Gender Divide: Re-Examining the Feminization of Teaching in the Nineteenth Century with Emphasis on the Displaced Male Teacher

Matthew Fegan
The College of Wooster, mfegan12@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://openworks.wooster.edu/independentstudy
Part of the History of Gender Commons, and the Other Education Commons

Recommended Citation
https://openworks.wooster.edu/independentstudy/3816
The College of Wooster

The Gender Divide:
Re-examining the Feminization of Teaching in the Nineteenth Century with Emphasis on the Displaced Male Teacher

By
Matthew Ryan Fegan

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of Senior Independent Study

Supervised by
Kabria Baumgartner
Department of History

Spring 2012
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: Follow the Leader: An Examination of the Role of Prominent Educational Reformers in the Formalization of Schools</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: School Formalization and the Culture of Benevolence</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Male Administrators: Benefactors of Discrimination</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure One: 1859 certificate from Wayne County, Ohio, certifying Benjamin Jones 36

Figure Two: 1884 certificate from Bellaire, Ohio, also certifying Benjamin Jones 37

Figure Three: Letter of recommendation recommending Benjamin Jones to the Ashland, Ohio school district 38
INTRODUCTION

For centuries, Americans have entrusted universal public schooling with the responsibility of educating our youth, the future of our society. Since the eighteenth century, parents have sent their children to schools to not only learn a formal curriculum, but also for the moral and social development that turns their children into productive adults and citizens. There has been a withstanding public expectation that these schools have the best interest of each and every student in mind. On this macro level, schools hold enormous duty and responsibility. This held true through the early era of one room schoolhouses, to the modern era of formalized school systems. While the specifics of methodology and ideology have evolved, the basic expectations of schools have remained constant. On this large scale, schools have been as influential to American life as any other social institution.

For as long as schools have been a part of American culture, teachers have filled classrooms with the task of carrying out the ideals of citizenship that schools set. Although this general principle has remained true, the specific duties and expectations of teachers have evolved perhaps more than schools themselves. In fact, in comparison to other occupations in fields of law or medicine, teaching has not always even been considered a profession.¹ According to historian John Rury, “the fact is that the social

characteristics of teachers can tell us a great deal about the status of teaching from one period to the next.”

Rury’s claim is especially useful when applied to instances where considerable change took place in the teaching profession. A dramatic transformation of social characteristics of teachers likely means a change in the status of these teachers; and there is perhaps no greater transitional period in terms of social characteristics and the social perception of teaching than the mid to late nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1830s, the teaching profession completely transformed in its legitimacy, its expectations, and its demographic makeup. Specifically, these years saw teachers change from primarily untrained male farmers teaching as a secondary occupation, to highly qualified and educated people performing these jobs full time, most of whom were women. The changes in the school system that caused the changes in the teaching profession are called the formalization of schools. The resulting effect to the teachers is called the professionalization or formalization of the teaching profession. The change in gender makeup of the teaching profession is referred to as the feminization of teaching.

The dramatic shift in gender makeup of teachers in the nineteenth century is one of the greatest changes in gender transformation of a single profession in recent history. While the timing, speed, and severity of the phenomenon was at times different from region to region and even from school to school, the overall trend seemed to be inevitable. In St. Louis, Missouri, for instance, male and female teachers were employed equally in 1844. But as soon as 1858, female teachers outnumbered males by more than

a 5:1 ratio. Cincinnati, Ohio saw their male teaching force actually increase from 21 to 34 in the 1840s, but in the same time the female teaching force skyrocketed, from 38 female teachers in 1840 to 108 in 1850. While the specifics may be different for factors that will be explored throughout this paper, the trend happened consistently in schools throughout the country. In the Northeast, schools tended to become formalized earlier in the nineteenth century compared to the South, which happened toward the middle of the century. In many ways, the Midwest was the happy medium of these two regions, and for this reason, whenever possible, this thesis will attempt to specifically focus on the Midwest. However, the trend held true for all regions: towards the end of the nineteenth century, females completely dominated the teaching profession.

Obvious questions arise as to why and how the feminization of teaching happened, and what it reveals about the social implications of the teaching profession and the common school movement in general in the 1830s. What made men suddenly leave the profession? What made women enter the profession in such large numbers? Clearly, significant social forces were at play, as these changes obviously cannot be explained simply by random chance. This thesis will explore these issues, and more. It will analyze the intersection of the formalization of schools and the teaching profession, as well as the feminization of teaching. It will offer insight into both the male and female perspectives of this historically significant trend.

The teaching profession is fascinating to study for its enigmatic status. Ever evolving, teachers have worn many hats and filled many different cultural roles. In many contexts,

---


ways, teaching is the perfect intersection of blue and white collar work. Beyond simply gender, the expectations of qualities that constitute a “good teacher” have forced the occupation to evolve constantly. Ultimately, the history of the teaching profession is not one, such as law or medicine that has had a consistent and predictable progression as a legitimate profession. Specifically, the feminization of teaching is a prime example of a significant, yet unpredictable chapter in the history of teaching in America.

**Historiography**

The historiography on the feminization of teaching in the United States does not lack in depth or variability. Historians have studied this phenomenon for many years, and from different angles and perspectives. This section will outline the differing ways that historians have answered the essential question, “What caused the gender shift in the teaching profession in the nineteenth century?” Although this thesis will examine far more specific questions and issues, my thesis will build upon the work of historians who have studied how and why the feminization of teaching occurred.

Myra H. Strober and Audri Gordon Lanford’s 1986 article “The Feminization of Public School Teaching: Cross-Sectional Analysis, 1850-1880” provides a great framework to begin to understand the important issues revolving around feminization for several reasons. The authors contend that the issue of occupational segregation is a difficult topic to study because there are very few professions in the 19th century where men and women co-existed. For a brief period, teaching was one of these few professions.
Strober and Lanford attempt to quantitatively test their hypothesis that women teachers in the antebellum era were more common in formalized school settings, and that their salaries in these areas were closer in proportion to their male counterparts. Along with this hypothesis, they suggest that “the formalization of teaching both increased the demand for female teachers and decreased the supply of male teachers.” They claim that the formalized school system increased the length of the school year, which disallowed men from pursuing teaching as a secondary occupation to supplement their incomes as farmers, tradesmen, etc. Furthermore, according to Strober and Lanford, the increased standards for teaching certification were an additional obstacle that women were willing to handle, and at the same time pushed men away. Finally, the authors argue that the average teacher salary was inadequate to support a family, a duty that was generally the responsibility of the patriarch in this era.

Using census data, the authors conclude that their hypothesis was true. Women were found far more frequently in formalized schools than in less formalized schools, characterized by length of the school year. They offer two solutions to this trend: women were cheaper to hire than men, and that stereotypes existed in this time period that women were more naturally adept at dealing with children. In this quantitative study, some conclusions can be drawn from this article, and the author’s work therefore provides a strong basis for succeeding historians in studying gender roles in common

---


6 Although Strober and Lanford do not use the term, for the purpose of clarity and consistency in this paper, the term “traditional approach” will apply to historians arguing that feminization of teaching has a purely economic origin, meaning that females were simply willing to teach for less money than men.
schools in the 19th century. This study reveals that there is a clear connection between the formalization of schools and the feminization of the teaching profession. Historians have since built upon this finding.

John Rury’s 1989 essay “Who Became Teachers? The Social Characteristics of Teachers in American History” also attempts to study the teaching profession from a quantitative perspective. Rury builds on Strober’s study by examining not only gender, but also other social characteristics such as class, race, and age. In doing so, he focuses more on the question of how teaching became a profession with a low social status compared to other fields such as law and medicine.

Rury addresses gender, and directly cites Strober and Lanford’s study. He compares their findings to the works of other historians before him and he concludes that “feminization was due to a combination of labor market forces, changing demands for teachers in the wake of educational reforms, and underlying shifts in popular perceptions of female roles.” Although he admits a lack of traceable recorded information, he amends Strober’s study by adding that the transition to hiring female teachers was a gradual process that many school districts resisted in fear that only male educators were adequately able to handle discipline issues of older school aged boys. In addition, he refutes the idea that feminization was an entirely economic issue, arguing that “saving money by hiring women as teachers may have been more of a consequence of feminization than a cause.”

Rury inserts race, class, and age into the discussion as additional factors playing into the low social status of the profession by 1850. Teachers were proportionately more likely to come from rural backgrounds and have more education than their parents, which suggests that the elite class of whites were reluctant to push their daughters and sons towards the profession. Finally, regardless of who did become teachers, they normally did so for only a short period of time, often before entering into another profession. Thus, the average age of teachers was young. In most places teachers were in their twenties. Overall, Rury shows that women, immigrants, blacks, those from rural backgrounds and households with minimal education, and young people were largely the characteristics of teachers. These factors, according to Rury, help to explain why the social status of the teaching profession was, and remains, connected to citizens who did not come from the upper class.

Ultimately, through his own quantitative study similar to Strober and Lanford’s, Rury reaches some similar conclusions. He concludes that women teachers were more prevalent in the Midwest and Northeast than in the South. This finding is consistent with Strober’s idea that more formalized schools employed more female teachers; formalization happened earlier in the Northeast and Midwest compared to the South. Of the numerous variables Rury tests for their association with the feminization of teaching, overall enrollment rates had the strongest positive correlation throughout the country. In other words, schools with more students were more likely to employ female teachers. He found a relatively low correlation between feminization and urbanization. Both he and

---

9 This argument is proportional. Rury does not suggest that, for instance, there were more black teachers than white teachers, but rather that in comparison to the demographic characteristics of other professions, these specific characteristics were more common among teachers.
Strober reject the commonly held notion that urbanization and feminization were highly connected. Rury’s quantitative conclusions both align with and build upon Strober’s from three years prior.

Further historical studies, such as JoAnne Preston’s 1993 article “Domestic Ideology, School Reformers, and Female Teachers: Schoolteaching Becomes Women’s Work in Nineteenth-Century New England” stray from quantitative research methods, and instead focus on specific cultural factors as well as the ideologies of important figures in 19th century education. Throughout her article, Preston wrestles with the perception that women were “naturally” suited for the teaching profession, and “masculine” qualities such as intellectual superiority, emotional restraint, and physical dominance were replaced by “feminine” qualities of emotionality, maternal love, gentleness, and moral superiority. By introducing these ideas to the reader in the beginning of her article, Preston develops her main idea that feminization of teaching happened because social propaganda surrounding the profession was heavily influenced by prevalent gender stereotypes of the time period.

Preston challenges some of the traditional stereotypes of women as teachers. She uses primary sources such as letters and correspondences of female teachers to dispute the notion that women lacked the ability and desire to pursue outside academic interests once they were paid professionals, as well as the idea that women did not care about their

---

low wages and poor living conditions. She offers numerous examples of female teachers who became teachers to pursue academic interests as well as females who bargained for better compensation. She includes this section to further support her thesis that stereotypes dominated the decision of who became teachers.

Ultimately, Preston concludes that the first reason men originally outnumbered women in teaching was because of the prejudices from the administrators who hired teachers. Eventually, propaganda, full of gender stereotypes, emerged and allowed women to take over the profession, only for the stereotypes to be proved untrue. The final effect, she concludes, is that schools were able to balance their budgets by hiring females. Preston’s contribution to the historiography is a more sociological view of the way society treated teachers and placed gender expectations on them. These expectations, she argues, were untrue and unfair. She also disagrees with the idea that economics were the main reason for the feminization of teaching, and argues that there were many other factors present such as cultural stereotypes. She agrees with Rury that economic benefits were more of a result than a reason of females becoming teachers.

In her 2009 study, Sarah E. Montgomery studies and critiques the historiography on the feminization of teaching. She examines several potential reasons for the feminization of teaching, contending that the majority of historians have studied the issue from an economic perspective and have concluded that the willingness of women to work for lower wages was the main reason they took over the majority of teaching jobs. She calls this the “traditional approach,” and she rejects it in her article. She argues that the

---

11 The issue of female teachers and low wages will be heavily explored in Chapter 2.

feminization of teaching was a complex process that was spurred on by many cultural factors such as changing life conditions among women and the role of the Civil War in making jobs previously held by men available to women. Thus, she concludes that economics was only a small portion of the equation.

Montgomery introduces Rury’s article and uses his ideas as one potential source to explain the feminization of teaching. She also addresses the idea of men leaving the profession because it was no longer suitable for part time work, an argument that Strober, among others, makes. She includes Geraldine Clifford’s work that focuses on factors within the female population such as falling birthrates, rising age of women’s first marriage, and the existence of permanently single women as the main reasons for increased amounts of female teachers. She also cites the Civil War as a reason men left the profession. In addressing these different perspectives, Montgomery does not argue for the merit of any single argument over any other, she simply contends that the issue is complicated, and the final result of the feminization of teaching is likely the product of a culmination of issues.13 Her main purpose is to combat the simple solution of women being willing to work for less as the sole reason for men leaving the profession.

This section identified some important key arguments historians have made regarding the feminization of teaching. My thesis will draw upon the many different ideas of these historians, while dually crafting its own place in the historiography on the feminization of teaching. It will add the role of educational leaders and their contribution

to the feminization of the teaching force, the issue of benevolence and its role in teacher wages, and finally it will fill a noticeable void in the historiography: the perspective of the male teacher. While much attention has been paid to the emergence of women in the teaching profession, much less has been focused on the men who left the profession. I will object to the notion that men were simply “bought out” by cheaper labor and did not feel a connection to education, but rather that they were able to reproduce the intrinsic benefits of teaching as principals and administrators.

