualize itself along broader theoretical and less school-bound lines. (p. 74)

Even with the criticisms and accusations of lying of blame of social inequities through education (Wraga & Hlebowitsh, 1995) and calls for political activism as a cover for changes in the field, the progressive educators of the reconceptualization of the field continued their work. As shall be discussed in chapter 5 of this dissertation, the impact upon the field of curriculum studies continued far into the future and to where the conversations lay today.

It was not long before other educational historians and political right-wing conservatives entered the discourse. Diane Ravitch, who has been an Assistant Secretary of Education in recent years, provided a history of the building of the New York City Public School System and provided work with the major tenet of education not being able to cure all of society's ills with her 1974 book, *The Great School Wars: A History of the New York City Public Schools*. She continued by beginning her outspoken criticisms of the reconceptualization of the curriculum studies field and liberals in general through her 1978 book, *The Revisionists Revised: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools*. By reducing the conversation to liberal radicals attacking the politics and economics of the country, Ravitch (1978) stated, "The authors fail to probe the interrelationships among the various political and social movements of the progressive period" (p. 129). She went on to add that schooling does not provide for continued generational inequities by muddying the waters and stated,

How is one to know what the underlying function of schools really is? The Marxist, the anarchist, the liberal, the conservative, the churchman, the school official, the teacher, the parent, the student, etc.--each has his own view of what the underlying function of what schooling *really* is. It should be obvious that any analysis that relies essentially on opinion rather than evidence is of largely hortatory value. (p. 151)

Ravitch (1978) continuously provided proof of her arguments against the "revisionists" and "political liberals" of curriculum theory and history and yet she attacked Joel Spring for "picking and choosing among his original sources" (p. 158), which is exactly what she has accomplished in her work. Ravitch (2000, 2003) continued to publish into the next millennium and was even actively involved in the setting of new Georgia

Performance Standards for reading and social studies curriculum that has transpired in the past few years.

Hofstadter (1962) contributed to the very early discourse regarding education by writing about the tone of anti-intellectualism in the United States and about the classes of power that creating intellectuals provides in his widely read book, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. He wrote,

Compared with the intellectual as expert, who must be accepted even when he is feared, the intellectual as ideologist is an object of unqualified suspicion, resentment, and distrust. The expert appears as a threat to dominate or destroy the ordinary individual, but the ideologist is widely believed to have already destroyed a cherished American society. (p. 38)

This fear of change and opening truths to the masses rather than keeping an open-ended conversation flowing for all to imbibe is at the heart of the modern conversation.

Hofstadter (1962) went on to explain that, while he was not necessarily “for” progressive education by referring to John Dewey (p. 359), he believed that progressive ideals were distorted (although at the same time never made clear in his opinion). Rather than relying on the “progressive” terminology, he utilized “the new education” or what this author refers to as “alternatives” in education (p. 360). Hofstadter was early for his time; however, he felt that progressive education and progressive educators lacked organization in order for this experimental curriculum to be provided to the masses. He stated,

The new education represented the elaboration of certain progressive principles into a creed, the attempt to make inclusive claims for their applicability in a system of mass education, their extension from experimental work largely with

very young children into a schematism for public education at all ages, and finally the development of an attack upon the organized curriculum and liberal education under the rubric of “progressivism.” (p. 261)

It is worth remembering here that John Dewey did not believe in –isms himself as was briefly discussed within this dissertation.

A new reaction against progressive ideology emerged with the recession and tax revolt of the 1970s, followed by the publication of the report *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), which led to a new emphasis on basics, national learning standards, and improving results on standardized tests, all of which went counter to the ideas of Dewey and Parker (Zilversmit, 1993, p. 9). The National Commission on Excellence in Education (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.) stated,

Our concern, however, goes well beyond matters such as industry and commerce. It also includes the intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our people which knit together the very fabric of our society. The people of the United States need to know that individuals in our society who do not possess the levels of skill, literacy, and training essential to this new era will be effectively disenfranchised, not simply from the material rewards that accompany competent performance, but also from the chance to participate fully in our national life. A high level of shared education is essential to a free, democratic society and to the fostering of a common culture, especially in a country that prides itself on pluralism and individual freedom. (n.p.)

While economic and political strength were minimized in the report by espousing the needs of individual freedom and building of intellectually stimulating curriculum, the

main call was to provide a direction for the country to participate as a power in a global, international community. This recognition to the advancements in technology and in providing a deeper and richer education, which would build for critical-thinking skills and problem solving, was well called for, and the future was predicted soundly. It was also with this report that the curriculum for secondary students mainly was set; however, postsecondary education was set as well. The recommendations of the commission were implemented nationwide, and while many of the changes have proven to prepare more students than ever for college work, the progressive ideals of allowing curriculum, *currere*, to be open and allow for discovery were stymied once again. Progressive educators were not to be thwarted, however, as will continued to be discussed in this dissertation.

