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Education and Gender in New Philadelphia

ABSTRACT

Education plays a vital role in any society, providing a process by which young community members are enculturated. New Philadelphia included two segregated schools until approximately 1874, when an integrated schoolhouse was constructed nearby. Historical documents and oral histories provide guides to archaeological investigations of those structures, and a likely foundation stone of one school was located in excavations, as were artifacts related to educational activities. Institutional education in 19th-century America can be understood as assigning value to specific knowledge, behaviors, and beliefs. Before public education became mandatory, parents were given choices as to how their children would be educated, and which of their offspring they could afford to send to school. Education is examined in New Philadelphia through a study utilizing U.S. census data, and is an ideal subject for an analysis of race, gender, and class dynamics.

Introduction

There is a column on the federal census forms between 1840 and 1860 that is labeled "School in Last Year." For Hadley Township, the location of the town of New Philadelphia within Pike County, Illinois, the checkmarks in this column are important for understanding the relationship between education, race, gender, and class. Understanding the larger context in which education was considered—its purpose and usefulness—is important for knowing how it may have been perceived in this rural community.

The town of New Philadelphia included two segregated schools until approximately 1874, when an integrated schoolhouse was constructed on the edge of town. Historical documents and oral histories (Christman, this volume) provide valuable data as a basis for further archaeological investigations of these structures. Excavations in the town site in 2004–2006 revealed artifacts related to such instructional activities, including items such as slate pencils. Archaeological work also located a likely foundation stone of an African American schoolhouse that existed within the town (Shackel 2006:1.22,3F.1–5). Aspects of education, both in New Philadelphia and nationally, are examined in this article through a study utilizing local federal census data, and through evidence of broader educational policies and practices that likely impacted the town's population, such as the common school movement.

The common school movement is foundational to any discussion of education in the early 19th century. In the 1830s and 1840s, the United States developed a public school system. The drive for this radical institution, public education, was directly related to the radical nature of our nation's government—allowing any white adult male to vote encouraged those in charge to put in place a system to educate the nation. Referred to as the common school movement (Spring 1994:62), its goals are summarized by Cremin (1980:2) in the introduction to *American Education: The National Experience*. He explains "republics needed an education to virtue that would motivate all men to choose public over private interest" (Cremin 1980:2). This was not just an education in facts, but an education in morality as well. Although during this time "debate raged over whether the government had a duty, or even a right, to educate its citizenry" (Connor 1997:47), a consensus eventually developed that without a monarch to guide them, the (white, male) people of the United States needed an education in order to make informed decisions about who would lead the country. In the case of white women, this meant encouraging their family members to make altruistic and moral voting decisions. Many times, local communities in non-slave states decided to educate children who were not white as well. It was believed and asserted that for a child's education to be complete, it should make him or her a morally upright person, and in this context morality was defined in a very narrow way that corresponded to the doctrines of Protestant Christian beliefs (Connor 1997:1).

The common school movement was integrated into wider notions of charity and social uplift.

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"The creation of a popular ideology and a justification for the common school movement was mainly the work of a class of individuals who were able to devote the majority of their time to the educational causes" (Spring 1994:64). Those of the upper-middle class often took it upon themselves to decide what their less-affluent countrymen needed to mold them into proper citizens. "The idea of using education to solve social problems and build a political community became an essential concept to the common school movement" (Spring 1994:63). The irony is that this decision to educate the lower economic classes was made by the educated and well-off, and was rooted partly in fear of an uneducated electorate controlling the apparatus of government. It was thought that a Christian education was the route to altruism. Shaping the indigent into responsible citizens meant reproducing middle-class standards and ideals. The common school was a part of this tradition that incorporated a wish to uplift the poor, often because they were worrisome to those better off.

This national system of education was a controversial idea, and debates on the national curriculum often took a backseat to concerns over who was to be educated. The idea of boys and girls sitting next to each other in class, or even being in the same space with one another, was enough to be of grave concern to those promoting a morality-centered education. The teachers' institute of Whiteside County, Illinois discussed this problem in an 1858 meeting and decided that coeducation was reasonable, as can be seen from an account of their debate and its resolution. The editor of *The Illinois Teacher* relates that "the usual complimentary remarks to the *females* were made on this resolution, and some pretty plain remarks made by one individual as to charging upon coeducation of the sexes evils which were chargeable to want of proper arrangement of grounds and out-buildings" (Bateman 1858b:185). While this statement conveys more impressions than specifics, it yields valuable information and raises related questions. Do the "usual complimentary remarks" imply the ability of girls to keep up in a classroom on an intellectual level, or did this have to do with the perception of young women as having a higher moral fiber than their male counterparts? Regardless, this was a conversation with sufficiently common themes for the editor to assume that his readership knew to what he was referring. Although subscribers to *The Illinois Teacher* were primarily educators and students, the listed occupations of its subscribers vary from farmer to lawyer, from wheelwright to architect (Bateman 1858a:35–41). This suggests that diverse members of the American public were familiar with debates over coeducation.