**Methodology**

For an issue as broad as the feminization of teaching, there are many historical factors at play. This paper will deal most heavily with gender, social, and cultural history. The inclusion of gender history is obvious, and in this case it is heavily tied to the social and cultural factors. In antebellum America, professions of high social status were dominated by men. There were definite stereotypical gender expectations, thus making the parade of females into common schools more interesting and significant. The social and cultural factors that allowed women to take over as teachers will reveal a lot about the way society viewed the importance of schools. This thesis will consistently wrestle with the question of society’s role in determining who filled teaching jobs.

A project of this length would not possibly be able to give due credit to the depth of all of the different perspectives and issues at play in the feminization of teaching. As such, each chapter will breakdown a specific issue connected to the broader topic, and in sum the chapters will work together to reach the conclusion that the feminization of teaching was indeed complex, and was ultimately a result of a perfect storm of factors,
including school formalization, that allowed women to enter the profession in large numbers while dually giving men the opportunity to fulfill their desire to participate in the field of education without being classroom teachers. Whenever possible, each chapter will draw upon the thoughts and words of the male and female teachers most directly affected by the relevant issues. Each of the three chapters is summarized below.

“Follow the Leader: An Examination of the Role of Prominent Educational Reformers in the Formalization of Schools” will focus on the educational leaders of early nineteenth century America, and how their combined efforts to formalize schools and professionalize the teaching profession helped to explain why the feminization of teaching occurred. This chapter will show that the dramatic growth of public schooling was a result of the efforts of educational proponents who served as leaders in the movement. This chapter will specifically study the ideas and thoughts of Calvin Stowe of Ohio and Henry Barnard of Michigan. It was the efforts of men like Stowe and Barnard that set in motion the chain of events that created the formalization of American public schools, and thus the feminization of teaching.

“Follow the Leader” will draw upon Stowe’s European travels, and how his world experiences applied to educational policy in Ohio. It will use Barnard’s writings to show how these educational leaders held the teaching profession in the highest regard. Furthermore, the perspectives of both smaller scale education reformers, as well as women activists such as Catharine Beecher will be considered. Ultimately, this chapter will show the connection between the work of Stowe and Barnard and the formalization and feminization of teaching.
“School Formalization and the Culture of Benevolence” will serve two distinct purposes. First, it will outline the many ways the formalization of schools directly altered the teaching profession. The process of becoming a teacher will be outlined, and it will show how the hiring and recruitment process changed, as well as the certification process. Secondly, this chapter will argue that while the formalization of schools and the professionalization of teaching were clearly occurring, teacher compensation did not match the additional efforts teacher candidates were exerting to enter the profession.

I will show that the formalization of schools led to the influx of women into the profession. Women certainly did not intend to keep wages low, and this chapter will add to Sarah Montgomery’s argument against the “traditional approach” by inserting the role of benevolence into the gender and wage debate. Ultimately, this chapter will argue that while men also felt a sense of benevolence towards teaching, the formalization of teaching presented women with the perfect opportunity to carry this feeling out in large numbers. Thus, this chapter creates a link between the formalization of schools and the culture of benevolence.

Finally, “Male Administrators: Benefactors of Discrimination” is a culminating chapter that focuses specifically on male educators. It will argue that men were not simply “bought out” by cheaper labor of women, who allegedly forced them out of the profession. There were many factors that ushered men away from teaching, most notable of which was the creation of an educational bureaucracy/hierarchy that coincided with the formalization of teaching. Discriminatory promotion practices of the time period allowed men to dominate these jobs because of the promotion obstacles for women.
“Male Administrators” will draw upon both data and specific examples to show that quite a few men, who had become teachers, were able to remain in the field of education and fill their sense of benevolence without being everyday classroom teachers. In doing this, they were dually able to meet the cultural and economic expectations and stereotypes that their time period placed upon them.

To conclude his introduction of Pillars of the Republic, a comprehensive book on American public education from 1780-1860, educational historian Carl Kaestle implores the reader that “rather than looking for legislative precedents of modern school systems in this period, we should ask what kind of schooling ordinary people sought in the new republic, and what the institutional results were.”\footnote{Carl Kaestle. Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860. 1st ed. Hill and Wang, 1983, 12. Hereby cited as Pillars of the Republic.} Kaestle goes on to write a superbly inclusive book about the relationship between schools and society. Similarly, this thesis asks the reader to understand the feminization of teaching and the formalization of schools not in a vacuum as interesting phenomena, but rather as essential trends on the continuum of the history of public schools in American history. For the aforementioned issues in nineteenth century education that each chapter will explore, what were the institutional results? To answer that question, in short, the inception of universally formalized public education in America and the resulting changes in schools and especially in the teaching profession set precedents in schools for years to come. The reverberations of these precedents, in many ways, can still be felt today.
CHAPTER ONE

FOLLOW THE LEADER: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF PROMINENT EDUCATIONAL REFORMERS IN THE FORMALIZATION OF SCHOOLS

The middle of the nineteenth century represented a key transitional phase in the history of public schooling in America. The idea of universal public schooling, although introduced decades earlier by Thomas Jefferson in “A Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge,” was finally being put into place. The period between 1830 and 1850 saw a dramatic increase in both the availability of schools and the public attitude towards the common school movement. By 1850, 80% percent of white males in New England, along with 75% of their female counterparts attended school. The growth of public schooling was a result of the efforts of educational proponents who served as leaders in the movement in the early and mid nineteenth century. Similar to the way the viewpoints of the Founding Fathers shaped the ideals and attitudes of our country from a political and cultural standpoint, men like Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and Calvin Stowe, among others, truly shaped the scope and structure of public schools across the country. The ideas of these men created the foundation on which the country’s educational system was built.

Traits and Goals of Leaders in Education

While these common school leaders were independent thinkers and had their own agendas and perspectives about educational issues, there were some common traits shared among them. Overwhelmingly, these leaders were white, male, Protestant, and from the

middle class. They varied greatly on issues of theology and politics, but shared important views on human nature, nationhood, and political economy. This mutual ideological ground paved the way for what educational historian Carl Kaestle identifies as the three main goals of early common schools: republicanism, Protestantism, and capitalism.\textsuperscript{16} Republicanism refers to the importance placed on virtue and discipline in early common schools. Similarly, Protestant ideas were taught through a curriculum heavily based on morality. The teaching of morality, not literacy or knowledge, was the main goal of these early common schools. Finally, capitalism was taught through the orderly nature of schools and the use of corporal punishment. Combined with the rigid structure of the school day, order and corporal punishment prepared students for their likely futures as factory workers. Through these main pillars, schools were a tool of society to create common social ideas. Kaestle argues these three issues were shared universally across the country amongst educational leaders, and thus became the backbone of early school curriculums.

Kaestle’s ability to draw these broad connections between the leaders throughout the country is interesting because it shows how the overlap of ideas of leaders eventually becomes widespread policy. It is equally interesting, however, to consider how these leaders differ, and how much their differences can be attributed to both place and time. Their unique ideas and areas of emphasis represent the different ways they approached the same goal of formalizing schools. The following examples will illustrate this point. Henry Barnard of Connecticut, born in Hartford in 1811, was a Yale graduate and

\textsuperscript{16} Kaestle, \textit{Pillars of the Republic}, 75-76.
practicing lawyer and politician. He used his political position to pass laws for better supervision of common schools and established a state Board of Commissioners of schools in Connecticut. These accomplishments alone were noteworthy, and were happening across the country by various reformers. Barnard’s major contribution to common schools was his advocacy of classifying students and schools into grades, as contemporary schools do. Although this idea may seem obvious to the modern observer of schools, Barnard’s idea was innovative for this time period. He argued grade classification would help to decrease the alarmingly high rates of teacher turnover and improve the social experience of children in schools.\textsuperscript{17}

Concurrently, John Pierce of Michigan was making similar strides in popularizing formalized education as Barnard in Connecticut. He was a strictly religious man and strong advocate of Protestant ideas being taught in schools as well as the need for schools to educate all children, not just those of privileged backgrounds.\textsuperscript{18} Comparable to the way Barnard became known for trying to classify schools into grades, Pierce advocated for the consolidation of small rural schools into larger schools based on those in urban settings, for efficiency and more advanced instruction.\textsuperscript{19} He felt this would be a more prudent means of sharing educational ideas and statistics while dually educating children in large numbers. While these are just two examples of leaders advocating their own unique agenda, they represent the trend of reformers working on a micro scale to promote the ideas to aid the process of formalizing schools.

\textsuperscript{17} Kaestle, \textit{Pillars of the Republic}, 132-133.

\textsuperscript{18} Kaestle, \textit{Pillars of the Republic}, 75, 91.

\textsuperscript{19} Kaestle, \textit{Pillars of the Republic}, 112
The antebellum era was transformational for many aspects of public schools, and especially so for the development of the teaching profession. The following examples in this chapter will focus specifically on teachers, and will show how the micro scale work of individual reformers brought significant change to American schools on a large scale. Although none of these cases includes a reformer originally attempting to remove male teachers and replace them with female teachers, their combined ideas of formalizing the school system and professionalizing the teaching profession, in sum, sheds light on how educational policies indirectly contributed to the feminization of teaching.

*Calvin Stowe and Henry Barnard*

Much like the way John Pierce became synonymous with education reform in the Michigan and Barnard with Connecticut, Calvin Stowe became the leader of similar status in Ohio. Stowe, who was notable as both a biblical historian and later as the husband of famed abolitionist and author Harriet Beecher Stowe, graduated from Bowdoin College, received theological training, and later taught at Dartmouth College. His 1832 appointment as professor at a minister training school, Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, brought him to the state of Ohio. In 1836, the seminary, just seven years old, was in need of books that were only readily available in Europe. They had the money for the books themselves, but lacked enough money to fund a European trip of a delegate to purchase the necessary books. Luckily for them, since comparative educational studies had become popular across the Northeast and Midwest, the Ohio legislature wanted to follow the example set by other states by sending a representative to
study the ways of European schools. They chose to send Calvin Stowe to report on successful education systems in Prussia. Publicly funded educational trips to other regions occurred as far back as 1825, when Nathan Guilford of Ohio praised the educational systems of certain states, such as Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and cited New York and Connecticut as bad examples. Even a European study similar to Stowe’s had precedent, as Michigan had sent Victor Cousin to report on the Prussian system a few years earlier. Thus, Calvin Stowe, funded by the state of Ohio, embarked on a European journey with two specific interests and goals. First, he was to purchase European texts to supply the growing library at the Lane Seminary back home in Cincinnati. Second, he was a delegate of the state of Ohio, with the purpose of finding what made education in Prussia so effective, and how both Ohio and the United States could learn and improve from an established and successful system.

From the viewpoint of the Ohio legislature, the result of Stowe’s trip was the 1836 report entitled “The Prussian System of Public Instruction, and its Applicability to the United States.” This report was intended for an audience of education leaders across the state, but was eventually distributed to schools across the state to be read by teachers and school staff. The writing is split into two sections; first, Stowe provided an overview of the Prussian system of schooling, and second, he explained how these ideas might be applicable to American schools. He found that Prussian ideas such as uniformity of language, extensive and thorough instruction that included lessons in music, drawing, and gardening, consistent responsibility for teachers and superintendents, the need for


21 Kaestle, Pillars of the Republic, 189.
educational statistics, and the presence of religion in accordance with school discipline should be utilized in American schools. Each of these concepts were consistent with Stowe’s proposal for the need to formalize public schools.

In reading his papers, however, it is clear that Stowe emphasized the need to improve the process of recruiting and training qualified teachers above all else. Similar to the way Henry Barnard became known for supporting the classification of schools into grades, Stowe became a prominent promoter of reforming the way American schools recruited and trained teachers. He argued that increasing the certification process for future teachers, paying current teachers more, and making teaching a full time occupation would improve the quality of teachers, thus resulting in better schools and a happier nation. This idea was planted in Stowe’s mind from his European travels where teacher seminaries were common, and served the sole purpose of preparing teachers to be successful, both from a knowledge and pedagogical standpoint. These seminaries, or normal schools, served the sole purpose of training and certifying high school graduates to become teachers, consequently producing intelligent and well prepared classroom instructors. The following excerpts accurately summarize Stowe’s findings, and the ways they were applicable in American schools.

VI. Supply of Teachers.---In order to furnish the numerous schools with well-qualified teachers, each of the twenty-eight regencies, into which the kingdom is divided, is required to maintain at least one seminary for the education of teachers. Not more than seventy pupils can be received into any one of these seminaries; the age of admission is from sixteen to eighteen, and the term of study three years. The law declares, that ‘the principal aim of these seminaries shall be, to form teachers, sound both in body and mind; to imbue them with sentiments of

---

religion, and with zeal and love for their duties.’ The course of instruction and exercises comprehends all the branches which are taught in the elementary high schools: particular attention is given to singing and playing on the organ. They are instructed in regard to the best methods of teaching; and for the sake of practice in this branch, model schools are attached to all these seminaries, in which the pupils, under the superintendence of the teachers, give daily instruction.  

2d. The care for the supply and support of teachers manifested in the Prussian system, is well worthy of adoption in our country. Teaching should be a profession: the wants of the country can never be adequately supplied till it is so. There are now in our country not less than one and a half million of children destitute of schools, and for them at least twenty thousand teachers are needed in addition to the eighty thousand already employed. But how can men of competent talents venture to make teaching their profession at the present low rate of wages and uncertainty of support? How can they engage in an occupation so laborious, and the severities of which so often bring on premature old age, on a pittance which gives them but a bare subsistence from day to day, and leaves them no provision for seasons of sickness and years of debility? If we have competent teachers, we must give them a sufficient and certain support. They should be regarded as public servants, and in time of peace treated as soldiers are in time of war-pensioned, if disabled, and their families provided for if they fall in the service.