The advancements in personal computers in the late 1970s and early 1980s brought new technology into the classrooms and into each individual's personal life as well. Carlson (2002) in *Leaving Safe Harbors: Toward a New Progressivism in American Education and Public Life* stated,

As we have produced the personal computer, it has been engaged in producing us and "framing" the way we see both the world and inhabit it. If all this is true, it changes everything in education. We are entering an age, for good or bad, in which all education is the education of "cyborgs," human subjects that have ruptured the borders that the modern mind constructed to separate them from animals, nature and each other, human subjects who are assembling themselves, or being assembled, who seek a limited freedom in the special dance between unity and difference. (p. 139)

As training was provided to the greater part of society for jobs within the industrial machine in the late 1920s right on through to the 1950s and now into the 1980s when technology again bounded forward, the working lower to middle White class was met with the striding changes and challenges of technologies. As technology was developed to assist the industries and businesses in carrying out their economic ventures, the job market shifted, and workers were displaced without solid retraining in place.

Weis (2004) in *Class Reunion: The Remaking of the American White Working Class* wrote of how these changes affected the White working-class student. Valuation of formal schooling had always been a matter of “getting by” (p. 98); many did not even obtain a high school diploma but rather a general equivalency diploma or no finalized certificate of education at all. As technology has changed the job market, more of these students are struggling to meet the rigors of the college-preparatory curriculum as set forth in our nation’s high school curricula. The new set curriculum, however, did not always lead to success in college work. Weis said, “White working-class youth in high school at least verbally valued schooling for what they thought it could get them: they valued what they saw as its instrumentality” (p. 98).

It is important to remember that the 1980s were a time of change for all of society, not only because of the influx of technology but also with a new sense of affluence for many within the period’s generation. The term *yuppie* (young urban professional) came to describe a generation focused on private concerns rather than socially engaging in activism as in the prior 2 decades (Appleby et al., 2005, p. 995; Boyer et al., 1990, p. 1134). Economically, the country recovered from the recession of the 1970s, and with the new technology market beginning to boom, jobs began to change and, therefore, influenced *The Nation at Risk Report* (National Commission on

Excellence in Education, 1983) as an affluent society was once again focusing on the future and college preparation for the workforce, progressive ideals took on alternative faces while the division between socioeconomic classes continued and grew in scope with the technological advancements. Shor (1986) in *Culture Wars: School and Society in the Conservative Restoration 1969-1984* wrote, "The self-directed classroom is pedagogy for *desocialization*. This kind of learning reconstructs the conditioned habits of domination and resistance in teachers and students. Mutual desocialization was certainly not a learning goal discussed in 'the great debate' of 1983" (p. 183). "The self-directed classroom"--a classroom where the learning is through the experience and through discovery--would provide for a compassionate and open-ended curriculum. However, the struggle continued to provide continuity between lives as lived and meeting the needs of the political machine and a desire for a nation with continued economic dominance. This mirrored the continued debate between conservatives and neoconservatives and liberals as to what shape curriculum studies should take as the new millennium approached. Standardized testing and providing set courses of study to be followed stymied freedoms within the classroom for both teachers and students and also continued to disallow for meeting needs of individual students.

At the same time throughout the 1980s, it was the National Education Association (NEA) that took on a different voice as well. The changes began in the 1970s and culminated in the 1980s. As politics continued its firm holds on education through national legislation and funding, teachers joined forces in order to have more power in setting educational policies. The NEA was previously comprised of mostly school administrators; however, teachers joined the organization in droves in order to have a collective bargaining unit. Both the NEA and American Federation of Teachers provided

support for teachers in having backing for meeting their needs. “This increased membership plus the increased militancy of the NEA heralded a new era in the relationship between teachers’ organizations and the managers of American education” (Spring, 2001, p. 429).

During the 1980s, many progressive schools in practice continued to thrive mainly outside of the public sphere. School vouchers where parents could choose where to have their students educated came into focus, and a flurry of discussion ensued regarding the use of taxpayers’ monies to pay for private schools. It was Milton Friedman and his wife Rose D. Friedman, both highly recognized economists, who first envisioned the concept of school vouchers in the 1950s. It was a long time before the public accepted the notion and entered into the discourse with educators. Friedman and Friedman (2002) stated,

That interest began in 1955 when we reached the conclusion that government financing of primary and secondary schooling is entirely consistent with private administration of schooling, and that such a combination is both more equitable and more efficient than the existing linkage of financing with administration. We suggested that a way to separate financing and administration is to give parents who choose to send their children to private schools a sum equal to the estimated cost of educating a child in a government school, provided that at least this sum was spent on education in an approved school. . . . The interjection of competition would do much to promote a healthy variety of schools. It would do much, also, to introduce flexibility into school systems. (n.p.)

School vouchers have never fully been utilized by states although some have tried various forms. The discussion even has continued into the present day and appears to be

highlighted particularly during election years (NEA, 2006). The folly of bringing up school vouchers to provide alternatives to mainstream education, while pure from some foundations and individuals, at the same time provides a diversion from talking about spending more money to fund public education properly in order to achieve equity. In the 1980s, the majority of progressive schools were privately funded, and they continue to be even today.