The second part of the sentence quoted above from *The Illinois Teacher* is perhaps a little clearer, while being similarly noncommittal. One can assume that the "proper arrangement of grounds and out-buildings" refers to the placement of privies at the school. A separation of male and female outhouses would mean that children would be less likely to see a member of the opposite sex using that facility. Bateman (1858b:185) seems to think that the conflation of coeducation and "evils" of a sexual nature were easily remedied by the layout of an institution, and additionally that this was a distasteful subject for conversation. Although others may not have been as convinced of this as Bateman, perhaps the conditions of the frontier forced parents and educators to settle on coeducation. There were often shortages of schoolteachers on the frontier, and so while it may have been feasible to have separate schools for the education of boys and girls in established towns and cities, it is likely that rural communities were forced to teach girls alongside boys if they wanted their female children educated at all.

The issue of integration in antebellum schools was not quite as straightforward as having separate toilet facilities. In some states the education of African Americans was illegal in general, to say nothing of such regimes' views of integrated education. Of course, not everyone agreed with or abided by these rules. For example, the public school in Oberlin, Ohio educated black and white students side by side as early as the 1830s, in spite of Ohio's Black Laws (Oberlin Heritage Center 2007). While instances of such subversive behavior can be found, it is important to note that during this timeframe there was no standard for the education of African American children that paralleled the scope of the common school movement for white children.

It was only after the Civil War that white educators began to focus significant energies on black education.

> Given their apparent awareness of the extent of the social control encouraged by the educational system, it is perhaps surprising that the majority of white statesmen and educators ignored these avenues to controlling blacks before the war (Salvino 1989:146).

As Salvino states, the impetus for the education of any child was at least in part, an attempt at normalization by state and national governments. In some free states during the pre–Civil War era, African Americans were typically not excluded from the goals of this public education effort (Spring 1993:165).

Education was not only designed to benefit the objects of its attention, but to act as a normalizing influence on a diverse body of citizenry. It was believed and asserted that for a child's education to be complete, it should make him or her a morally upright person, and in this context morality was defined in a very narrow way. Specifically, morality was grounded in the ideals of democracy and the religious framework of Protestantism.

> The primary focus of education was not on the diffusion of knowledge, but on the inculcation of an 'American' moral code, based upon Protestant prescriptions for thinking and acting, and designed to alleviate the social and economic anxiety caused by an influx of immigration—much of it non-Protestant (Connor 1997:90).

The standardization of morality was intended to make members of lower economic classes and new immigrant populations more stable in the eyes of middle-class Americans (Connor 1997:2). The centrality of a Protestant morality to education in the 19th century was grounded in a desire to create conformity of beliefs and principles among the youth of the nation.

Education is thus conceptualized as the process of creating an ideal citizen. Clearly, during the 19th century this general vision meant more than creating a literate electorate. A unifying moral code was essential, if not of surpassing importance, when compared to traditional academic subjects. In bringing this vision from the national to the local level, the architects of the New Philadelphia schools undoubtedly personalized this vision of America in unique ways based on their particular beliefs and situation. Truly, "in order to fully understand a community, the history of the local school must be understood" (Struchtemeyer 2008:11). Through an analysis of documentary sources and a discussion of archaeological investigations of schoolhouses, this article takes on that goal through a lens of gender and race.

A Common School Reader

An excellent resource for understanding the goals of educators, goals both stated and unstated, is a textbook published in 1865. Written by Benson Lossing, it is entitled, *A Common-School History of the United States*. While there is no data on whether this book would have been available in New Philadelphia specifically, this work is a valuable source because it provides a practical example of how the ideals of the common school movement were disseminated to children across the country.

There are sweeping generalizations throughout *A Common-School History* that are used to convey vital aspects of the American character. For example, in describing the accomplishments of the so-called Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony, Lossing (1865:34) states, "what rich and powerful men could not do, a few humble Christian men and women performed." Such commentary underscores an identity of the Protestant majority of the United States.