By studying the Prussian educational system that was already successful, Stowe gained the foresight to identify factors that became important in education not only throughout the rest of the antebellum era, but later on into the twentieth century. Not long removed from a period where schools were largely viewed simply as a means to teach discipline and religion or at times were viewed as not important at all, Stowe


argued that teaching was important and that it should be a profession because “the wants of the country can never be adequately supplied till it is so.”

In the era before the formalization of schools, teaching positions were largely filled by farmers or tradesmen as a secondary occupation to supplement their main income. Having teachers who taught as a secondary occupation suggests that schools were not important enough in the public’s eye to have full time employees that dedicated their life’s work to their profession, the way lawyers, politicians, and other professionals did, which suggests that society did not view teaching as a legitimate and important career. The fact that farmers or tradesmen were filling these teaching positions further showed that teachers were not specifically trained, or even adequately educated themselves. Stowe’s hope to establish public support for normal schools was extremely difficult because of the public’s apathetic attitude towards the training of an occupation that previously required no formal training. The result, according the Samuel R. Hall, the man who eventually established the first seminary for teacher preparation, was that “there is not in our whole country one seminary where the educator of children can be thoroughly qualified for his important work.”

Stowe tried to completely reform the process of teacher training, as well as the public’s way of thinking, by not only making teaching a full time job, but also one that paid well and encouraged intelligent and qualified men to choose the profession over

---


other lucrative options. Furthermore, he recognized the difficulty of teaching, calling it a “laborious” profession, and even one that can “often bring on premature old age.” He was clearly attempting to raise public awareness of the importance and difficulty of teaching, arguing that societies should pay teachers more. His argument calling teachers “public servants” and comparing them to soldiers in time of war is a noteworthy and positive step in increasing the social standing of the profession. In context, he replaced the common held belief that teaching should merely be part time work, by saying it was the most essential of jobs. No one would argue against the importance of soldiers during a war, and Stowe argued a similar stance should be taken for teachers. His message was clear: teachers were absolutely necessary for the health of a society.

Although Stowe was not the first person to argue the merits of teacher preparation reform, his ideas nonetheless were put into action in the short term. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, the certification requirements and training of teachers increased significantly. With the knowledge of the future, it is both interesting and impressive that Stowe talked about issues facing teachers and raised questions that largely have gone unanswered for a century and a half.

Stowe’s advocacy for teaching seminaries became influential both within Ohio and in other states, but he was neither the first nor only prominent scholar to endorse the idea. In fact, the idea of teacher seminaries was first suggested by Denison Olmstad at an 1816 commencement address at Yale University. However, it was not until 1823 in Concord, Vermont that Reverend Samuel R. Hall established the first seminary for

---


teacher preparation. However, as educational historian Willard Elsbree argues, there was minimal improvement in the qualifications and general effectiveness of teachers from 1776 to 1836. According to Elsbree, advocacy and patience eventually paid off, and the period from 1836 to the Civil War represented “the most significant years in our whole history” from the standpoint of the teaching profession.\textsuperscript{30} In terms of the creation of teacher training institutes, Calvin Stowe was eventually successful in his plan. “From the standpoint of teachers,” according to historian Willard S. Elsbree, “the creation of normal schools was by far the most significant contribution of the period from 1836 to 1860.”\textsuperscript{31}

Another prominent leader who sought to change the status of the teaching profession from not well respected, poorly trained, and part time to well respected, sufficiently trained, and full time was Henry Barnard. His instructional 1859 book \textit{The Teacher}, provided a detailed outline of the characteristics of a quality teacher. It was much different in style and structure than Stowe’s report, but it essentially arrived at similar conclusions. The most immediately noticeable feature of the book was that it was remarkably detailed, seemingly leaving no issue of education unattended. Topics spanned a variety of issues including preferred pedagogy, proper teacher interactions with students, and even the proper physical construct of a classroom. Barnard speaks extensively about the importance of teachers working long and meaningful days, and the need to meticulously prepare teaching lessons. While Barnard does not necessarily make a succinct argument in this book, his motives are clear, as is the fact that Barnard shared Stowe’s views of holding the teaching profession in the highest regard. He respected the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30} Elsbree, \textit{The American Teacher}, 141.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Elsbree, \textit{The American Teacher}, 153.
\end{itemize}
importance and challenges that teachers faced, and the fact that they did so with inadequate preparation.

_Education Leaders and the Feminization of the Teaching Profession_

While the advocacy of teachers from Stowe and Barnard had a significant impact on the teaching profession from a standpoint of preparedness and effectiveness, it also influenced the feminization of teaching even if they did not directly address the issue of gender. Stowe and Barnard called for increased certification, higher pay, more accountability, and higher social status of teachers. If it were up to them, teaching would become a full time, well paying, highly respected profession, not merely a part time job or hobby. As schools formalized first in the Northeast then the Midwest and slowly in the South from the 1830s to the 1860s, this wish materialized.

However, the formalization and professionalization of the teaching profession indirectly ushered men away from the profession, while concurrently bringing females in. School formalization was in part a result of the increased public awareness of the importance of education, and thus the general support of schools. The effects of formalization, among many other characteristics, were the lengthening of the school year as well as the process of garnering teacher credentials. Schools were no longer part time for students or teachers. In many ways, the changes in this period created the bridge between schools pre-mid nineteenth century and schools as we know them today. The lengthening of the school year meant a more serious time commitment from men who were also farmers or tradesmen, a commitment they were largely not inclined to make because of the status and money other occupations offered. Similarly, the hassle of
garnering teacher credentials was not appealing for men who did not even consider their time in the classroom to be a legitimate job.\textsuperscript{32}

Furthermore, men were not making adequate salaries to support their families by teaching. As Lanford and Strober argue, even increased pay as a result of certification did not make a male teacher’s salary adequate to support a family. Men were able to make far more money in other fields, even as unskilled laborers. White, middle class women, on the other hand, often held economic positions of either supplementing their husband’s main income, or otherwise needing to support only themselves.\textsuperscript{33} In each of these cases, a teacher’s salary was satisfactory. When the certification requirements were raised by school districts and state legislatures across the country as a result of the movement to emphasize the importance teacher seminaries, the opportunity cost for men in the teaching profession, from a purely economic standpoint, was simply too great to remain as teachers. This economic phenomenon was one aspect of teacher reform that both Stowe and Barnard would not have condoned. They both felt that teachers ought to be paid high wages because they were so important to a society. Based on their written work and regardless of their position on gender, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs, adults leaving the profession or not entering the profession because it was not a good economic decision would have upset both Stowe and Barnard, who spent considerable time and effort persuading schools to pay teachers more.

\textsuperscript{32} The process of garnering teacher credentials and the decision of whether to do so will be discussed in further depth in the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{33} Strober and Lanford, “The Feminization of Public School Teaching,” 219.
While the preceding examples illustrate how reform strategies indirectly helped set in motion the feminization of teaching, some educational leaders were more direct in promoting the merits of female teachers. George Brewster, principal of the Cleveland Academy, advocated the importance of teacher qualifications that were stereotypically female. In his 1833 collection of essays entitled “Lectures on Education,” Brewster specifically addressed the qualities that were most needed among teachers, including patience, affection, love for the society of children, and uniformity of temper. These qualities clearly align themselves directly with female teachers because they are consistent with what historians have called the “Cult of Domesticity,” the gender rules that dominated at this time. As historian Barbara Welter has argued, women of the nineteenth century were expected, even demanded, to uphold the four cardinal virtues of piety, purity, submission, and domesticity. In order, these virtues respectively meant that women, mostly white, middle-class or elite, were expected to uphold religious faith and behavior, keep their virginity until they were married, be obedient to men because men were seen as superior, and make her living by tending to her home. Brewster’s identification of qualities teachers should possess is somewhat in conflict with the value of domesticity, but otherwise is consistent with the expectations of women according to the “Cult of Domesticity.” Women’s perceived natural abilities to care for and raise their children to be successful adults and citizens was being transferred to the classroom in the eyes of Brewster and others, and thus women were the more qualified teachers.


Furthermore, the perception that women were more pure and pious made them attractive teaching candidates because of the strong connection between the common schools of the antebellum era and a curriculum centered heavily on religion and morality. Thus, Brewster’s argument for teachers needing to be patient, affectionate, lovers of children, and uniform of temper clearly seemed to align with what were seen as uniquely female traits in the antebellum United States.

Eventually, Barnard also supported the idea of female teachers filling jobs in the lower grades. In his 1840 “Second Annual Report,” Barnard resists the practice of low pay for female teachers, and makes his position on female teachers obvious.

I am aware that there are many unqualified teachers among the females who have been employed as such in the common schools; but as a class, they manifest a livelier interest, more contentment in the work, have altogether superior success in managing and instructing young children, and I know of instances, where by the silken cord of affection, have led many a stubborn will, and wild, ungoverned impulse, into habits of obedience and study even in the large winter schools. But this last is not their sphere of usefulness. And it is necessary to modify the practice, and the arrangement of school districts, so as to constitute a class of primary schools for small children, and then to employ the same teacher, if found qualified, through the year, before the superior efficiency of woman, in the holy ministry of education, can be exerted and felt.

Barnard makes his position clear that he supports the idea of females teaching lower grades. He even advocates for the rearrangement of schools in order to efficiently utilize the employment of female teachers. Horace Mann voiced a similar opinion in 1846, when he said in the Common School Journal that

Reason and experience have long since demonstrated that children under ten or twelve years of age can be more genially taught and more successfully governed

---

36 Elsbree, The American Teacher, 200

by a female than by a male teacher. Six or eight years ago when the employment of female teachers was recommended to school committees, not a little was said against the adoption of the suggestion. But one committee after another was induced to try the experiment, and the success has been so great that the voice of opposition is now silenced.38

Mann mirrors Barnard’s position that women are uniquely qualified to teach younger children, an idea that helped to explain gender pay gaps, and will be explored further in the following chapters. In sum, these quotes show that although men like Stowe, Barnard, and Mann originally set their aim on school formalization, the pattern of feminization of teaching as a result of school formalization was one that they were willing to accept and support.

_Harmony or Conflict?_

The essential historical question to consider is whether the importance Stowe and Barnard attempted to place upon the teaching profession was duplicated by others. Specifically, was their emphasis on the importance of teaching supported by the feminization of teaching, or in conflict with it? Many people in the antebellum era thought that the professionalization of teaching and the influx of female teachers were a harmonious phenomenon. An 1850 version of the monthly teacher newsletter _The Ohio Teacher_ took a straightforward position on the matter. The unnamed author of an article simply titled “Female Teachers” drew a simple yet direct correlation between the success of schools and the number of female teachers employed, using the example set by the state of Massachusetts. The author contended that Massachusetts educated students at the highest level, and “much of her success may be attributed to the fact that she employs

---

38 Horace Mann, _Common School Journal_, Vol. VIII (1846), 117.
more than twice as many female, as male teachers.” While this alone merely represents the author’s opinion that female teachers were more suited to teach than males, the article was significant in context because the author also advocated preparing teachers better and paying them more. This example shows that at least some people drew the connection between the feminization and professionalization of teaching.

An additional factor that increased the amount of females attempting to enter the teaching profession was the increase of academies and seminaries that served the purpose of educating females. During the forty years between 1790 and 1830, just 14 seminaries were established across the country for women, but from 1830 and 1860 at least 158 were established in just thirty years. As these female seminaries increased in popularity, their curriculums slowly became to mirror men’s, but there were still specific subjects that were more likely to be taught to women, such as science. Educated females were taught subjects such as science so they could be successful mothers that were able to educate their sons, but also to separate their elite status from other social classes, and thus promote the class interests of the elite class. Ultimately, in terms of the effect on education in general, these seminaries exponentially increased the amount of educated women in the country, and thus the amount of females that were qualified and interested in a career of teaching.

Perhaps the biggest proponent for the joint advocacy of female and professional teachers was Calvin Stowe’s sister-in-law, Catharine Beecher. Beecher was known as an

39 “Female Teachers,” The Ohio Teacher, (1850).

educational reformer in her own right, advocating for the interrelation of disciplines, the importance of physical education in schools, and for the change of assessments to be more communication based. Beecher was also a strong supporter of women dominating the workplace and increasing their presence in the teaching profession. She argued that teaching was “women’s natural vocation.” She believed that school teaching was a means for women to increase their cultural hegemony, but she also believed in gender stereotypes that were common in the period. She said that women’s knowledge “is not like the knowledge of men, to be reproduced in some literary composition, or some learned profession, but is to come out in conduct.” Interestingly, these quotes show that Beecher obviously wanted to improve the possibilities for women and increase their social status, but it also shows that she bought into many of the ideas Welter talks about in “The Cult of Domesticity.”

Beecher thought that the feminization of teaching was a positive development for schools. In her 1829 book *Suggestions Respecting Improvements in Education*, she said that standards of schools were too low, and were caused by the fact that anyone was able to become a teacher, that these teachers were poorly paid, and finally that teaching was considered “a drudgery suited only to inferior minds.” This chain of cause and effects created poor results from schools, and thus hurt the public’s perception of school quality. In terms of teacher training and professionalization, Beecher wanted female schools

---


42 Preston, “Domestic Ideology”, 533.

43 Preston, “Domestic Ideology”, 534.

comparable to male schools such as Brown University and Harvard University, not simply schools that only train and prepare teachers.\footnote{Preston, “Domestic Ideology”, 539.} She felt that schools dedicated to general female education and those dedicated specifically to training teachers should not be separate. In her view, women would be able to attend these female classes, and there would have the option to pursue education and preparation necessary to become a school teacher, much the way institutions of higher learning are structured today, only with the obvious difference of gender separation.