As the discourse continued and new innovative scholarly work was produced within the field, a reflection of the 1970s and 1980s formed around the important discourse that took place. Great strides were made mainly through opening discussions that allowed for debate and differing perspectives. This allowed for the field to continue progressing forward, and although theory into practice continued to be a concern (Wraga, 1999, p. 16), it was through the reconceptualization of the field that there was a readying for the future work within. By continuing to approach curriculum studies as an inquiry and intellectual query, one can truly begin to run the race of life rather than to merely run courses of curriculum and studies for ulterior motives and means. It is through this lens that the final chapter of this dissertation will conclude this historical dissertation in curriculum studies and add to the field through keeping the complicated conversation open and by providing further implications regarding the impact of current work while leaving openness in the discourse to continue beyond to an unknown future.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Throughout this dissertation thus far, it has been discussed through an intellectual history the evolution of progressive education in America. By beginning with the historical Progressive Era and then moving forward through the 1940s and 1950s, many different initiatives in education have been examined and presented. It is in the course of challenging ourselves as educators to view the varied facets and perspectives that effected forms of progressive education over those time periods and then into the turbulent 1960s that the field is added to by keeping the conversation open. In the research here, it is apparent that, although progressive education was the scapegoat for many of the ills that transpired within education in modern times (Bowers, 1969; Kliebard, 1995; Zilversmit, 1993), the main concepts continued to have an impact through repeatedly refocusing and disquieting educational endeavors.

As has been discussed, it was with the reconceptualization of the field of curriculum studies in the 1970s that revitalized the intellectual and modern paradigms and led to understanding curriculum in its various critical perspectives. Through continuing to glance behind the scenes to the numerous factors that led to much discontent and division of traditionalists and progressive educators and scholars within the field, the current creation and evolution of education and the field of curriculum studies into the current era continues. The 1980s brought about more federal mandates and a focus on standardized testing in order to ensure accountability for public funding, and this has continued into the present day. “Understanding curriculum as a political text” (Pinar et al., 2002, p. 250), it is possible to conceive the hegemony whereby domination is achieved “via the use of force and via the shaping of human consciousness” (p. 250).

In this final chapter of the dissertation, this “shaping of human consciousness,” along with the new and evolutionary discussions that have arisen in the national, international, and global community as we as a society have progressed through the 1990s and into the 21st century, will bring the conversation to conclusion. The challenges that progressive educators continue to face in working within the political machine remain evident. Throughout this work it has been discussed the control of education through political and economic means which is in direct opposition of the basics of progressive educational theory. There is a core, significant difference in philosophies between those in the field who could stand and deliver knowledge to students rather than view education as the shaping of human lives through open and individual intellectual exploration. This continued call for examining all possibilities through a compassionate and open-ended curriculum provides for an exciting era to be studying within the field, and it is through continuing the open discourse that great strides can be made in moving forward.

The research reveals that it was in the late 1980s with the election of President George H. W. Bush that the federal control of schools continued and restraints and controls were tightened even further. Spring (2001) related,

With the election of President George Bush in 1988, the contribution of public schools to the economy and business continued to be emphasized. Receiving support from the religious right, Bush also advocated school prayer and some form of educational choice. With regard to the economic goals of education, Bush, on April 18, 1991, unveiled plans for achieving national education goals by the year 2000. (p. 432)

In actuality, this was a reauthorization of the original ESEA from 1965, which had become known as the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 and then the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). While the language within the act consistently states “voluntary” action by the states, at the same time, federal funding was attached to the mandates. Goals 2000 required “voluntary national content standards and voluntary national student performance standards.” States could choose how to proceed with meeting these goals; however, the National Education Standards and Improvement Council was also created and was deemed part of the executive branch of government (Sec. 212), and this entity was charged with overseeing national standards.

The first duty of the council was to identify areas in which voluntary national content standards needed to be developed and then certifying them through a consensus process. Further national standards would then be written as prescribed. States would “voluntarily” submit to the council state performance standards and assessments for approval:

The Council may certify State content standards and State student performance standards presented on a voluntary basis by a State or group of States, using the criteria developed under subsection (a)(2)(A)(i), if such standards are comparable or higher in rigor and quality to the voluntary national content standards and voluntary national student performance standards certified by the Council. (Sec. 213)

The council consisted of 19 members who held appointed positions. The creation of model schools, voluntary national achievement tests, and incentives for parental choice was also part of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act.

Spring (2001) related,

Bush's model schools plan was launched on July 8, 1991 with the establishment of a private, nonprofit corporation, the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC), which was funded by private corporations and in cooperation with the federal government. The Bush administration planned that the NASDC would develop 535 model schools with one experimental school in each congressional district and two more for each state. (pp. 432-433)

It is interesting when one views the information on the NASDC that the renown North Central Regional Education Laboratory (2007) has published, "American business leaders created the New American Schools Development Corporation in 1991 to identify effective schoolwide restructuring designs for the nation's public schools and fund their implementation" (n.p.). It is obvious that business and politics were married in this endeavor and the valuation of education for specific economic interests bears scrutiny.