Another uniformly presented topic is the ineptitude and depravity of the British. King James is introduced as "the conceited bigot," and "his son Charles [as] . . . a weak and selfish man" (Lossing 1865:37, 52). Even Benedict Arnold is treated in a more humane fashion; "Arnold was a brave soldier, but a bad man" (Lossing 1865:179). The youthful audience of this work was meant to either identify with, or absorb the premises that hardworking Christians founded this nation, and had to defend their claim to the nation against both the reportedly warlike natives and the hateful British.

What is somewhat surprising is a lack of any meaningful discussion of race in America. The author was most likely writing this work during the Civil War, but no real discussion of the racial implications of that conflict is included. American Indians are treated in a brief and trivial manner, confined to a four-page chapter and a series of failed battles with white colonists, but even this is much fuller coverage than African Americans or any other non-white people receive in Lossing's text.

Similarly, the book lacks any discussion of women. Of the many thumbnail portraits of important figures throughout the book, only two are of women: Queen Isabella and Pocahontas (with the latter depicted in iconic British dress). These occur in the first few pages, and after this, women largely disappear from the book (Lossing 1865). Its focus shifts to war and politics, which clearly are not conceptualized as the domain of females. If children were expected to see a reflection of themselves in this book, this would be an easier task for white male students.

Educators and Students in Hadley Township

Hadley Township was the location of New Philadelphia, and specific locations within the township were listed in the federal census only starting in 1880. Therefore, the following analysis examines all data for the township to evaluate the context in which New Philadelphia educational activities were undertaken. There are two categories related to education examined in the federal census data concerning this township: the children who went to school, and the adults who taught them.

Before examining this data, it is necessary to define a number of terms. Teachers are identified by what is listed in the "Occupation" column of the census. This includes variations such as "school teacher," "teacher," "common school teacher," and others. On the census form there is a column labeled "School in Last Year" and a box underneath that may be checked or not. For the purposes of this article, the group referred to as "students" are the children with a check in this column. The term "of school age" is used in this study for any individual (students and unschooled children) between the ages of 3 and 19, inclusive. These boundaries are the youngest and oldest ages at which children regularly attended school, according to the federal census for Hadley Township. In the analysis presented here, an "adult" is defined as anyone older than 19 years of age. These definitions can be problematic: by the age of 20, many people were already married and had children of their own, and many younger than that would have considered themselves adults. The purpose of these definitions is for the interpretation of educational data, however, and these terms prove useful for that application. Additionally, in the instructions given to census enumerators for the years 1850 and 1860, it is not until 20 years of age that a person could be determined to be illiterate (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850b, 1860b).

Teachers

From the years 1850 to 1880 on the federal census, there are a total of 28 individuals who list their occupation as "school teacher" or some variation thereof. Twenty-two are female, six are male, and all are white (Table 1). The number of teachers increased in each successive census from 1 in 1850 to 17 in 1880.

TABLE 1
CENSUS DATA FOR SCHOOLTEACHERS, HADLEY TOWNSHIP

Year	Number of Teachers	Male Teachers	Female Teachers	Average Age
1850	1	0	1	28
1860	2	1	1	24.5
1870	12	1	11	22.5
1880	17	5	12	24.2

Source: United States Bureau of the Census (1850a, 1860a, 1870a, 1880).

The number of students was greater than the available teachers could handle, however, with the possible exception of 1880 (Table 2). If Mabel Shipman, the sole schoolteacher recorded on the 1850 census had been the only teacher working in Hadley Township, 280 students could not have attended school. So where were the other teachers? It is possible that children were sent away to be educated, or that their teachers lived outside of Hadley Township. It is also likely that at least some of these instructors were in Hadley Township at the time of the census, however, and did not list their occupations as "school teacher."

The census was taken in the summer months in each of these four years. In 19th-century rural America, schools were in session only during the winter, when children were not needed to

TABLE 2
NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN HADLEY TOWNSHIP

Year	Female Students	Male Students	Total Number of Students
1850	129	151	280
1860	144	152	296
1870	174	196	370
1880	112	129	241

Source: United States Bureau of the Census (1850a, 1860a, 1870a, 1880).

help with farming duties, and less needed to help with housework. Teachers without family in Hadley Township would have had to support themselves if they remained in the area. Their educational winter occupations could have been easily subsumed by work current at the time of the summer census. Unlike the student checkbox, which specifies interest in whether the child has been to school in the last year, there is no "Educator in Last Year" column. These individuals could be listed in the census as a "servant" or "domestic." The Hadley Township census data likely would have looked quite different if the census had been taken in the winter months. This would also affect male teachers, perhaps to a greater degree. Teaching was seen as women's work, and so men who worked as farmers or laborers in addition to teaching in the off months could easily have identified with their more "masculine" occupations.