Ultimately, the professionalization of teaching was a key factor in the formalization of schools. Men like Stowe, who pushed for teaching seminaries, along with the support of those in the education field and general citizens, completely reformed the way teachers were trained and prepared. Teacher preparation academies were instituted throughout the country through both public and private funding, and teaching eventually became a full time job, a victory for Stowe. However, teaching remained a relatively low paying job in part because of the influx of women into the profession. Perhaps the feminization of teaching was inevitable, because, as historian Sarah Montgomery argues, there is no one single issue that caused men to leave the profession and women to enter, but rather a series of factors.\footnote{Montgomery, “Why Men Left,” 220.} Regardless, the feminization of teaching was certainly correlated to the professionalization of teaching, which leaders like Stowe and Barnard likely did not anticipate.

While concentrating on increasing the standards and expectations of teachers, both of these men focused on a variety of factors. As described earlier, Barnard’s book...
The Teacher was so detail-oriented that it laid out teachers plans for intricate issues such as the physical lay-out of a classroom. Likewise, Stowe gave detailed reports for the scope and sequence of creating teaching seminaries nationwide. Both of these men were serious and concerned about the teaching profession, and equally determined to reform it. However, neither addressed the feminization of teaching before it actually happened.\footnote{As shown, Barnard did address and support female teachers, but only after the feminization of teaching had taken place.} For men as influential and educated as Stowe and Barnard to not address an educational phenomenon as significant as the drastic feminization of teaching that was occurring right before their eyes, the only logical conclusion is that they either did not foresee it, or initially did not support it. The fact that their works exclusively used male pronouns further shows that they originally viewed teaching as a man’s job. Likewise, they did not make an active effort to recruit female teachers, which would show their support for the feminization of teaching. Thus, the ultimate relationship between Stowe, Barnard, and the feminization of teaching is that they did not anticipate it, but their goals were at times supportive of feminization, and at times in conflict with it. The feminization and the professionalization of teaching were generally in agreement with one another. The obvious exception to this rule was teacher salary, as the professionalization of teaching, as advocated by Stowe and Barnard, sought to increase teacher’s salaries, while the feminization of teaching indirectly drove down teacher’s wages.
CHAPTER TWO

SCHOOL FORMALIZATION AND THE CULTURE OF BENEVOLENCE

As schools became formalized in the years between 1830 and 1850, the teacher preparation academies that were deemed so important by Calvin Stowe and Henry Barnard became increasingly popular throughout the country. As a direct result, certification requirements increased and the hiring process itself became more formal. Teachers were no longer male farmers or tradesmen simply looking for part time work in their off-season to supplement their income; they were now trained professionals looking for full time work in the newly formed career of teaching. After completing work in teacher seminaries, teachers were often recruited by school leaders and administrators, and needed to complete a formal interview process that began to resemble teacher interviews witnessed in modern America. In short, the profession had become just that: professional. Teaching was slowly becoming a legitimate career option, and teachers were increasingly well trained and educated citizens that truly sought to provide a service to their communities. Despite of all this, teacher salaries remained stagnant. As shown in the previous chapter, society was making substantial progress in its attitudes and treatment of schools and teachers, but a myriad of social and economic factors allowed teachers to remain marginally paid. This lack of substantial pay is revealing in understanding the role and status of teachers in the antebellum era.

Another result of school formalization was that schools were now using public funds. Tax-paying citizens, especially those who only recently began to support the idea of public schooling, had an expectation that these funds would be used efficiently. Thus,
some historians have argued that schools naturally began to use the business model of looking to cut costs wherever possible. For some, a common way to cut costs was to hire female teachers, and pay them less than their male counterparts. Samuel Lewis, an educational reformer who served as state superintendent in Ohio, made this simple economic argument by saying that counties employing female teachers “are able to do twice as much with the same money as is done in the counties where female teachers are almost excluded.” Some historians have used evidence such as this to argue that the formalization of schools directly drove down teacher salaries.

This chapter will serve two main purposes. First it will examine the effects that the formalization of schools and the professionalization of teaching had on different aspects of the profession, including teacher certification, recruitment, and hiring. Second, it will show that despite the formalization and increased amount of preparation to become a teacher, teacher compensation remained low. To that end, this chapter will outline the work of other historians in explaining this lack of substantial pay, and will also offer the nineteenth century’s culture of benevolence as an additional factor that contributed to the low pay of teachers following the formalization of schools. Teachers began to view themselves the same ways social activists of the time period did, and thus were willing to work for low wages. This culture of benevolence was yet another factor that created a “perfect storm” of events that allowed females to dominate the teaching profession.

Teacher Certification

Certification was the first area where much progress was made as a result of school formalization between the 1830s and 1860s. With the rise of teacher preparation schools, government institutions were now certifying teachers formally. However, in contrast to modern arrangements with states having the power to certify professionals, teachers in the nineteenth century were first certified by more localized institutions. For example, in Ohio, teachers were evaluated and thereby certified by counties. Some states, including New Jersey, placed the responsibility of evaluating teachers on the towns that employed them.49

Figure 1: 1859 certificate from Wayne County, Ohio, certifying Benjamin Jones.50

49 Elsbree, The American Teacher, 179.

50 Wayne County Board of Examiners. “Benjamin Jones Teacher’s Certificate.” Wayne County, State of Ohio, January 29, 1859. Benjamin T. Jones Papers, 1855-1906, Western Reserve Historical Society Archives Library, Box 1, Folder 7, Manuscripts Collection, Cleveland, Ohio.
The prerequisite licensing bodies examined in potential candidates generally fell into three broad categories: good moral character, capacity to govern a school, and suitable academic attainments. For the first two requirements, rather modern forms of evaluation were used. Candidates were often asked by administrators and interviewees to supply letters of recommendation that defended their good moral character. This was especially true of regions like the Northeast where religion played a more prominent role in the classroom and curriculum, compared to more secular districts, perhaps in the Midwest. In formal interview scenarios, candidates were also often asked questions


52 Elsbree, The American Teacher, 179.
about their morality as well as how they would educate children with different personalities and levels of ability. According to the *Maine School Report* in 1848, common questions included:

What method or methods would you adopt in order to inculcate the principles of morality, justice, truth, humanity, industry, and temperance?

What significance do you attach to each of the above terms?

How would you deal with a child who was (1) obstinately disobedient? (2) physically and mentally indolent? (3) addicted to falsehood? (4) impulsive? Not only were teachers influenced into the profession by a sense of morality or benevolence, but administrators expected these traits from the teachers they would hire.

Figure 3: Letter of recommendation recommending Benjamin Jones to the Ashland, Ohio school district. 

---

In terms of the final requirement, formal tests were administered by counties nationwide to ensure that teacher candidates possessed the required knowledge to adequately teach. Reading, writing, and arithmetic, known as the “3 R’s” of nineteenth century common schools, were tested almost universally for teachers nationwide. In some areas with larger schools or simply stricter requirements, teachers were also tested in other subjects such as grammar, orthography, and geography. These tests were regularly administered to teachers on an annual basis, as opposed to one passing grade being able to serve throughout a teacher’s career, as is customary in American schools today.  

Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate the specificity of these teacher licenses. The first image, from 1859, is a teacher certificate from Wayne County in the State of Ohio, and certified that Benjamin Jones passed examinations in the prescribed content areas, and also that he was of good moral character. Jones was an Ohio resident that taught throughout the state, and later served as a principal and superintendent in several school districts. His movement from teacher to administrator is a common path for men in the nineteenth century, and will be explored much more thoroughly in the following chapter. The text on the top of the certificate notes that the license was valid for twelve months, which shows the regularity of these early examinations. The second certificate, from 1884, is from Bellaire, Ohio. The examination scores this time were out of a possible perfect score of 100, which shows that the process evolved from 1859 to 1884 by becoming more precise in the grading method, and thus more formalized. The certificate

---

54 Millersburg, Ohio citizens to Ashland, Ohio Board of Education, June 15, 1876, Benjamin T. Jones Papers, 1855-1906, Western Reserve Historical Society Archives Library, Manuscripts Collection, Box 1, Folder 7, Cleveland, Ohio.
leaves a blank place in the spot where the gendered pronoun appears, which shows that female teachers became more common towards the end of the nineteenth century. The word “his”, which obviously appears on Jones’ certificate, was no longer appropriate in every case. Ultimately, these certificates show that the process of becoming a teacher was now an accountable and formalized one.

As teacher preparation examinations became more popular, candidates eventually had the opportunity to effectively plan and prepare for these tests. Isaac Stone, a man who served both as a teacher and principal at Kenosha High School in New York, created a book in 1864 that served as an aid for teacher candidates attempting to pass these examinations. The book compiles more than twenty five hundred questions that Stone found typical of teacher examinations through his twenty years of experience as a principal and superintendent. Interestingly, Stone found motivation to write such a book to aid in what he viewed as deficient test scores among candidates. In the preface of the book, he states “By being thorough and rigid in questioning yourself by the use of this work, you may not only save the examiner the painful emotions in rejecting you, but also your own mortification from the disgrace of your failure.”

In his introduction, Stone noted the low passage rates of these tests, and reminded teachers that they should not attempt to teach a subject in which they are deficient. The following are a few of the hundreds of sample questions Stone included in his book.

Geography: 1. What is a sphere? What is the diameter of a sphere?

15. Name all the Lake and principal rivers.

---

56 Isaac Stone, *The elementary and Complete Examiner, Candidate’s assistant*: Chicago, xi. Hereafter cited as *The Elementary and Complete Examiner*. 
Penmanship: 3. What should be taught first, knowledge of forms, or command of the pen?

Arithmetic: 6. How many ways may 6x4 be multiplied together? (72)

3. What is the difference between the greatest common divisor and the least common multiple? (119)  

As these examinations became more popular, teachers were expected to answer specific questions in a broad range of academic disciplines, including but not limited to geography, penmanship, and arithmetic. These questions represent a minor sample in his exhaustive book, but nonetheless provide some insight to the complexity and broad range of questions that teachers faced in their preparatory examinations.

Along with the evolving landscape of the certification process, the recruitment process of teachers also changed along with the formalization of the teaching profession. For school leaders assigned to the task of recruiting and hiring teachers, gender became a significant issue. The issue of gender preference of teachers is important in understanding society’s attitudes towards teachers. Some areas fully embraced the trend of female teachers, and even argued that women were more naturally suited for the profession. These ideas were displayed by the gender expectations of women during that time, and were even agreed upon by women such as Catharine Beecher, who argued that teaching was “women’s natural vocation.” Many citizens around the country bought into this idea of women being better teachers. Records from this era show us that some schools, when seeking new teachers, specifically sought out females. As historian

---

57 Stone, The elementary and complete examiner, 42.

JoAnne Preston argues, as the nineteenth century progressed, teaching became women’s work “not only statistically, but ideologically and prescriptively as well.”

Traits of “intellectual superiority, emotional restraint, and physical dominance” that were once deemed as most important for teachers were now being replaced with “emotionality, maternal love, gentleness, and moral superiority.” Ideologically, for many, teaching was becoming a profession that was best performed by females.

Some schools did not bother with stereotyped qualities and were direct in which gender they wished to employ as teachers at their school. An 1848 advertisement in the *Vermont Watchman and State Journal* specified that it was looking for “a lady who is a competent English scholar, skilled in music and other branches of female education and experienced in teaching.” An 1843 advertisement in the Washington, DC paper *Daily National Intelligencer* also sought a female teacher in Kent County, Maryland to teach English, French, Music, and Drawing. Conversely, other newspaper advertisements in similar years specifically requested male teachers. An 1850 advertisement in Washington DC’s newspaper “Daily National Intelligencer”, asked for a man to take over the math and English courses of a school in Charlotte, North Carolina. In 1840, the trustees of the Leasville Academy in Rockingham County, North Carolina similarly sought a male

---


60 Preston, “Domestic Ideology,” 532.


teacher to lead their school, offering “liberal wages.”\textsuperscript{64} This advertisement notably specified that the school pursued only married men to fill their teaching vacancy. Perhaps the school administrators sought a male that conveyed the image of stability, which is why they preferred a married man. These advertisements show that certain schools had preferences in the gender of their teachers. Gender was a key issue in the recruitment process of a teacher.

While some areas, as evidenced, actively welcomed female teachers, in other areas it was not such a smooth process. Scattered districts across the country despised the idea of replacing male teachers with female teachers, and reacted in several ways. Some, mostly unsuccessfully, tried to continue the practice of having men teach part time with small salaries. Others recruited mainly young males who were not economically responsible for a family, and thus were able to take low paying teaching jobs. Richard Rust, New Hampshire’s commissioner of common schools from 1848 to 1850, conceded that women had the necessary traits of kindness, patience, and purity to be successful teachers, but their lack of “literary acquirements, aptness to teach, and ability to govern a school” were absent\textsuperscript{65}. Rust was an example of a school leader who directly shared his preference for male teachers. Even amongst those who preferred male teachers, however, the overwhelming reaction was to hire female teachers anyway, simply as a means to save money.\textsuperscript{66}


\textsuperscript{65} Preston, “Domestic Ideology,” 541.