The NASDC was elicited to provide "whole-school designs" and then supply implementation teams for "improving student outcomes" (Bodilly, 1996, p. 2) by entering individual schools or school systems. Out of 18 members on the corporation's board, only 1 was an educator, 12 were heads of major corporations, 2 were politicians, and 2 were publishers. The final member was the head of the National Football League (Spring, 2001, p. 433). It is interesting to note that it was also at this time that exit tests for specified grade levels and the five core content areas and using world class standards were recommended by President Bush and yet another entity was created to oversee this goal: the National Council on Education Standards and Testing (p. 433). (In recent years, state exit exams for eight core content areas have been mandated in the state of Georgia,

and many other states also have this requirement in place through individual state submission and then federally approved state rules and regulations.)

The NASDC put out requests for a proposal for 3-year plans from interested independent groups. These model schools were to “break the mold” from the current public education efforts and were to try to not cost substantially more (Bodilly, Purnell, Ramsey, & Smith, 1995, p. 1). Eleven models were chosen to participate in the initiative: (a) Atlas communities, (b) Audrey Cohen College Design Team, (c) Bensenville Community Design, (d) Community Learning Centers of Minnesota, (e) the Co-NECT School, (f) Expeditionary Learning, (g) Los Angeles Learning Centers, (h) the Modern Red Schoolhouse, (i) the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, (j) the Odyssey Project, and (k) Roots and Wings. These were later reduced to 9 for implementation (Ahearn, 1994, pp. 7-14). At present, there are still 6 national school reform efforts still under the aegis of NASDC (“ATLAS Communities,” 2006), and although the initial site implementation phase period is over, many of the model school house projects are still in place. The models selected have also been replicated in other school districts across the nation and are presently either part of local initiatives, are part of federally funded grants, or are for-profit organizations.

Ultimately in 2002, President George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind (U.S. Department of Education, 2004) was devised as the act went through appropriations once again. With these federal policies on education state and local school systems also must provide accountability. As the NCLB home page (U.S. Department of Education, 2006) stated,

No Child Left Behind ensures accountability and flexibility as well as increased federal support for education. *No Child Left Behind* continues the legacy of the

Brown v. Board decision by creating an education system that is more inclusive, responsive, and fair. (n.p.)

Flexibility is in how the state school systems will respond to the call for accountability, however, not in what data are to be reported; *flexibility* as opposed to *voluntary* as per the wording of Goals 2000 are the key terms to be considered here. This direct link back to the *A Nation At Risk* report with set benchmarks of achievement and accountability in concert with the continued standardization of comparing states and local systems according to test scores and data collection of the masses was to have a profound effect on public education curriculum over time and into the present day. Although many would believe this all to be progress forward for the nation's educational system, there are still many progressive educators who continue to denounce models and designs to be cure-alls for any kind of intellectual education and also the regulation by political bodies.

So the 1990s saw a great many additions to teaching practices of the public education system of America; notice this author did not say *changes* as there were really no changes--only tighter constraints and more governmental involvement. Freedom in the classroom continued and continues to be limited, and the bureaucracy of accountability within the mass educational structure of America diminished the work that needed to be done. As was stated in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, the work of progressive education is not political in nature or in definition. The government and economic system in the United States through attachment of funding to education maintained and continued to maintain in many ways control over educators and had a direct impact on what was taught in classrooms.

However, during the 1990s and into the new century, there were still many educators and scholars within the field who continued to work for activism and opening

minds to view curriculum as a living experience during this time period, and their work continues in the new millennium today. By the continual finding of the open spaces in which to take opportunities to find constructive possibilities of positive difference, educators are enabled to reconceptualize theoretical efforts and put them into action (Roy, 2003, p. 5). Some educators continue to choose to leave the profession or find alternative routes in schooling that escape the holds of the bureaucracy. In the 1990s, this was done by squirming through the bars and becoming involved in privatized or charter schools.

At this point in history, private schools were many times public schools controlled by private companies (Spring, 2001, p. 435). An example of this type of school would be the Edison Schools. Edison Schools started out small in 1992 as a vehicle to assist schools in reformation and was the brain-child of entrepreneur Chris Whittle (Edison Schools, 2006a, n.p.). As a for-profit enterprise, Edison Schools completely took over the curriculum and management of the schools involved or school systems. The upstart of Edison began as the model school program was also beginning. Edison Schools was not one of the chosen models by the federal government, but the team of educators involved used research and their advanced experience and knowledge in order to provide services to school districts seeking answers to raising student achievement (Edison Schools, 2006b, n.p.). The Edison initiative has continued to grow over time and is still functioning even today. Although with its initial inception it was progressive in some ways, it is doubtful whether there is freedom in teaching and learning as was originally imagined by its creator.