When there was only one blank for occupation in the census form, it was the primary work activity that was listed. For unmarried women who only worked outside the home for a few months of the year, "schoolteacher" must have seemed the obvious choice. For a grown man with a family who spent the majority of the year farming like the most of his neighbors, "schoolteacher" must have been an afterthought, rather than something the government was interested in. Supporting this observation is the fact that the only people in Hadley Township who list themselves as "unemployed" in the 1880 census (the first year this column is present) are schoolteachers. Three of them are men and two are women.

Another factor that obscures the number of teachers present in Hadley Township relates to the "snapshot" nature of the federal census. Most women would not have worked as schoolteachers for more than a few years before marrying and ceasing work outside the home (Cordier 1992:89). Of the 22 female teachers, only 3 or 4 are listed on two censuses, and none are listed as teachers on three.

Students

General observations on the education of children in Hadley Township, specifically on how education was valued based on the gender of the child, can be derived from an examination of the same census lists. While there are many complicating factors to consider, overall one can see that girls' education was valued less than boys' education during the timeframe of this study. A brief overview of education trends for Hadley Township recorded in the 1850–1880 federal censuses follows (Table 3). Enrollment in these years varies from about two-thirds of children being enrolled to approximately one-half. In all four of these census lists, the percentage of students of each gender was roughly 50%, with girls representing a slightly smaller part of the population of those attending school. The percentage of girls attending school out of all girls in Hadley Township was between two to seven percent below the boys' corresponding percentage on all four censuses. The year 1860 represents a minimum in school attendance for both genders, but also it was a year with a comparatively low disparity of attendance between male and female children.

These census data provide evidence of the differences between those households that only educated girls and those households that only educated boys in the years 1850, 1860, and 1870 (Table 4). All of the members of these households were categorized as white in each census. One might expect to find that those households that educated girls would be wealthier than households that sent boys to school. Before education was compulsory and free, this would imply that the education of female children was a luxury, while educating boys was a better economic choice.

In 1850 and 1860, the average real estate values for households that only educated girls were higher than the comparable values for households educating boys only (Table 5, Table 6), although in 1850 and 1860 the median real estate value for households that only educated

TABLE 3
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BY GENDER

Year	Girls Attending, of Total	Girls Attending, of all Girls	Boys Attending, out of Total	Boys Attending, of all Boys	Total Attending
1850	31% (*n*=129)	64%	36% (*n*=151)	70%	67% (*n*=280)
1860	26% (*n*=144)	51%	27% (*n*=152)	54%	53% (*n*=296)
1870	29% (*n*=174)	61%	33% (*n*=196)	65%	63% (*n*=370)
1880	22% (*n*=112)	47%	26% (*n*=129)	49%	48% (*n*=241)

Source: United States Bureau of the Census (1850a, 1860a, 1870a, 1880).

TABLE 4
HOUSEHOLDS (HH) WITH CHILDREN AT SCHOOL AND AT HOME

Year	HH with Girls at School and at Home	HH with Girls in School and Boys at Home	HH with Boys at School and Girls at Home	HH with Boys at School and at Home
1850	5	10	6	4
1860	8	7	16	16
1870	11	7	5	6

Source: United States Bureau of the Census (1850a, 1860a, 1870a).

TABLE 5
AVERAGE DEMOGRAPHICS FOR THE SELECTED SUBSET OF HOUSEHOLDS EDUCATING ONLY GIRLS IN HADLEY TOWNSHIP

Year	Girls per Family	Family Size	Number of Adults	Average Real Estate Value	Median Real Estate Value
1850	1.82	6.09	2.43	$584.29	$200
1860	1.53	6.16	2.79	$2,226.32	$800
1870	1.76	6.0	2.95	$4,330.95	$2,500

Source: United States Bureau of the Census (1850a, 1860a, 1870a).

girls was lower. In 1870, the median real estate value for boy-educating homes was nearly twice the value for girl-educating homes, and the average real estate value was higher as well. Perhaps over this 20-year period there was a shift towards education being thought of as important regardless of gender, and not simply as a luxury expenditure.