\textsuperscript{66} Preston, “Domestic Ideology,” 538.
Compensation

The discussion of how gender and the formalization of schools affected the certification and recruitment of teachers directly leads into the topic that historians have been most interested in: teacher compensation. Despite the fact that the formalization of schools made the process of becoming a teacher more difficult and strenuous and teachers became formally trained and certified, pay remained low. Historically, teachers have been poorly paid in comparison to professionals in other fields. This is true of both male and female teachers. Male teachers in urban areas made just 20% of the salaries of experienced civil engineers during the antebellum era.\footnote{Susan B. Carter, “Incentives and Rewards to Teaching.” In American Teachers: Histories of a Profession at Work, edited by Donald Warren, 49-65. Macmillan Pub Co., 1989, 49. Hereafter cited as “Incentives and Rewards to Teaching.”} In rural areas, male teachers in the same time period made just 85% of the earning of unskilled male laborers.\footnote{Carter, “Incentives and Rewards to Teaching,” 49.} And while male teachers were earning what many felt were unfairly low salaries, female teachers had it much worse. In 1841, female teachers in rural areas nationwide made just 60% of what their male peers earned, and this number plummeted to just 37% in urban school districts.\footnote{Elsbree, The American Teacher, 274.} Furthermore, wages in comparison to careers in law and medicine fared even worse. The opening decades of the nineteenth century had a large population of men who taught for short amounts of time while preparing for careers as lawyers.\footnote{Elsbree, The American Teacher, 93.}

In terms of raw numbers, female teachers in Massachusetts earned $11.96 per month on average in 1835, while their male counterparts made $18.34. Thus, in 1835,
women teachers in Massachusetts were making roughly 65% of male teacher’s pay. By 1850, both men and women were making less. Women were down to $10.15, while men took a slight decline as well, to $17.20 per month. While both male and females took a pay cut as teaching became more professionalized, females took a larger percentage cut. In 1850, females were making just 59% or what males were making, as opposed to the 65% from fifteen years prior.\textsuperscript{71} These wage percentages and proportions show us that women were likely making just a fraction, perhaps a quarter, of the money made by unskilled male laborers.

The lack of substantial pay of teachers in New Hampshire in comparison to other professions led one state school board member to remark that “the salary of a common foot soldier in the United States Army is greater than the salary of the best female teacher in the public schools of New Hampshire and we pay a bookkeeper more than the president of a college.”\textsuperscript{72} However, while isolated educational leaders perceived low teacher pay as a problem, the average citizen did not. In an editorial essay entitled “Teachers’ Compensation, No. II.”, an anonymous writer makes his case for the benefits of paying teachers more, but acknowledges the fact that his views are not shared by most citizens, and specifically by the parents of students. The essay appeared in the May 1837 version of the monthly paper called \textit{Common School Assistant}. Speaking of low teacher pay, the author says

…few parents perceive the bad effects of giving low wages to teachers…It prevents young men from obtaining proper qualifications-it makes teachers indifferent and unfaithful in their employment-it makes them dislike their

\textsuperscript{71} Elsbree, \textit{The American Teacher}, 430.

\textsuperscript{72} Elsbree, \textit{The American Teacher}, 281.
business, and anxious for some other occupation-it puts men in our schools who are lazy and ignorant-it makes teaching a temporary business for a few idle months, and teaching a profession low and disreputable. These are some of the evils which make our schools, in a great measure, useless compared with what they might be, -evils which arise from giving teachers too small a compensation.73

The author also argued that paying teachers high salaries was a public investment in the future, because higher pay meant better quality teachers, which obviously in turn eventually led to better academic results.

While it is apparent that teachers, both male and female, made low salaries in the antebellum era, the question remains: Why was this the case? Historians have answered this question many different ways. One interesting perspective is that the formalization of schools created a not only a gender hierarchy in education, but also a bureaucracy in education with newly formed administrative jobs. The bureaucracy in education did not create the gender gap in pay, but it certainly exacerbated it in two main ways. First, it created a hierarchy of administrative positions that were largely filled by men for reasons that will be explored in more depth in the following chapter. These jobs were higher paying than classroom teaching jobs, which in turn made males in education more highly paid than females, simply based on the types of jobs they held. Secondly, the formalization of schools led school districts to adopt official school policies on how teachers would be compensated. These policies, called salary schedules, paid teachers more based on their education, experience, and level of teaching, among other factors.74

Each of these criteria for pay essentially favored men because of the nature of the path


men took to become teachers. Other examples of institutional gender discrimination that allowed men to make more than women were also present, but it should be understood that the bureaucracy of education helped to create the system of teachers making low wages.

Some historians have made the simple connection that school formalization caused men to leave and women to enter the profession, and thus drove wages down. Historian Sarah Montgomery calls this the “traditional approach” and refutes this claim by arguing that this simplistic view is unfair and untrue.\textsuperscript{75} I will agree with and build upon Montgomery’s argument, and offer a consideration of benevolence as an additional argument towards the complexity of issues that contributed to the low wages that teachers made even after the formalization of the profession. The culture of benevolence that historians have identified as being important in explaining the actions of various types of social activists in the nineteenth century also applied to teachers. While many felt that teaching was a public service, many teachers also thought that they were “doing God’s work” by educating youth. In the 1840s and 1850s, schools were still heavily tied to religion and morality, in terms of both curriculum and customs. Teachers were able to justify their low salaries because they felt a sense of satisfaction in the morality and servitude of their work. While some historians such as JoAnne Preston have argued that some female teachers did, in fact, routinely fight for higher wages, the fact that pay remained low and women began to dominate the teaching profession suggests that, in large, females tolerated their low wages in part because they saw themselves as actors in the culture of benevolence.

\textsuperscript{75} Montgomery, “Why Men Left,” 220.
Teachers and the Culture of Benevolence

Jennie Lines, a schoolteacher in both New York and later Georgia from the 1850s to the 1880s, shows how feelings of benevolence play out first hand. Writing to her sister in 1852 upon receiving her first teaching job, Lines speaks about how she feels “very ambitious to raise myself a little and to be something in the world.” Furthermore, although she is not yet confident in her teaching ability, Lines says of her days teaching in New York that “the Lord has given her a field for labor and usefulness.” Thomas Dyer contends that Lines “displayed a remarkable piety that conformed with the "true womanhood" beliefs, and she tended to view women as special guardians of virtue.” Dyer goes on to argue that Lines’ case is the norm, and essentially that her autobiography and journals display many common beliefs held by middle class women in the nineteenth century. Women such as Blandina Segale, who taught in New Mexico throughout the mid nineteenth century for virtually no pay support Dyer’s point. The formalization of schools created teaching jobs around the country that were filled by women like Lines, and thus allowed these women to achieve this sense of usefulness, that otherwise would have remained unfulfilled.

Lines’ accounts also provide insight into the idea that female teachers rationalized their low pay by comparing themselves to other public servants. After moving to

---


77 Lines, To Raise Myself a Little, 21.

78 Lines, To Raise Myself a Little, 3.

Georgia, she wrote letters to her sister sympathizing with the brutal treatment of slaves, and acknowledging the important work of abolitionists.\textsuperscript{80} Concurrently, although she recognizes that she does not have the most favorable living conditions or pay, she merely acknowledges this fact, as opposed to complain about it.\textsuperscript{81} In a diary entry titled “Wednesday 15\textsuperscript{th},” she explains how some circumstances have caused her to board with a thirteen year old female student, but simply that the girl “is very social and appears to make herself quite at home with everyone.”\textsuperscript{82} Lines’ consistent references to duty and religion throughout her letters and diaries show that she feels a true sense of benevolence in her work, and her inclusion of thoughts towards abolitionists helps to explain her general acceptance of poor compensation and living conditions.

Lines’ experience and pursuit of knowledge was fairly typical of women in the nineteenth century. While women during this period still had social gender stereotypes of being nurturing and virtuous, these duties often expanded beyond the domestic sphere and onto a larger scale. John Rury contends that “female reform activities became associated with the amelioration of social ills.”\textsuperscript{83} Furthermore, in order to fulfill these duties, women needed to be educated, and have “highly refined organizational skills, advanced literacy and analytical capacities.”\textsuperscript{84} Not only did the need for educated females increase the amount of females in schools, but it also gave female teachers a

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{80} Lines, \textit{To Raise Myself a Little}, 10.
\bibitem{81} Lines, \textit{To Raise Myself a Little}, 16.
\bibitem{82} Lines, \textit{To Raise Myself a Little}, 108.
\bibitem{84} Rury, \textit{Education and Social Change}, 111.
\end{thebibliography}
more defined role in this social reform and culture of benevolence era. Teachers not only saw themselves as comparable to other social activists, but also as supporters of the reform system through their education of other females.

The majority of teachers in the nineteenth century were well aware of their low pay. “The Teacher’s Rewards”, an 1851 essay written by a teacher, acknowledges the low pay of the profession, but persuades teachers to not be discouraged. The essay, which appeared in the publication *The Massachusetts Teacher*, essentially was a pep talk to fellow teachers, asking them to continue to work hard and not expect a monetary reward, because the true rewards of being a teacher cannot be shown monetarily. The author reminds the reader that “a teacher who is worthy of his profession neither expects or seeks compensation in a salary. He knows that no salary can equal in worth the value of his toils.” Furthermore, the author tells the teachers that only when “you appear before your Judge”, will you “receive final and complete compensation.”\(^8^5\) The author is arguing that although teachers do not make a significant monetary salary, the benefits of their job are intrinsic, and extend even beyond their lifetimes.

The important precedent that this essay sets is that teachers were morally “above” salaries. The fact their work was so important that it will benefit them before God after their death, puts the issue of salary into perspective. This particular teacher feels that monetary salary is such an insignificant issue because of the far more important benefits of teaching. Their work was so heavily tied to morality and benevolence that no teacher would enter the profession simply looking for substantial compensation. This author’s

---

\(^8^5\) “The Teacher’s Rewards,” *The Massachusetts Teacher (1848-1855)*, vol. 4, no. 4, (April 1851); 118-120.
words help to explain the actions of teachers like Jennie Lines and Blandina Segale, and their willingness to work for low wages and poor conditions. Teachers, and especially female teachers, saw themselves as both public servants as well as servants to God, and these feelings made wages an issue that they were not concerned with.

The motives of teachers often changed throughout the nineteenth century. Women in the first few decades of the nineteenth century wrote about their goals as teachers primarily in religious terms, but beginning in the 1840s this religious language often transformed into humanitarian and specifically benevolent rhetoric. In her May 29, 1838 entry into her personal diary, Fanny May Holmes spoke of her teaching by saying “again I have been permitted to meet with my school to instruct immortal minds and prepare them in some measure to go forward in the various duties of life. Oh that I might so instruct them, that they may become useful members of society-doing much good in their day and generation.” Charlotte Forten also focused on more humanitarian goals, saying she wanted to “live for the good that I can do my oppressed and suffering fellow creatures.” Angelina Grimke, a prospective student at Catharine Beecher’s Hartford Female Seminary, wrote in 1831 that Beecher’s students, “though quite independent” financially, “had become teachers simply from the wish of being useful.” Each of these diary excerpts support the notion that while female teachers had moral


87 Biklen, School Work, 57.

88 Biklen, School Work, 58.

89 Biklen, School Work, 55.
motives for teaching throughout the nineteenth century, these specific reasons changed from purely religious to simply benevolence and usefulness as the century progressed.

The culture of benevolence in the nineteenth century contributed to the fact that despite the formalization of schools and the teaching profession, teacher wages remained low in the nineteenth century. In sum, these examples show that morality certainly played a role in the mindsets of teachers, and especially female teachers, in the antebellum years. Much the same way as abolitionists, female teachers saw themselves as pious individuals who were using their natural skills to perform an important social service; teachers felt a similar sense of pride and purpose in their work. Although no teachers intentionally sought to drive down wages, their willingness to work for low wages because of their sense of benevolence created a pattern of low teacher pay that proceeded for years to come. The intersection of the culture of benevolence, the formalization of schools, and the feminization of teaching created a perfect storm of events that allowed these female teachers to fill an important public need in a profession that was newly respected, and do so in a manner that was congruent with their wish to lead pious lives. Collectively, these factors gave teachers intrinsic rewards that far outweighed the need for higher monetary salaries.

The fact that each of the aforementioned examples of teachers complying with the rhetoric of benevolence is females shows that while benevolence was indeed significant, the availability of teaching jobs to women in great numbers allowed for these women to see themselves as players in the culture of benevolence. The question of opportunity cost for males and females to remain in this pious position of low paid teacher becomes an issue that presents itself in the ensuing years.
CHAPTER THREE

MALE ADMINISTRATORS: BENEFACTORS OF DISCRIMINATION

If the widespread entrance of women into the teaching profession was more complicated than simply a cause of women being willing to work for low wages, as the previous chapter acknowledges and builds upon, the question is still worth consideration from the opposite perspective. As teaching became a full time profession and there was an enormous influx of women that were eager to teach, how viable of an option was teaching for men? Did men simply leave the profession because they could not make adequate wages while teaching full time? Moreover, was this a conscious choice made by men, or a choice forced upon them due the declined market wages of teachers?

The feminization of teaching has been studied less frequently and less thoroughly from a male as opposed to a female perspective. Sarah Montgomery, among others, have paid female teachers their due respect by acknowledging that there were far more factors that contributed to women entering the teaching profession other than simply money. However, the entrance of females into the profession does not, in itself, explain the mass exodus of males, because it suggests that men exited with no resistance, and thus had no intrinsic attachment to their jobs as teachers. This chapter views the feminization of teaching from the eyes of the men whose jobs as classroom teachers were now largely extinct. Much the way that Montgomery argued for the complexity of issues that allowed for the entrance of females into the teaching profession, this chapter will outline the variety of factors that caused men to leave.
Teaching became a less attractive career option for men in antebellum America for reasons other than simply economics. Most significantly, the formalization of the school system created a bureaucracy of jobs, and men were given opportunities in the field of education beyond classroom teaching that dually fed their desire to have a place in education while also offering them the practical and intrinsic rewards that met their gender stereotyped needs in the 19th century. These administrative jobs were often available only to men. Thus, much the way that there was a “perfect storm” of factors that led to the entrance of women into the profession, so too were there reasons for men to consciously choose to leave. Men were not simply “bought out” by cheaper labor, as the ensuing chapter will show.