Educational Alternatives, Inc. (EAI), is another example of a for-profit privatization of public education that began in the early 1990s. Functioning in much the

same way as Edison Schools, the company took over 12 of the Baltimore City Schools and also 1 school in Miami-Dade County. In 1994, EAI moved into Hartford, Connecticut, schools as well. From the beginning, there were problems with the acceptance and implementation of the programming offered by EAI. The article “School Privatization” (1997) stated,

EAI’s Baltimore contract gave the company virtually no authority over school personnel. EAI could not hire teachers or administrators, nor fire them, nor even affect their evaluations. EAI could bring new technology, teaching materials, and supplies into the classroom, but it could do nothing about the staff that was supposed to work with those resources. By contrast, teachers in Edison Project schools are employees of the company, not the school district. (n.p.)

As in the past with outside of mainstream ventures, problems with management and leadership as well as the politics of education were the cause of failure of an alternative to mainstream public education although there is no conclusive evidence that EAI ever intended to utilize progressive ideals. It appears that the interest was more in making money and hopping on the school-choice bandwagon rather than in open pedagogy. The following of a model with scripted teaching and set design, as evidenced directly by this author early in the inception and through direct study of EAI, was clearly not progressive education in action.

Once again, it is important to turn away from public school endeavors and the holds of political and economic constraints to examples of alternative education private schools that are continuing in the progressive ideals. As the research here has indicated, attempting to provide a true progressive curriculum in a public education setting is difficult at best. Corporations and governments continued and continue in the present day

to control the masses for ulterior motives while progressive educators want to allow for freedom of expression and growth of students and teachers alike. Remembering that many progressive schools opened in the 1960s and 1970s and are constantly opening even today, it is possible to locate educators who are providing alternatives. The Alternative Education Resource Organization (AERO; 2006a) is a vital source of examples and links to schools that are currently in operation and are actively involved in current progressive education. Schools across the nation and even internationally can be found through this coalition, and it is here that communication and support are offered to these initiatives. The AERO mission statement (2006b) stated, "Building the critical mass for the education revolution by providing resources which support self-determination in learning and the natural genius in everyone" (n.p.).

Some examples of progressive schools that are still in operation and are making a difference in education through their critical pedagogy are Albany Free School, Albany, New York; Academe of the Oaks, Decatur, Georgia; The Circle School, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; The Learning Exchange, Greenfield, Massachusetts; and The New Schools who have a number of locations in the United States. These schools and many others not listed continue to thrive outside of the boundaries of public education through paid tuitions, private contributions, and philanthropic endowments (Academe of the Oaks, 2007; The Circle School, 2005; The Free School, 2007; The New School of Northern Virginia, 2007). Each encompasses a progressive ideology of allowing for curriculum to unfold through individual and small-group discovery and instruction. Creative and critical thinking are stressed, and allowing the student as an individual to grow through the various intellectuals while maturing physically as a healthy, whole person are reflected. In the majority of these schools, the curriculum unfolds and flows as pathways

are discovered for opportunities for educational experiences. What has also changed from early private school initiatives as discussed in chapter 2 is that current private alternative schools are not only for serving the education of the wealthy. In many situations, financial aid is available (Academe of the Oaks; The Circle School). The payment for private schools' tuition continues to be an issue that needs to be addressed in order to allow for opportunities for all students to pursue alternatives to mass public education. This is an area where further research should continue to be pursued and would be of interest to this author.

As has been previously discussed, there will always continue to be critics of the progressive educational scholars who also work in this manner and also of the educators who publicly revitalize classrooms through progressive tenets. However, it remains important to remember that keeping the discourse open and flowing is the only vehicle in challenging change and opening minds (Spring, 2001, p. 441). In this vein, Pinar (2004) contributed further to the field by writing about the current access to knowledge and what is taught in public schools. This is the continual struggle within the curriculum studies field. He stated,

In moving to cultural studies curriculum specialists are asking, as we once did, what knowledge is of most worth. This is a question that must be asked constantly; the answers we provide will change according to project, person, nation, and the historical moment. As university-based scholars of education, we take from extant academic knowledge to devise mosaics that point to the educational significance of academic knowledge for the individual, situated subjectively, socially, historically, a gendered, racialized and too often tragically human creature. (p. 19)

At the current time in history, the collective work of today's curriculum theorists continues to taunt our inquiry here and bring into fruition new concepts and challenges to the intellect. Thus the work of progressive education continues to evolve. As curriculum studies change and challenge the field, there will, of course, continue to be critics and openings for discourse and even discomfort as paradigms are challenged. The vast technological advances of our time have opened a new type of access to knowledge and the swift connection of the international community. The implications for progress forward in curriculum studies and both public and private educational endeavors cannot be mistaken or taken lightly as will be discussed further as this dissertation draws to conclusion. Pinar (2004) stated, "The school curriculum communicates what we choose to remember about our past, what we believe about the present, what we hope for the future" (p. 20).