The trends described above can also be seen in the data concerning families who did not send their children to school (Table 7), as determined by a lack of checkmarks in the "School in Last Year" column for all school-aged children listed for a family. The family sizes of those with unschooled children are much smaller than those with formally educated children; it is not as easy to generalize about the number of adults per family, however. The number is predominantly lower for families with unschooled children than it is for those with

TABLE 6
AVERAGE DEMOGRAPHICS FOR THE SELECTED SUBSET OF HOUSEHOLDS EDUCATING ONLY BOYS IN HADLEY TOWNSHIP

Year	Boys per Family	Family Size	Number of Adults	Average Real Estate Value	Median Real Estate Value
1850	1.70	5.35	2.5	$329.50	$300
1860	1.74	5.74	2.05	$1,705.26	$1,000
1870	1.26	5.11	2.63	$4,747.37	$4,500

Source: United States Bureau of the Census (1850a, 1860a, 1870a).

TABLE 7
DEMOGRAPHICS OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO CHILDREN AT SCHOOL

Year	Girls per Family	Boys per Family	Girl HH, Family Size	Boy HH, Family Size	Girl HH, No. of Adults	Boy HH, No. of Adults
1850	1.57	1.0	4.14	4.0	2.57	2.17
1860	1.44	1.44	4.32	4.31	2.28	2.38
1870	1.32	1.44	4.27	4.5	2.32	2.56

Source: United States Bureau of the Census (1850a, 1860a, 1870a).

children attending school, but for both boys and girls there is a year in which the number of adults is higher in the families that do not send their children to school. On the other hand, the number of children of school age per family is always lower among those with children not at school than it is for those which have children being schooled. This, combined with the relatively small family sizes, would indicate that the families who chose not to educate their children formally were younger families. They did not yet have more than one or two children, and there were no grown children at home. This may also indicate that the families that kept their children at home were less-established families, and therefore had fewer economic resources than the families that sent their children to school.

In spite of this fact, a determination of real estate values as an influence on gendered educational choices has its limitations, perhaps the most important of which is that owning real estate does not necessarily imply available funds. Of course, no human decision is dependent on only one variable—parents of potential students most likely did not look at their various land holdings to help them decide whether to send their children to school.

Therefore, another variable was examined: family size. One can assume that in the 19th century, even in the winter months, children provided an important source of labor. Sending them to school would significantly affect the ability of a household to complete its routine tasks and meet production needs. It follows that if a girl's education was believed to be a lower priority than a boy's instruction, the families that chose only to educate girls were likely larger, and therefore more able to absorb the loss of a working member, even for a limited portion of the day and year. This is true in all three census lists examined (Table 5, Table 6). Households that only educated girls had (on average) no less than six members in all three census years, while the comparable values for families that only educated boys were lower. The results for the number of adults in each family were similar, with the exception of 1850. With household tasks divided strictly along gender lines in many households, overburdened mothers may have been reluctant to allow their female children to spend precious time away at

school. Therefore, in some ways, an economic expenditure may have been less of a burden to frontier families than having a child out of the home for a significant portion of the day.

In the end, education in the mid-19th century was a matter of parental choice. That choice was constrained by a number of variables, such as funds and availability of schools and teachers. In Hadley Township, this choice was at least partially motivated by gender constructs.

An Archaeology of Education

Although examining educational statistics can be a useful endeavor in terms of shedding light on how gender constructs were played out and affected lives, census data provide just one way to explore this topic. The material culture of schooling also provided an essential part of the educational experience. It is important to think about how these items were used. In an era when children did not have myriad toys, games, and other accoutrements, the rare school supply—something as simple as a slate pencil—could have had a much deeper meaning to a child than a yellow No. 2 pencil does today. The material culture of education may have been dictated by cost and availability, but those items could have consequently held greater significance for those who used them.

It is difficult to locate archaeological studies of rural 19th-century frontier schoolhouses, or schoolhouses in general. One reason is that "they are considered to exhibit low archaeological visibility" (Peña 1992:10). Gibb and Beisaw (2000:124) report "studies of non-architectural artifacts" at each of 19 school sites surveyed "have been disappointing." It is important to recognize the implications of such findings. The lack of distinct artifacts at schoolhouse sites may result from the lack of specialized material for education in a 19th-century rural context, as well as the lack of disposable material culture associated with children. One of the conclusions reached by Catts and Cunningham (1986:56) about a schoolhouse in Delaware was that "few artifacts were recovered, possibly because the students had few material items to lose." This is not to say that schools do not have any archaeological visibility whatsoever. At the Old Elliot School in Bermuda, "very few dishes or other kinds of ceramics" were recovered during excavations, suggesting a marked difference from domestic assemblages (Agbe-Davies 2001:23). Additionally, "another interesting difference was the lack of animal bone that can be linked to peoples' diets. The few fragments of bone that were found are almost exclusively from animals such as rodents and small birds that probably crept into the building uninvited" (Agbe-Davies 2001:23). Even considering these differences, consultation of historical sources provides an important resource for reconstructing the ways schoolhouses were used by communities (Catts and Cunningham 1986:57; Agbe-Davies 2001:26).