Climbing the Career Ladder in Education- 3 Models

Historian David Labaree identified three main ways that educators climbed the career ladder in the nineteenth century. The three ways teachers made more money or held more prestigious positions were by moving from the country to the city, by teaching higher grades within the same schools, and by moving from teaching to administration. In general, regardless of which of these models the individual prescribed to, all educators looking for promotion were seeking two main things: better pay and better working conditions. An analysis of each of these three models makes it clear that a system was created in the nineteenth century that allowed women to hold standard teaching jobs, but made it difficult for them to be promoted from that point. Each of these three models presents serious obstacles for women.

The country to city model, according to Labaree, was a route that many teachers took because teachers in urban areas made more money, but also had more professional freedom in what subjects they were able to teach. Due to the difference in school size, urban teachers also taught in larger schools with larger faculties, which was often also attractive to teachers. This model of professional growth favored men because women often did not have the geographical mobility that men had. Married women may not have had the power to move their family in a situation where the husband had a job elsewhere. Furthermore, single women were often the teachers with the least amount of training. Many single women were products of normal schools that allowed them to teach immediately after finishing their own schooling with minimal teacher education. This method of becoming a teacher, however, only qualified the women to teach in the district in which they attended school, which obviously constrained their job mobility.\textsuperscript{91} School districts also exploited women by paying them less because of their lack of education and qualifications.

The biggest barrier for women in Labaree’s second model, the school mobility model of moving from elementary to secondary to higher education, was gender stereotypes of the nineteenth century. While the cultural ideology of the teaching profession had changed dramatically in the 1830s and 1840s to favor more stereotypical female traits, the perceived lack of ability to discipline still plagued female teachers. This notion allowed females to completely take over teaching younger students, but allowed more men to remain as teachers in the higher grades. Additionally, teaching high school

\textsuperscript{91} Perlmann and Margo, \textit{Women’s Work}, 122-123.
was substantially more lucrative than teaching elementary school.\textsuperscript{92} Thus, the stereotype of women not being able to teach older students as effectively as younger ones hindered their ability to be promoted and therefore make more money.

Labaree’s final model for professional growth in the field of education in the nineteenth century was from teaching to the administrative field. This model was not only the most common way that teachers sought new jobs in the field of education, but also presented the most serious obstacles for women. By 1888, after the formalization of schools had occurred nationwide, men represented just 33\% of the teaching population, but 96\% of the school administrators and policy makers.\textsuperscript{93} The combination of blatant gender discrimination and a structure of incentives that heavily favored males allowed for the newly formed jobs in education administration to be as uniquely male as the profession of teaching was female.

\textit{Institutional Resistance for Female Administrators}

Economists Joel Perlmann and Robert Margo conducted a quantitative study in 2001 to test the importance of certain variables on the likelihood of teachers being promoted to administrative positions. Examining the metropolitan cities of Houston, Texas, Portland, Oregon, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Paterson, New Jersey, they concluded that teaching experience and education were positively correlated to both pay and the likelihood of promotion for both men and women teachers. For men, additional

\textsuperscript{92} Labaree, “Career Ladders,” 174.

years of teaching experience was the most important factor when seeking promotion. For women, this pattern was also true, albeit at a slower rate. Ultimately, however, gender was more positively associated with the likelihood of a certain teacher in being promoted than any other factor, including education and experience. For example, Perlmann and Margo concluded that in Grand Rapids, gender discrimination accounted for 27% of teacher promotions, when all other factors were equal. These patterns were especially true in large, urban districts where the formalization of schools happened more rapidly, and thus more bureaucratic positions were available.

The term “men manage, women teach” became increasingly true and began to dominate American public school systems as the second half of the nineteenth century commenced. The formalization of schools created a bureaucracy and hierarchy in education, and women were clearly far less likely to fill these newly formed administrative jobs. While Margo and Perlmann established that blatant gender discrimination was an issue for females hoping to become administrators, the far larger obstacle was the system of discriminatory institutional promotion practices that heavily favored men. The gender segregation in the newly formed bureaucracy of schools where women taught lower grades and men taught higher grades and managed schools was not random, but rather the consequence of institutional policies that allowed men to occupy the most sought after positions in the field of education.

94 Which is to say that if one additional year of teaching experience made men “X”% more likely to be promoted, it also benefitted women, but at a smaller rate than “X”%.

95 Perlmann and Margo, *Women’s Work?*, 120-121.

96 Perlmann and Margo, *Women’s Work?*, 111.

Women around the country faced a system of promotion that clearly favored men without seeming to be blatantly discriminatory. For example, many districts used a meritocratic system that promoted teachers based on their education. Throughout the nineteenth century, men were more likely than women to be college graduates, which gave them the advantage in teaching higher grades, and thus competing for a position in administration.\textsuperscript{98} Whether or not it was their direct intention to promote men and keep women as teachers, districts were able to promote men based on a meritocratic system that inherently favored males.

Paul Hanus, a Prussian immigrant in the 1850s, took full advantage of the educational opportunities he had as a male. Hanus began his career as an elementary school teacher, and then left the profession to take classes at the University of Michigan. His degree from Michigan and his geographic mobility led him to teach high school math, and later college courses at the University of Colorado, where he once again left to be a high school principal in Denver. His last career move was to Harvard University, where he was recruited by a friend to head the school’s new department of education. He was eventually responsible for founding the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1920.\textsuperscript{99} Hanus’ path from teacher to administrator to graduate school founder was filled with twists that would not have been possible for women to make. He used each of Labaree’s three models for professional growth at some point in his career. He moved from country to city, from elementary to secondary to higher education, and from teaching to administration. Hanus certainly utilized his gender advantages to the highest

\textsuperscript{98} Labaree, “Career Ladders,” 180.

potential, and in doing so founded a school of education at one of America’s most prestigious universities.

Despite all of these barriers, there were isolated examples of women that attempted to become administrators. Mary Davison Bradford was an elementary school teacher in Wisconsin who began teaching in 1872 at the age of 13. After teaching for more than a decade, she quit to get married and have a son. However, her husband’s death in 1881 forced her back into the field, where she taught for several more decades in increasingly high paying jobs, until 1910 when she became the superintendent of schools in Kenosha, Wisconsin.\textsuperscript{100} While Bradford’s story is certainly one of persistence, the fact is that many females in education were forced to make sacrifices if they wished to become administrators.

Bradford’s experience represents an additional practical obstacle for women; the marriage and hire bars. Marriage bars required that female teachers be dismissed upon marriage and hire bars prohibited schools from hiring a female if they were married.\textsuperscript{101} The establishment of marriage bars discouraged women from seeking the credentials that were valued by school boards for higher pay. For some, it did not make sense to invest their time and effort into a profession that they would not remain in. The fact that women could be fired upon marriage would hinder their ability to have more teaching experience than men, and ultimately be more qualified for administrative positions. For women that truly wished to become administrators, forgoing marriage may have been a decision they

\textsuperscript{100} Labaree, “Career Ladders,” 160.

\textsuperscript{101} Perlmann and Margo, Women’s Work?, 112-113.
would have to face. Marriage and hire bars are another prime example of institutional gender discrimination that favored men in the promotion process in schools.

Women were only offered administration jobs in education when no men showed interest in applying. When no men applied for a specific job, women like Margaret Ingram were able to temporarily hold these jobs. Ingram became a small town high school principal in 1862 when she was the only applicant for the position, but was replaced after one successful year in favor of a man who later proved to be incompetent at his job. This ideological preference for male administrators was straightforward for some districts around the country. A Chicago superintendent put the situation simply, by saying “Why do we pay men more than women? The most important and responsible positions are filled by men. It is of rare occurrence for a woman to be considered successful either as a city superintendent or as a high school principal.” Margaret Ingram was a victim of this type of blatant gender discrimination.

Ultimately, women faced serious practical obstacles in climbing the career ladder, whereas these opportunities were more straightforward for men. Thus, women remained teachers, and men moved “upward”. While, for the most part, there were no formal laws stating that women could not hold these jobs, there were plenty of discriminatory institutional practices that allowed for men to manage and women to teach. It was not until the twentieth century that women appeared as principals in substantial numbers, and

102 Labaree, “Career Ladders,” 177.
103 Labaree, “Career Ladders,” 177.
even then they were often constrained to principal jobs in elementary schools, likely the result of a promotion from begin an elementary school teacher.  

Ideological Advantages for Men

As much as women fit the mold for what was expected of classroom teachers, men were equally compatible with the expectations of administrative jobs. Gender stereotypes, displayed by both male administrators and female teachers, created an ideological obstacle in addition to the aforementioned practical obstacles for women seeking administrative jobs. While the expectations of what made a good teacher shifted during the feminization of teaching to traditional female qualities, the qualifications of newly formed administrative positions in education were similarly aligned with male qualities, which set the stage for male teachers also having an ideological advantage in addition to the practical advantage over women in competition for these positions.

Gender customs in the nineteenth would have made successfully filling a superintendency difficult for women because of the job expectations and the political nature of the job. The reason superintendent positions were created, according to Ohio state officials in the 1840s, were because local school officials were so “ignorant” and “sluggish” that they could not “make a report with the form in front of them.” Superintendents, according to educational historian Carl Kaestle, were expected to “interpret laws, explain procedures for reports, encourage uniformity of textbooks, and


106 Kaestle, Pillars of the Republic, 115.
examine teachers applying for jobs.”

Furthermore, superintendents had a responsibility to negotiate with school boards and tax payers. These responsibilities not only strayed from social norms for women, but also from what society, as well as proponents of female teachers like Catharine Beecher, viewed as the traits that made female teachers so effective. The feminization of teaching was in part due to the evolving expectations of what made a good teacher. Female teacher’s perceived ability to be nurturing and caring was, at minimum, a factor in their taking over teaching jobs. Beecher even argued these traits made teaching women’s “natural” vocation.

Administrative jobs completely strayed from these traits. These positions had an aspect of communicating and corresponding with other adults, whereas teaching elementary school did not.

Assuming that every female teacher wished to become an administrator or sought upward mobility would be a mistake. While it is evident that the gender stereotypes of primarily male administrators furthered the trend of men filling these positions, females buying into these stereotypes also had an effect on their remaining in teaching jobs. By the end of the nineteenth century, teachers could have a reputation school-wide or potentially even district-wide for being excellent educators. Many female teachers did not think that they could replicate this level of importance or sense of benevolence as administrators, and thus consciously made the decision to remain as classroom

107 Kaestle, Pillars of the Republic, 115.
108 Perlmann and Margo, Women’s Work?, 122.
110 Biklen, School Work, 39.
teachers.\textsuperscript{111} When Amy Morris Bradley was a 26 year old teacher in Massachusetts in 1849, she wrote that she “may do much more good in my present capacity than as a wife.”\textsuperscript{112} Bradley’s plan to remain a career teacher and forego marriage seemingly would have made her an ideal candidate to progress into administration because marriage bars would have not affected her, but she had no intention to do this.

Another ideological reason that women remained teachers while men became administrators is because of the nature of the relationship between these two positions. Before the feminization of teaching, prevailing social norms held that school discipline was extremely important, and the biggest obstacles for female teachers would be their inability to discipline older boys. Just a few decades later, even though females completely took over teaching jobs, this notion still held true at times. Hiring a male principal to manage a school of female teachers was, for some, the solution to this problem.\textsuperscript{113}

Additionally, male principals and superintendents took advantage of the cultural power structure that favored men in society, and applied this system to schools.\textsuperscript{114} Similar to the perception that female teachers needed a male administrator to help handle issues of discipline, an 1878 writer said that women teachers are often preferred by superintendents because they are “more willing to comply with established regulations

\textsuperscript{111} Biklen, \textit{School Work}, 40.

\textsuperscript{112} Clifford, “Man/Women/Teacher,” 322.

\textsuperscript{113} Kaestle, \textit{Pillars of the Republic}, 67-68, 123.

\textsuperscript{114} Tyack and Hansot, \textit{Learning Together}, 87.
and less likely to ride headstrong hobbies." A male administrator was necessary not only deal with discipline issues, but also because the submissiveness of female teachers and the proactive strength of male administrators were a perfect match. From the opposite perspective, male administrators would also be less likely to hire male teachers because male teachers would ideologically be more likely to question the administrator’s authority, and also could potentially be a threat to the administrator’s job, whereas the female teacher would not be. Furthermore, some administrators felt that hiring a female as a principal would create a restive environment in schools because female teachers may not respect a female boss. Having one female principal may lead to other female teachers seeking principal positions. Ultimately, these stereotyped beliefs created a system of hierarchal relationships that built upon itself and further expanded the pattern of male administrators working with female teachers. This trend of vertical relationships based on gender in education remained prominent for years to come.

Although it is clear that discriminatory practices favored men in terms of both pay and promotion, it is important to not solely blame the field of education for its discriminatory practices based on gender in the nineteenth century. Throughout the century, there were few, if any, professional fields where women were able to hold managerial positions. One could argue that females in education had better opportunities than females in any other field in terms of climbing the ladder

116 Clifford, “Man/Women/Teacher,” 328.
professionally. The fact that females were employed in such large numbers, even if it was primarily in low paying positions, makes the field of education comparatively progressive compared to other professions.