There has also been much written by political conservatives and conservative educational historians about the shift in course on the journey here as the reconceptualization and further work within the field have continued in a variety of forms and in questioning the hegemony of the ruling class's intentions in continuing the stagnancy of studying curriculum rather than working towards understanding a conscious, compassionate curriculum. Neoconservative Lynne Cheney wrote very explicitly regarding the use of critical pedagogy in education with her 1995 book *Telling the Truth: Why Our Culture and Our Country Have Stopped Making Sense--and What We Can Do About It*.

The point is to give students as accurate an accounting of the past as we can; and when we neglect our accomplishments and emphasize our failings, while doing

exactly the opposite for other cultures; it is not the cause of truth that is being advanced. (p. 30)

What does America's current vice president's wife mean by "other cultures?"

This is a huge problem with progressing forward with education and certainly steers us in the direction of further querying for future research and discussion within the field. The United States is a true "mosaic" of many different cultures, and it was not until the 1970s that once again curriculum specialists and theorists questioned what was being taught in our schools and to what demise after a period of apologism. When curriculum is viewed through a variety of lenses and the texture of the "mosaic" of different perspectives and frameworks of inquiry, it is apparent that "the truth" is not one but many. Of course, Cheney would find issue with this assumption. She stated further,

And this arrogance is often combined with an amazing lack of thought to the consequences of what they are preaching. It does not require great insight, for example, to see a connection between the idea that one's truth is defined by one's group and the resegregation and racial hostility that have become all too common in our society. Nor should we overlook the moral consequences of insisting that reality is nothing more than what we create. If history is only an invention, then we never have to account for what we have done. (pp. 203-204)

Ms. Cheney would have us educating youth "account for what we have done" but through what lens? A lens that does indeed exclude looking at situations and historical events from within a class or group of people would not be "telling the truth."

Shor's (1986) earlier discourse regarding multiculturalism can be seen as rebutting Cheney's (1995) whitewash of multicultural education by previously relating,

These forces have a framework to suppress the critical potentials of multiculturalism, so that it can be harmlessly absorbed into the existing system. By defining cultural diversity in the curriculum as a bland celebration of what we all have in common as Americans, as the mere mention of some famous women and minorities, and as a travelogue exposure of students to the exotic food, dress, and countries of ethnic groups, an official brand of multiculturalism can yet emerge to counter the critical version of how inequality was made, fought and lived with in American life. (p. 247)

It is not about “political correctness” (p. 247) as was thrown into the debate but rather about viewing curriculum and history through the frameworks that comprise all textures.

Within the field, traditionalism and scholars supporting the reconceptualization of the field have continued their discord as well. Wraga and Hlebowitsh (2003b) wrote about their argument with the continued reconceptualization scholars and what they believe is the lack of theory into practice:

We think that the lack of sustained deliberation and dialogue about these and other issues perhaps is attributable in part to an exaltation of ideology over ideas in reconceptualized curriculum theorizing. Positions such as the repudiation of the historic field, the separation of theory from practice, and the redefinition of curriculum from the course of study to the course of one’s life experience, originated as planks in the platform of “reconceptualized” thought. Over time, however, as these positions were operationalized in reconceptualized curriculum scholarship, they became reified into doctrine. These positions now seem to function more as articles of faith than as ideas to be tested. The lack of substantive

response to criticism of these positions perhaps can be explained by recognizing that, typically, ideological tenets prove intellectually indefensible. (p. 431)

Any time that students of Pinar and corresponding progressive scholars respond to attacks on the reconceptualization of curriculum studies, they are met with a flurry of further attempts to control. Reynolds (2003b) responded to the critics by writing,

I propose researchers create rather than debate. Debating delays. Nostalgia pretends. *Ressentiment* harms. Curriculum studies should not be about delay, pretending, and harm. Children and educators living in the present historical moment cannot afford to dwell in these ways, since the reconceptualization, creativity and multiplicity have characterized US curriculum studies. Despite nostalgia and *ressentiment*, multiplicity and creativity characterize a field not in arrest or crisis, but one swiftly advancing in sophistication and significance. It is long overdue for all who claim this field as their disciplinary home to come together and work for its advancement. (p. 450)

Reynolds represented many in the field who are exhausted with the debating and are actively involved in moving on with the work within the field of curriculum studies. By doing thus, progressive education continues to thrive and touch educators in a variety of means through contributing to the work at hand.

In response once again, however, Wraga and Hlebowitsh (2003a) stated, This noted, we choose not to dwell any further on these aspects of Reynolds's rejoinder, however tempting that may be. Although we did not find anything from our paper with which Reynolds states agreement, we concur with him on at least one point: that the curriculum field should "be about creating." However, we see no necessary bifurcation between creating and debate, between the present and the

past. Academic fields create new knowledge and understandings by building upon previous work, and publishing new work for critique, debate, correction, and refinement. Openness to this approach to curriculum enquiry is the best prospect we now offer for creating and recreating the field. (p. 456)

Through all the arguing and debating both within the field of curriculum studies and by outside politicians who situate themselves within the discussion as a means to continue to control education, it is time for the field to advance forward. Stifling creativity in order to provide models and designs and continued searching for “magic bullets” do not progress the field. The arguments of today are indeed similar to other struggles that progressive educators have faced over the course of American public education’s building of its mammoth system. Even though it was not stated in the above-quoted argument if progressive educators do practice progressive tenets in the classroom, many times their tenure is short-lived. However, it is only through opening and continuing to revive and examine and hold discourse that the work of progressive education and progressive educators lives in the here and now. The work is continuously evolving and changing with the times and as history continues to unfold. There can be no finis and no ending but rather only beginnings and fresh perspectives. Progressive education is continuously in transition, and that is the nature of the human experience.