Two important studies of schoolhouse sites were conducted on the grounds surrounding standing schoolhouses in the eastern United States, schoolhouses which were both in operation during the 19th century. Peña's (1992:10) study was of a building known as Schoolhouse 12 in LeRay, New York, and the focus of her research was finding one or both of the two privies that were associated with the building, but no longer standing. Neither was found, and her conclusion was that "the results of the archaeological excavations indicate that the activities carried on in the vicinity of Schoolhouse 12 lacked archaeological visibility" (Peña 1992:17).

Although they did not find significantly more artifacts than Peña, Catts and Cunningham (1986) come to the more constructive conclusion that "although the archaeological record of a one-room schoolhouse will not be rich, the importance of the historical study of schoolhouses lies in their use as social and cultural centers in pre-industrial rural communities" (Catts and Cunningham 1986:57). The schoolhouse that their team excavated was located in the Welsh Tract, a rural section of Delaware. Although the original structure was still standing, the schoolhouse had been significantly altered when it was converted to a home in 1939 (Catts and Cunningham 1986:56), as opposed to Schoolhouse 12 in New York where remnants of a blackboard and stove remained (Peña 1992:12). Catts and Cunningham (1986:46) found through archival research that during its life as a school the schoolhouse they excavated contained "a slate blackboard ... teacher's desk ... benches ... no chairs in 1851 ... six oil lamps ... a potbelly stove [and] ... the floor was wooden." Additionally there were several

external structures associated with it, including "two frame privies ... a frame wood and coal shed … the post-and-rail fence … [and] a flagpole" (Catts and Cunningham 1986:46). The authors were able to identify one of the privies as well as the general area of the coal shed. At the Welsh Tract school, a privy yielded two coins, which provided date ranges for the feature (Catts and Cunningham 1986:56).

The remains of schoolhouse privies can often be elusive, however. Even when a schoolhouse is still standing, it is unlikely that a structure associated with unsanitary and antiquated waste disposal methods will have survived into modern times. Additionally, there was no consistent method to the placement of such outhouses. "Privies were often located to the rear of the playground, although an early-20th-century report recommended that privies be completely hidden from the playground if possible" (Peña 1992:12–13). As discussed above, the editor of *The Illinois Teacher* seemed to believe that the separation of male and female privies was essential to a proper educational environment (Bateman 1858b:185). Such preferences for physical separation of privies from the schoolhouse, combined with a desire for teacher oversight of such an outbuilding, means that privy placement would likely be distant from the school building, separated by gender, and yet be visible to the school yard. Privies make excellent archaeological finds, due to both their short-term use and their use for trash disposal. They often yield some of the most attractive finds from a site, such as at Morganza Elementary, where a fountain pen and its inkwell, the only pen located during excavation, were recovered from a privy context (Struchtemeyer 2008:49). None of this means privies are easy to find. The task of locating the remains of such structures is dependent partially on understanding the sensibilities of the original architects, but also on the particular layout of the school grounds at the time of construction.

While the archaeology of schoolhouses may be somewhat elusive, there is no shortage of discussions of schoolhouse architecture. In addition to modern studies, there is much in the historical record about the proper form a schoolhouse should take. "Schoolhouse architecture and schoolyard landscaping figure prominently in educational literature of the 19th century, most comprehensively and influentially through the published work of Henry Barnard" (Gibb and Beisaw 2000:112). Barnard and Horace Mann, two of the greatest influences on 19th-century educational theory, both thought that a building should reflect its function, and so the structure of the school itself should encourage learning and education. The editor of the *The Illinois Teacher* weighs in on this subject as well, declaring that the "old, unsightly, poorly-adapted school-houses, in many parts of the state, are not only a blot upon the face of nature, but an absolute clog upon educational effort and school efficiency" (Bateman 1858c:204). This rich record of the theory behind schoolhouse architecture informs archaeological explorations by elucidating meaning in visible forms.