Effects of School Bureaucracies on Teacher Pay

There were two main ways the creation of an educational bureaucracy effected teacher pay. First, the formalization of schools led districts to create formal systems of teacher compensation, called salary schedules, which were based on the individual’s experience, education, and which grade they taught. For reasons such as marriage and hire bars, access to education, and the fact that men were far more likely to teach higher grades, these salary schedules clearly favored men and paid them more. This structure of incentives helps to explain the gender gap in pay for classroom teachers.

The second effect of the establishment of the bureaucracy on teacher pay is that because men were more likely to hold administrative positions and these administrative positions received substantially higher salaries, the gap between men and women was further widened. For example, male high school principals in Cincinnati, Ohio earned $1,500 in 1862, while male teachers made roughly $1,000 and female teachers between $600 and $900. In elementary schools, male principals made between $1,068 and $1,152, while male teachers made between $700 and $800, and female teachers between just $240 and $540. These numbers represent not only the fact that administrators made more than teachers and males made more than females, but also the difference in

---

118 Perlmann and Margo, Women’s Work, 122.
119 Tyack and Hansot, Learning Together, 83.
120 Tyack and Hansot, Learning Together, 84.
pay between elementary and high school. Men being more likely to hold higher paying administrative positions coupled with the fact that women were more likely to work in elementary schools helps to explain the general difference in pay between male and female teachers.

Ultimately, if other factors were equal (which was unlikely), a discrepancy in pay between a male and a female could sometimes be explained by blatant gender discrimination. However, a large portion of gender pay discrimination can be directly linked to the creation of the school bureaucracy and the institutional policies that heavily favored men. While these practices were clearly discriminatory, school districts were able to justify this discrepancy by claiming the system was entirely meritocratic. Some districts, however, made the decision to pay men more for deliberate reasons. In 1895, the superintendent of Chicago schools, A.F. Nightingale sent out a survey to fellow superintendents throughout the country about issues of gender and pay. One anonymous respondent made the need and his willingness to pay men higher wages clear because “the market demands it. The woman will stay at her work for years-the man, as soon as he becomes of value to the school, must be promoted, or he will leave to go where higher salaries are paid. It is a simple question of supply and demand, governing the price of work for the two sexes.”121 This superintendent uses both gender stereotypes and practicality to explain his practice of paying men more money. This type of thinking could attract male educators seeking higher salaries if the district had enough money to fulfill their intent, which would further widen the gender pay gap.

121 Labaree, “Career Ladders,” 179.
If, as the previous chapter argues, the culture of benevolence allowed female teachers to make low salaries and remain in teaching, did the departure of men from the profession mean that males did not feel this same sense of benevolence? Ultimately, I argue that males indeed felt the same sense of benevolence as female teachers. Augustus Wattles of Cincinnati, Ohio, an educator and abolitionist that created schools for freed slaves throughout Ohio, truly embodied the culture of benevolence. In an 1836 article in the publication *Philanthropist (1836-1843)*, Wattles argued for the importance of his cause of abolition and education, writing “we know of no department of that cause stronger in its intrinsic claims, fuller of glorious promise-and certainly none so necessitous at the present moment, as the school in Cincinnati for the benefit of the black population-we have accordingly appropriated the above donation to their benefit.”\(^{122}\)

Similarly, although Calvin Stowe’s main life work was as an educational reformist, he showed examples of the culture of benevolence and morality in other aspects of his life. Throughout his adult life, he studied and taught religion. In addition, he was also a strong abolitionist and aided his second wife and author of the famous anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe, in her resistance of slavery. Their property in Cincinnati served as an Underground Railroad station throughout the mid nineteenth century. The spirit of abolition that both Wattles and Stowe not only felt but acted upon was certainly related to their advocacy for increased educational opportunities and reform.

The difference between males and females in education was their ability to carry out this pious spirit. The formalization of schools created low paying teaching jobs that

\(^{122}\) Augustus Wattles and Theodore D. Weld, “A Card,” *Philanthropist, (1836-1843)*, vol. 1 no. 7, (February 12, 1836); American Periodicals Series Online, 2.
were an ideal way for women to feel benevolent as teachers. The piety of female teachers did not create the low wages of teaching jobs, but rather allowed women to justify their low salaries. For men, it was not that simple. The creation of a bureaucracy in education created administrative jobs that were attractive to men for reasons that will be outlined below. Principal positions allowed men to fulfill their feeling of benevolence and piety working with children on a day to day basis, while dually allowing them the financial compensation and intrinsic rewards that were expected of them in the nineteenth century.

Additional Factors Causing Men to Leave the Teaching Profession

The prevalence of the upward mobility of male educators is not completely exhaustive of the reasons men comprised only a small percentage of the teaching force after the formalization of schools. While the creation of an educational bureaucracy certainly accounts for a large portion of male teachers, not every male teacher in the country became a principal or superintendent after school formalization. Much the way Sarah Montgomery argues that a variety of factors other than simply economics contributed to the entrance of females into the profession, I maintain that there were certainly factors beyond economics and promotion within the field that men chose to leave education.

Throughout American history, there have been dozens of examples of women that have faced gender bias in the workplace. Males in education in the nineteenth century may have faced their own form of workplace discrimination. The nineteenth century shift of teacher qualifications from stern, strict, and authoritative, to loving and
compassionate clearly worked against the cultural expectations of the time for men.

Similar to the way female teachers may have not pursued administrative jobs in favor of their teaching jobs because they felt that their gendered stereotypes were more suited to teaching, men easily could have felt the opposite. This change in the perception of the qualities of a good teacher set by people such as Catharine Beecher were so widely accepted that they played a part in the mass entrance of women to the profession. Some men unwittingly and internally accepted these stereotypes, and saw themselves as lacking the qualities to teach, whether in fact that was the case or not. In 1908, the negative stereotypes of men in teaching were clearly laid out by C.W. Bardeen, an American publisher, when he said

> Teaching usually belittles a man. I do not say it ought to; I do not say it always does; I say it usually does. His daily dealing is with petty things, of interest only to his children and a few women assistants, and under regulations laid down by outside authority, so that large questions seldom come to him for consideration. His environment narrows him, he grows to have only one interest, and that limits him in public and in social life. As a rule men teachers are uncouth, crude, ill at ease in company. It is amazing what a difference it makes in a teacher’s presence if he goes into business for a time and learns how to meet people.\(^{123}\)

Even men who were attracted to the teaching profession or had the benevolent spirit of the nineteenth century would be turned off by this perception of male teachers.

Naturally, if they had other substantial opportunities, men would stay away from a profession that is seen as so petty, limiting, and generally unimportant in the eyes of society. Furthermore, the fact that male administrators preferred female teachers because of their submissiveness obviously works against men when taken from the opposite perspective. Male teachers simply weren’t in high demand for a lot of male principals

---

because of the perception that they would not be as passively obedient, and that they may pose a threat to the job of the male administrator.

The men that did remain as teachers, as Bardeen suggests, found their masculinity and force of character in question. Many felt that they were simply doing “women’s work.” Male classroom teachers became so atypical that they felt the need to bond in all male teacher associations and educational fraternities such as Phi Delta Kappa. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, some school boards, such as those in Chicago and Philadelphia, grew frustrated at the decline of male teachers. Philadelphia even created a normal school for men only, arguing that men were more effective educators and that they were able to understand male students in a way that female teachers could not. Into the beginning of the twentieth century, the need for male teachers, according to some, grew even stronger because of the perception that an all female teaching force feminized male students. G. Stanley Hall argued that female teachers were unable to identify with the male students need for a “raw period” before the development of a “virile manhood.” For his thoughts, Hall was complimented by President Theodore Roosevelt for his “sound common sense, decency, and manliness.” However, despite the endorsement of some for the merits of male teachers, the domination of the feminized teaching force continued.

---

A final factor working against men who wished to remain as classroom teachers was a simple issue with numbers. The feminization of high school enrollment, the name for the huge increase of high school students that were female, in the 1800s created an increased supply of high school educated females that sought work. Due to the gender restrictions of comparable professional field such as law and medicine, many women considered teaching a highly desirable profession.\textsuperscript{129} A survey of Detroit high school graduates between the years of 1860 and 1862 show that 95\% of those who went on to teach were women.\textsuperscript{130} Furthermore, a survey of St. Louis high school graduates in the 1860s showed that over half of the 700 women surveyed were teaching in public schools, making it by far the most popular occupation of female St. Louis high school graduates.\textsuperscript{131} These statistics suggest that, in part, the feminization of teaching can be attributed to the mass entrance of females, as opposed to the mass exodus of males, into the profession.

Along with the large amount of females that were capable and willing to teach, a simple opportunity cost equation further explains the dominance of females in teaching. Teaching was among the most prestigious jobs a female could hold in the nineteenth century. For men, this was clearly not the case. The fact that female teachers represented the group of females that had risen to the top of their gender in terms of education and training (and, in turn, knowledge, opportunity, and persistence) suggests that these females were intrinsically motivated. For some male teachers, teaching was a last resort


\textsuperscript{130} Rury, \textit{Education and Women’s Work}, 21.

\textsuperscript{131} Rury, \textit{Education and Women’s Work}, 22.
when occupations in law, medicine, or another comparable field did not materialize. The fact that male teachers had plenty of other viable career options while women did not suggests that female teachers had more at stake, which might influence motivation and performance.

**Administration: A Man’s Place in Education**

The feminization of teaching is a phenomenon that is much more heavily studied from the perspective of the females that entered the profession in the mid nineteenth century, as opposed to the male perspective of the men that left. The formalization of schools created a system where “teacher” was no longer the only profession in the field of education. This chapter tells the male side of the story by establishing the fact that men did not leave the profession altogether, but rather found new positions in education as school administrators. These jobs were created as a result of the formalization of schools, and were filled by men for reasons ranging from blatant discrimination to an institutional promotion system that favored men.

The movement of men into these jobs is a natural, almost predictable, historical trend that allowed men to stay in the field of education while earning larger salaries that allowed them the financial rewards that were largely expected of men in the nineteenth century. To that end, just as many people argued that teaching was women’s natural vocation in the nineteenth century, I contend that male administrative jobs aligned with traditionally male traits just as teaching supposedly aligned with traditional female ones. This arrangement of gendered traits allowed for men to dominate administrative positions just as females dominated teaching position.
CONCLUSION

There is no simple method of understanding the relationship between the feminization of teaching and the formalization of schools. As this thesis illustrates, there were an abundance of issues that allowed females to take over low paying teaching jobs, and allowed men to relocate into administrative jobs. To say that this historically significant event was simply a result of women taking over teaching jobs because they were willing to work for less than their male counterparts is not only shortsighted, but also unfair and untrue. Social, cultural, and pragmatic issues such as the formalization of schools and its resulting bureaucracy, the culture of benevolence, gender stereotypes, and social expectations all played a large role in allowing women to take over the teaching profession. As this thesis argues, the feminization of teaching was the result of a perfect storm of factors, rather than simply the consequence of one single issue. The addition of the male educator’s perspective on the feminization of teaching gives the male educators who stayed in the field of education their previously unpaid due.

This topic is significant because of its relevance. The introduction of this paper established the fact that schools are culturally important in America, at least partially in thanks to Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and Calvin Stowe. As Americans began to accept the significance of schools in the nineteenth century, the decisions and actions of schools in the time period began to affect not only the teachers and students in that year, but also people in schools for years to come. Nineteenth century antebellum America is significant because it represents a major time of change for American schools that reverberated for years to come. In many cases, the effects of educational reform of the nineteenth century can still be seen and felt today.
This thesis broke down several different aspects of the feminization of teaching, and argued, in order, that educational leaders played a large part in the formalization of schools, that wages remained low despite the formalization of teaching for a multitude of reasons including the role of the culture of benevolence, and finally that men were not simply bought out by cheaper, female labor, but rather they were restructured into newly formed administrative jobs in the field of education. In my research, these issues and these arguments proved themselves as prominent in understanding the feminization of teaching, and especially in doing so from a male perspective. The fact that other historians have pointed to other factors and examples is further proof of the complexity of issues surrounding the formalization of schools and the feminization of teaching.

Ultimately, regardless of which factors individual historians point towards as being most influential in the formalization of schools and the feminization of teaching, it remains clear that these significant nineteenth century phenomenon created trends that are still evident in American education systems. Like many other significant historical events, the feminization of teaching and the formalization of schools should not be studied in a vacuum, but rather understood as significant events on a continuum that have lasting impacts. One final chapter by chapter breakdown of this thesis makes the connections to modern American public schools evident.

“Follow the Leader: An Examination of the Role of Prominent Educational Reformers in the Formalization of Schools” argued that male educational reformers played a large role in formalizing and standardizing schools in the nineteenth century. The increased bureaucratization of schools and the formation of even more roles for educational “leaders” at the local and federal level make this a trend that stands true
Today. Men like Calvin Stowe, Henry Barnard, and Horace Mann were instrumental in conducting the changes in American public schools such as the creation of graded schools and the induction of teacher preparation academies in the mid nineteenth century that contributed to the formalization of schools. Not only are graded schools and teacher preparation schools still relevant in American schools in 2012, but men like Stowe and Barnard set the precedent of the importance of educational reformers in educational decision making nationwide. The success of these men in creating widespread educational reform set the stage for the expectation that their successors in educational leaderships would be able to do the same. The creation of boards of education and other educational leadership departments at the local, state, and federal levels are testament to the importance not only of schools in American culture, but also the necessity of strong leaders to lead these departments.