The work in this dissertation continues to add to the field by keeping this complicated conversation ongoing. Caine and Caine (1997) stated, “We suggest that the changes needed to radically improve education will emerge naturally once the large community begins to subscribe to a different set of beliefs” (p. 258). As a part of the human race dwelling here on this earth, we are in the early beginnings of this new

millennium, and, therefore, the time is ripe for continuing the current discourse within the field by glancing into the future at all of the possibilities.

Further, it is the intention here in this further research for the field to free the experiences of those pursuing alternative forms of education authentically in order to find continued “lines of flight” (Deleuze, 1995, p. 19) and the freedoms to move within and without the boundaries of conventional public education. Historically, it has also been possible within this work to provide evidence of how progressive education manifests itself in well-established private organizations that began as early as the 1890s and are still sustained today such as with the Independent Country Day Schools for example. The Foxfire Schools and the Foxfire method (Foxfire Fund, 2002), founded in 1966, also provide the historical perspective of alternative educational endeavors that began with the changing times of the turbulent 1960s.

As has been discussed throughout this dissertation, however, progressive tenets and ideology are not necessarily manifested in organizations and associations nor are they held in physical facilities. It would be idealistic even perhaps to conceive that the majority of practicing teachers utilize progressive concepts in present-day pedagogy and thus into daily classroom instruction. Reynolds (2003a) related that “This tendency to control teachers through management techniques and to make them intelligent obedient workers helps to ensure that no type of alternative teaching gets accomplished” (p. 12). That is exactly what persistently occurs as the politics of education continues to hold a vice on curriculum and students and teachers. The majority of the work that does continue in the field regarding progressive education and progressing forward with continuation and persistence is one of questioning--one of astute practitioners and the diverse scholars who keep the conversation expanding and connecting to the “here” and

to the “now” and to possibilities almost unimaginable. All of these facets of progressive and alternative forms of understanding curriculum are intertwined and would be unable to be disconnected with present-day society and the sustained progressive education of today. Before concluding and providing implications for future research, it is vital to bring the historical inquiry into what transpired within education during the 1980s and 1990s in order to understand the discourse to the present day.

The work of the *JCT: Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* continues today and provides opportunities for scholars to have voice in changing and challenging the field. At the same time, the Bergamo Conference also continues to be an annual gathering place for a variety of perspectives and networking and presentations to keep the field alive through discourse and openness. The International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS) is also a vital and global organization that is committed to an open field for studying curriculum. The homepage on the Internet for the IAACS (2007) stated,

The Association is established to support a worldwide--but not uniform--field of curriculum studies. At this historical moment and for the foreseeable future, curriculum inquiry occurs within national borders, often informed by governmental policies and priorities, responsive to national situations. Curriculum study is, therefore, nationally distinctive. The founders of the IAACS do not dream of a worldwide field of curriculum studies mirroring the standardization and uniformity the larger phenomenon of globalization threatens. Nor are we unaware of the dangers of narrow nationalisms. Our hope, in establishing this organization, is to provide support for scholarly conversations within and across

national and regional borders about the content, context, and process of education, the organizational and intellectual center of which is the curriculum. (n.p.)

Through conferences and research submission, the field is kept alive, and progressive educators continue to collaborate towards furthering the questioning of crossing borders within education's political boundaries.

In February 2006, a conference was held at Purdue University (2006) entitled *Articulating the Present (Next) Moment in Curriculum Studies: The Post-Reconceptualization Generation(s)*. The keynote speakers and session leaders were diverse, and there were several key scholars in the field invited to attend. The announcement for the conference stated that "The intellectual exchanges created at the conference are not likely to be repeated in the near future but will be certain to shape the direction of the field in the decades to come." Re-thinking and continuing to disturb the waters of the field of curriculum studies will not be thwarted. The progression is forward with continuous revitalization, and it is obvious that new generations of scholars will be diligent in spinning new and important work into the tapestries of today. Progressives cannot and will not be silenced even when attempts are misguided or do not achieve the original intentions. It is only through perseverance that any changes and challenges to the norms that continue to taunt public education can ever take place.

There are those in the field of curriculum studies who still do not believe that progressive education is alive in education today. This dissertation adds to the field in that way by providing continued proof that the major tenets have evolved and yet centrally remain through the use and pondering of both exciting, compassionate, and creative progressive theory and also practicing initiatives that allow for pedagogy with focused but open intent. Serres (1991/1997) captured the essence of learning when he

wrote, “Learning consists of such crossbreeding. Strange and original, already a mixture of the genes of his father and mother, the child evolved through new crossings; all pedagogy takes up the begetting and birthing of a child anew” (p. 49). Thus, the possibilities are endless for alternatives and progressive notions to stimulate the intellect of all students and the *currere* to unfold through open endedness and discovery in learning.