The surest way to determine that a site was used as a school is if there is a standing schoolhouse. Many archaeological studies of schoolhouses are done at sites with a period building present. At the Old Elliot School in Bermuda, Agbe-Davies (2001:2) was able to "approach the structure archaeologically; that is to say, examining the various phases of construction, repair and renovation, and the order in which they occurred." Combining this approach with the historical literature on educational archaeology, Agbe-Davies was able to determine ways in which this schoolhouse reflected theories on education from the period of its construction. For example, there was a Gothic-style arch over the original door to the structure of the Old Elliot School, which was later filled in. "The Gothic style was thought to be suitable for settings where instruction, either spiritual or intellectual, and contemplation were the primary activities" (Agbe-Davies 2001:21). This style was particularly popular in the mid-19th century in America, and clearly fell out of favor in Bermuda at some point during the Old Elliott School's use.

The Welsh Tract school in Delaware examined in the Catts and Cunningham (1986:23) study was also standing at the time of their survey. Since 1939 it had been used as a private residence rather than as a school, however. Due to the change in its function "the schoolhouse structure itself revealed little about its use as a school" (Catts and Cunningham 1986:56). Accounts of alterations to the structure of 19th-century schoolhouses are common throughout

the archaeological literature on those structures still standing. These structural changes vary in extent. While some thwart entirely an architectural reading of the buildings' use as schools, in other cases subsequent renovations can be distinguished, and the original shape of the schoolhouse can be revealed.

At New Philadelphia, there is no standing structure that could have been used as a school, though it is known that at least one existed. Since the land has been returned to agricultural use for decades, historical documents and oral histories become guides to archaeological investigations for the New Philadelphia schoolhouse. In previous seasons, artifacts relating to schooling have been discovered. Specifically, two slate pencils have been found on different lots of the former town (Shackel 2005:3A). During the 2005 season, a foundation stone was located which was initially interpreted as the pier to the "negro schoolhouse," based on oral accounts of its location in the town (Shackel 2005:3F). Further excavations did not reveal additional remains of a structure, however, and this hypothesis, while not disproved, remains uncertain.

As discussed above, education was most often in the hands of young female teachers. The curricula these women decided upon varied widely. This implies that the material culture associated with 19th-century classrooms will vary considerably. In many cases, teachers simply taught from the Bible, as it was the only book readily available and one that was viewed as aiding the moral upbringing of youth, making it doubly suited to a school environment. Some teachers were very creative, however, such as one Wisconsin schoolteacher discussed by Polly Kaufman. The teacher used bones provided by the local doctor for teaching physiology, had a blackboard made, and taught her students to sing (Kaufman 1984:29). Such a classroom could be archaeologically confusing, and so it is important to keep an open mind as to what exactly constituted the material culture of education in the 19th century.

At least some elements of the archaeology of a schoolhouse are predictable. For one, slate pencils, such as those already recovered from excavations at New Philadelphia, are routinely recovered in quantity from schoolhouse sites, such as the Altaville Schoolhouse in southern California. Of 330 artifacts recovered from within the schoolhouse itself, 50 were slate pencils (Napton and Greathouse 1997:17). Although a seemingly simple educational device, these items still can provide important information about the material culture present in a school. Napton and Greathouse (1997:18) describe the collection: "many of the slate pencils bore obvious signs of sharpening, and several displayed spiral-pattern striations, as though they had been used in some type of holder." A holder was not necessary to the function of a slate pencil, but most likely improved the comfort of the student using it. Spiral marks can therefore be a useful indication of the availability of funds for nonessential items, either on the part of the school or on the part of the families of the students. If more marked or unmarked slate pencils are recovered from a future excavation at New Philadelphia, conclusions may be drawn about the economic situation of the school within the community. Additionally, the length of the pencil at the time of discard is an indication of the availability of the pencils themselves.

Another archaeologically visible aspect of education is seating furniture, specifically student desks. During her excavation of Morganza Elementary School, an early-20th-century African American school in Louisiana, Structemeyer (2008:52) documented six metal desk frames, each exhibiting a maker's mark. From the diverse nature of the makers' marks, she concluded that these desks were come by secondhand, most likely as castoffs from a better-funded white school in the area (Structemeyer 2008:55). Being less portable than slate pencils, the recovery of desk elements would be an excellent indicator of the location of a school, and they can be a useful addition to analysis.

Toys are also to be expected in the archaeological remains of a school. While New Philadelphia was a frontier town, possibly indicating a scarcity of material culture aimed at children in its early years at least, doubtless children had items either intended for, or used for play. Already recovered items include several marbles, pieces of porcelain dolls, and a miniature train. The presence and quantity of toys can be a useful indicator of the time of a deposit, particularly before the Civil War, as children preferred games that were not dependent on toys (Mergen 1992:87). In addition to

such traditional children's material culture, it is important to keep in mind the nature of children when recovering artifacts from a context associated with young people. Not all items which functioned as toys are immediately identifiable as such. Dollhouses could be furnished with broken pottery, rings, and rubber balls (Mergen 1992:91). In analyzing artifacts recovered from a privy associated with an elementary school, Struchtemeyer discusses some unexpected artifacts: a fossil, a 1915 coin in a 1970s context, and a purple rock. She classes these three items as toys, and notes that they "possess elements that children find intriguing: unusual shape, shininess and color" (Struchtemeyer 2008:68). Children who lack what would be considered a stimulating environment can easily create one for themselves, leaving an baffling archaeological record in their wake.

Toys are artifacts to which it is tempting to assign gender. A slate pencil cannot be viewed as gender specific, but what about a toy gun, a doll, or a marble? It may seem obvious that a particular toy belonged to either a girl or a boy, but it is essential to remain cautious and critical about gender assignments. In an environment where toys are scarce, it is likely that the "correct" gender of a toy will have less sway over a child than its entertainment value. Additionally, such categories do not remain stable. Formanek-Brunell (1992:121) asserts that when it came to dolls, it was not the toy itself that was gendered but the particular manner of its use, with both girls and boys using the toy to act out the gendered roles of their society.

Assignment of gender on an artifact level can be ill-advised, but a more thoughtful way to discuss gender and the material culture of education and childhood is through context. Privies are one obvious location where children are separated by sex. The tendency of elementary schoolchildren to self-select companions of the same gender can also be helpful to an archaeological investigation. Bugarin (2008: 29) describes oral history testimony in which her informant "remembered where the boys would play and in which corners the girls would giggle." While this type of spatial separation on the playground is helpful to keep in mind, it is equally important to remember the transient nature of student populations; what was once the girls' corner may in just a few years become a favored hangout of the boys. Reading gender from the archaeological record alone can be very problematic, and lead to a reinforcement of stereotypes and a disregard of transgressive behavior. It is through the combination of careful archaeology, documentary records, and open-minded analysis that meaningful conclusions about gender can be drawn from the material record.

Conclusions

It is important to realize that education existed in informal structures as well formal institutions like the common school. Education was begun in the home, and in many cases stayed there when it was impractical, impossible, or undesirable to send children to school. Additionally, education took place at church, and given that in the mid-19th century religious instruction blended with what we consider academic instruction, this may have been considered a legitimate education by some. The guidelines provided to census enumerators in the years 1850 and 1860, however, indicate that if a child were only educated at a Sunday school, this was not a sufficient criterion for him or her to be marked as attending school within the last year (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850b, 1860b). By 1870, what was meant by "at school in year" must have been viewed as self-evident and standard across the wide geographical region of the United States, because there were no longer guidelines given to enumerators on this topic (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1870b). This sort of transition is a valuable one to note, as it reveals that as schools became more entrenched within American society, they became the only "school" of import.

The archaeological study of education is still a fledgling field, which can be of much more use with the development of a critical body of theory, as well as the addition of more data. Gibb and Beisaw (2000:113) frame a series of related questions as a way to approach this topic: "Has archaeology contributed to the history of education? How might it contribute in the face of a rapidly dwindling resource [frontier schoolhouses]? Can schoolhouse sites offer anything to the archaeological study and explication of the historical and cultural development of the Western Hemisphere?"

These are all valuable inquiries, and to them a few more questions should be added. For

instance, how can constructs of race, class, and gender be seen in the archaeological record of education? How can the material culture of education within the home be distinguished from that of the institutional education of schools? Where does study of the archaeology of education necessitate a reliance on documentary sources, and what can be learned only from material culture? All of these questions can be addressed in studies of the archaeology of education.

Archaeology provides a way to better understand the past, and in turn, a means for improving our current society. Through deconstructing and exposing past notions of race, class, and gender, discrimination based on these axes can be better eliminated in the present. As Audre Lorde (1984:112) states, "in a world of possibility for us all, our personal visions help lay the groundwork for political action." It is hoped that as archaeological investigations continue at New Philadelphia, the findings will yield critical insights that will combat current forms of oppression.

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