At the 2005 Georgia Conference on High School Improvement in March of 2005, many of the educators and educational leaders in the state of Georgia were present. The title of the conference was “Creating Engagement-Centered High Schools: From Bureaucracies to Learning Organizations.” It is once again here that one might interpret a hint of original progressive ideals. This is another indication that progressive education has changed faces in the transition from modern to the current evolving society and international community. The keynote speaker and author of *Shaking Up the Schoolhouse*, P. Schlechty (personal communication, March 8, 2005), addressed the group and stated that it was time for the United States public school system to “change the current school bureaucracies.” He called for action and a different pedagogy for our changing time in society and throughout the global world. With the rapid pace of changes in technologies over the last century and in our terrorist times, his call to action of creating “learning organizations” is ever vital. “When the pace of change outside an organization is faster than the pace of change inside the organization, the future of the organization is at-risk,” Mr. Schlechty stated.

The pace of change outside of the current national public school system is ever evident, and as has been discussed intellectually with this dissertation, education throughout history has continued to respond to needs in society, political climates, and

economic dilemmas. It will continue to be a challenge to meet the needs of students in our current society and ensure that we prepare ourselves as educators as we change our own pedagogy and paradigms over time as history becomes the present. Therefore, the conclusive evidence is that it is by rethinking and keeping the conversation open between both progressive scholars and traditional scholars, even with their mind-set of needed methods and practices, that the profession can continually thrive and be renewed perpetually only through understanding curriculum through critical thought and open-ended conversations. It is in this manner that we can “leave safe harbors” (Carlson, 2002, p. 2) and move towards a new progressivism in American education within our society.

As education and the field of curriculum studies is reconceptualized and deconstructed again and again, we can and should continue the work of seeking “alternative” forms of education and of educational theory rather than the use of any ‘ism’s much as Dewey wrote about in 1938 as quoted earlier. Salin (1992) wrote in his essay, “New Subjects, Familiar Roles: Progressive Legacies in the Postmodern World,” which was published in *Celebrating Diverse Voices: Progressive Education and Equity*,

In short, I contend that we undermine our best intentions when we consider the child and the world as separate entities. The subject of our pedagogical attentions might better be construed as the child-in-the-world. And this is where we turn from progressivism as understood to be the effective realization of individual human potential to progressivism as social reconstruction. (p. 240)

This is our educational responsibility to the youth of today. As one critically questions the past, contemplates and provides discourse for our present-day situation, and looks forward to forming and re-forming the future of education, we, as educators and intellectual beings, can continue to seek alternative forms of understanding curriculum

and education. By standing up for and considering all possibilities for individual intellectual growth and reaching full potential as individuals and members of society at large and the international community, we are enabled to progress forward with intent, purpose, and action within the profession.

Through written traces (Derrida, 1995/1996), we are provided an indulgence into inner thoughts that we might not be able to provide meaning to in other data-collection methods. This intellectual study of the evolution into the 21st century of alternative-progressive forms of education has allowed insight from which to draw conclusions for forming further educational theory. Often we are able to draw metaphors that enable us to cross the boundaries of thoughts into meaning. Lander (2000) stated that "The etymology of metaphor is instructive: 'phor' is Greek for ferry or transport and the 'meta-' of crossing boundaries is implicated in the ever expanding postmodern lexicon" (p. 10). We, as theorists and scholars within the curriculum studies field, retell the stories of history within our research much like building a "patchwork quilt" through branching out along the trails of where others have trod before us. It is here we explore new and comfortable niches in which to dwell for short periods of time and wait for other opportunities and spaces to explore once again.

In conclusion, this dissertation has added to the field of curriculum studies by taking an intellectual, historical perspective of what transpired over time. Alternative forms of education steeped in many of the original tenets of early progressives provided and continue to provide classrooms filled with rigorous student engagement and action and scholarly work that enable perpetual inquiry that is thought-provoking and endless. As Pinar (2004) coined with the term that "the conversation is complicated"--this is truly

a path worth continuing to probe and nudge. The implications for growth and perpetual movement forward are a vital part of the query of progressive professions in the field.

The rivers are wide and deep, and we indeed wish our students a safe crossing (Conroy, 1972). The winds of words written before have caused much shifting and contemplation. The opportunity to continue forward is exciting and adventuresome and unknown explorations that are looked forward to with great anticipation in discovery. Continuously in transition and ever evolving, the interconnectivity of everything in life, past and the here and now, can be presented through our sustained and open-ended conversations. It through the creation of a curriculum that is compassionate and filled with historical and present aspects and a variety of critical perspectives that the work can and will continue to have a voice in education and, therefore, an impact on the world. If we can but achieve this, our work here will not have been in vain.

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