“School Formalization and the Culture of Benevolence” argued that while school formalization commenced in the mid nineteenth century, the process of becoming a teacher became increasingly formal and difficult. Likewise, this is a trend that began in the nineteenth century but certainly continued in the subsequent decades, and is evident still in the year 2012. According to the Ohio Department of Education, teachers in 2012 are required to have a college degree as well as formal training and licensure in the assigned grade level and subject. Often times, teachers are expected to continue their education once they are already employed to ensure professional growth. While it may seem obvious and inevitable to the average citizen and the average teacher that these credentials are necessary, the period before the formalization of teaching saw untrained male laborers teach as a secondary occupation. Again, many aspects of schools and the
teaching profession have changed in the years between 1830 and 2012, but this specific time period in the nineteenth century was absolutely instrumental in teacher preparation reform. Furthermore, just as the increased credentials of the nineteenth century did not necessarily equate to higher pay, similar arguments have been made about teacher compensation in 2012. Just as Calvin Stowe’s 1836 trip to Prussia to study their school system convinced him of the need to professionalize teaching and pay teachers more, Arne Duncan, the current United States Secretary of Education, has argued for the need to pay teachers substantially more in 2012.132 So while the ideals of educational leaders having significant impact and the formalization of schools have been primarily accomplished, the issue of teacher pay remains.133

The second portion of “School Formalization and the Culture of Benevolence” contends that the nineteenth century culture of benevolence played a key role in allowing teachers to justify their low wages. Teachers often accepted their low wages because they saw themselves as public servants, in the same light of social reformers of their time such as abolitionists and women’s rights activists. “Male Administrators: Benefactors of Discrimination” expanded on this argument by saying that in addition to the culture of benevolence, the fact that females had few more attractive options in the antebellum era aided in their acceptance of these low wages. To put these arguments into a modern context, women and marginalized groups of men that became teachers in the nineteenth century due to a lack of better options no longer have the same legal and cultural barriers that their ancestors did. The teacher recruitment company Teach For America annually


133 It likely remains to be seen if Duncan will have the success of his predecessors such as Stowe and Mann in his goal of increased teacher compensation.
recruits some of the highest achieving students from America’s most competitive colleges. The average Teach For America teacher has a 3.6 college grade point average, and 90% of teachers held a leadership position in college. As a whole, individuals who seek teacher positions through this company often turn down more lucrative options in fields such as law or medicine. The fact that a substantial portion of our college educated society take lower paying jobs in education is testament to the fact that while the term “culture of benevolence” may be specific to social reformists in the nineteenth century, the idea of educated citizens taking lower paying jobs in professions they deem as culturally important is still evident today.

“Male Administrators: Benefactors of Discrimination” also argues that while the perception of men during the feminization of teaching is that they simply left the field of education because they were bought out by cheaper labor, this was not the case. Rather, large numbers of male educators relocated to newly formed administrative jobs in the field of education that were largely available only to them, and not women. As much as the perceived qualities of a good teacher aligned with stereotypical female attributes in the nineteenth century, likewise did the qualities of a principal or superintendent align with the stereotypical male dominated qualities of the time period. These stereotypes, along with the ideological and practical barriers for the entrance of women into administrative positions, allowed men to dominate administrative positions in education even more than women dominated teaching positions. As this chapter argued, the pattern of male administrators managing schools that employed female teachers can be traced to the mid nineteenth century.

Once again, this pattern was relevant for years to come. Recent research suggests that grade level, subject, and position of an employee provide great indicators to their gender. According to the National Center for Education Statistics’ congressionally mandated annual report on trends in education, in the school calendar year of 2007-2008, 75% of the national public school teaching force was female. In terms of grade level, 91% of elementary school teachers were female, compared to 55% at the middle and high school, or secondary school, levels. In the same years, females comprised 59% of public elementary school principals, and just 29% of public secondary school principals. These stats clearly show there remains a distinction between the jobs men and women fill in education, with men being far more likely to have jobs as principals. Although the 59% of female elementary school principals obviously makes women principals the majority, the fact that 99% of public school principals have teaching experience suggests that women are still far more likely to be teachers than administrators at the elementary schools level. Furthermore, this trend does not seem to be coming to an end. There was only minor change in the percentage of female teachers in public schools from the year 1999-2007, and in private schools there was no change at all.\footnote{National Center for Education Statistics, \textit{Condition of Education 2011}, Publication No. 201133, May 26, 2011, http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011033.}

It is clear that each of these chapters represents an aspect of the feminization of teaching and the formalization of schools that created a pattern in education for years to come. To take a step back and view the feminization of teaching and the formalization of schools from a broader and more general perspective, however, historically significant phenomena in education are not unique to the nineteenth century. Clearly, contemporary
American schools face their own set of issues. These issues are increasingly debated in the modern era of politicalization of education, but some potential examples may include the achievement gap of students based on socio economic status and race, the role of government in educational decision making, and the role of standardized tests in classrooms nationwide. Just like the feminization of teaching and the professionalization of schools in the nineteenth century, the decisions leaders and citizens make on the issues in American education today could potentially affect students, teachers, and essentially all citizens for years to come.

\footnote{This is simply my abbreviated list of potential issues in education in 2012, and others could easily choose three completely different issues and still accurately make the same point. It should not be taken as a commentary on the three most important issues in education. That, in itself, would be its own entire thesis.}
Primary Sources with an Author


Bardeen’s essay, as its title suggests, is an early twentieth century commentary on the factors that cause men to not be attracted to the teaching profession. Bardeen, an American educator and publisher, did not argue that men should not become teachers, but rather lists the reasons that men cited as why they did not. This primary source is valuable in helping to understand the factors that kept men out of classrooms as the twentieth century began.


Barnard, an extremely influential nineteenth century educational reformer, identifies in this book what a good teacher looks like and effective teaching strategies are. The book is extremely detailed, and portrays the teaching profession as being of extreme importance. It classifies the details of proper classroom instruction, including even appropriate layout of the classroom and how to allocate each minute of the school day. This book is further proof to the point that nineteenth century educational reformers thought the teaching profession was very important, and it should be a professionalized and formal career.


This report is significant because Barnard advocates for the importance of having females fill positions in schools. He argues that females are better teachers because they have more naturally suited characteristics necessary to teach effectively. However, despite this position, Barnard still only suggests that females fill positions in lower grades and lower status positions. This caveat is shared by many in the years to come and allows men to overwhelmingly fill positions as school administrators.


George Brewster was the principal of a school called the Cleveland Academy in the nineteenth century. His collection of unpublished essays on education in Ohio argues for the division of labor amongst teachers in terms of grade level and subject and for the proper qualifications for becoming a teacher. He promotes stereotypically female traits as being important for a classroom teacher, a feeling that became increasingly popular throughout the country in the nineteenth century. His writing on this subject were compatible with the expectations of women laid out in the “Cult of Domesticity.”

This book is the memoirs of a nineteenth century female schoolteacher from Ohio, Irene Hardy. It contains her thoughts and feelings concerning a variety of subjects through letters she wrote throughout her lifetime. Her career path took her in and out of the field of education, and her records are a rich set of primary source materials from a female teacher in the nineteenth century that provides a first hand account of a women directly affected by both the feminization of teaching and the formalization of American public schools.


Similar to Irene Hardy, this book about Jennie Lines is an account of her life in the field of education. Lines is a prime example of the culture of benevolence playing out first hand in the thoughts and actions of a poorly paid female teacher. In many ways, the editor argues, Lines demonstrates the thoughts and values of the “typical” female schoolteacher of the nineteenth century. This paper does not build on this contention because it does not agree that there can be such a typical situation for all teachers, but it does accept the fact that benevolence and piety clearly played roles in the actions of this particular nineteenth century female school teacher.


In this version of the *Common School Journal*, Mann, the leading figure in education in the nineteenth century, takes a strong stance on the feminization of teaching. Mann says that it is clear that female teachers are superior, and there is no reason for the idea of an increasingly female teacher force to face any opposition. However, much like Barnard, Mann restricts his advocacy of female teachers to lower grade levels.

Stone, Isaac. *The elementary and complete examine, Candidate’s assistant*: Chicago, 1864.

As the formalization of teacher certification increased and teacher examinations became popular around the country, Stone released this book for teacher candidates to feel more prepared and comfortable while taking the test. The book is an exhaustive list of examples of questions he found typical of a teacher examinations. Stone felt strongly that teachers need to be prepared, and could not and should not teach a subject in which they were not adequately equipped.

This report is the result of Calvin Stowe’s federally funded trip to study European education systems, and remark on ways in which to improve American school systems. This report is broken into two parts: first, an explanation of the Prussian system, which was formalized and far more comprehensive than American schools. Secondly, Stowe comments on the ways American education could improve based on the Prussian system, which amount to, in short, the need to formalize American schools. This report is a prime example of the work of educational reformers in the nineteenth century seeking to formalize American schools.


Augustus Wattles was a nineteenth century educator and abolitionist in Ohio. This essay explains the importance of educating freed slaves. Wattles’ career and this source in particular show the strong intersection of education, abolition, and the culture of benevolence in the nineteenth century.

**Anonymous Primary Sources and Primary Sources with no Author**


This is an anonymous 1848 newspaper advertisement in the *Vermont Watchman and State Journal* that specifically sought a female teacher.

“A Female Teacher Wanted.” *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington DC), August 16, 1843.

This is an anonymous 1843 newspaper advertisement in the *Daily National Intelligencer* that specifically sought a female teacher to teach in Kent County, Maryland.

“Female Teachers.” *The Ohio Teacher* (1850).

This anonymous article in the 1850 publication *The Ohio Teacher* makes an argument for female teachers being more effective because of the character traits that they possess. The author says that there is a direct correlation between the amount of females that a given school employs and the success of that school.

This is an anonymous 1850 newspaper advertisement in the Daily National Intelligencer that specifically sought a male teacher to teach in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Millersburg, Ohio citizens to Ashland, Ohio Board of Education, June 15, 1876, Benjamin T. Jones Papers, 1855-1906. Western Reserve Historical Society Archives Library. Manuscripts Collection, Box 1, Folder 7. Cleveland, Ohio.

This letter, part of the Benjamin T. Jones collection at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio, is a reluctant letter of recommendation from Millersburg, Ohio citizens to the Ashland, Ohio Board of Education. They recommended Jones for the position of superintendent in Ashland, even though they are sad to lose him from their school system. The letter represents the more formalized hiring process that took place as a result of the formalization of schools.


This annual, congressionally mandated report outlines research and accompanying data for a wide variety of topics in education including student performance, school funding, demographic information of students and teachers, etc. While it is clearly a cumbersome report to study as a whole, individual sections can be useful for specific purposes. The conclusion of this thesis used this report for statistics on gender for teachers and principals in the twenty first century.


This teacher certificate, part of the Benjamin T. Jones collection at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio, certifies Jones to teach in Bellaire, Ohio in 1884. Specific graded scores in nine different academic disciplines showed the more formal nature of teacher examinations throughout Jones’ career. In addition to citing his academic capability, the certificate also vouches for the good moral character of the candidate.


This essay, appearing in the monthly edition of the Common School Assistant, expresses the anonymous author’s frustration with the fact that most citizens, and specifically parents of students, do not understand the negative effects of low teacher pay. The author argues that the low pay of the profession inhibits highly qualified individuals from entering the profession, and also that higher pay will create improved academic results.
This essay fits into my research as an example of some leaders in education identifying low teacher pay as a concern as far back as the 1830s.


This is an anonymous 1840 newspaper advertisement in the *Daily National Intelligencer* that specifically sought a male teacher to teach at the Leavensville Academy in Rockingham County, North Carolina. The advertisement promised “liberal wages.”

“The Teacher’s Rewards.” *The Massachusetts Teacher (1848-1855)*, vol. 4, no. 4. (April 1851); 118-120.

This essay in the monthly publication *The Massachusetts Teacher* essentially served as a motivation memo to teachers who were making low salaries. The content of the essay reminds teachers that the rewards of the teaching profession are not monetary, but rather intrinsic. The author goes as far as to say that teachers will only be fully rewarded on their Judgment Day before God. This primary source fits into the notion of the culture of benevolence playing a role in teachers justifying their comparatively low salaries.


This teacher certificate, part of the Benjamin T. Jones collection at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Ohio, certifies Jones to teach in Wayne County, Ohio in 1859. Graded scores on a three point scale in six academic disciplines show the beginning of a detailed process for ensuring that teacher candidates were qualified to teach. In the ensuing years, teachers were tested in an even wider variety of subjects, and tested on a larger graded scale.

**Secondary Sources**


Biklen is a professor of Education at Syracuse University. This book is a great source that approaches the issue of gender in teaching from many different angles. Chapter 3 in this book is specifically about the rewards of women teachers in school, which was a helpful resource for my project’s chapter about hiring and wages. This chapter argues that teaching was a radicalizing activity for women, and thus most of their rewards were intrinsic.

Carter begins this article by establishing the fact that throughout history, teachers have been poorly paid in comparison to other professions. She then answers the question of who chose to teach with an emphasis on several time periods, notably arguing that men in the early nineteenth century chose to teach due to the profession’s convenience as a secondary occupation. The ultimate thesis of this article is that throughout history schools have been able to employ qualified teachers and pay them low salaries because they generally recruited educated white women and black men who had few other options.


Clifford, a professor of education at California Berkeley, outlines the trajectory of the feminization of teaching, and argues that the gender stereotypes of the nineteenth century shaped the roles of men and women in schools. She argues that the Civil War had a significant impact in allowing females to take over the teaching profession. She outlines the reasons women were not able to climb the career ladder, namely the stereotypes that plagued women in performing in leadership positions. Ultimately, she argues that cultural perceptions of gender in the nineteenth century impeded the proper development of the teaching profession.


Elsbree’s 1970 book is a useful resource for all general information about schools in the nineteenth century. The book does not directly address the feminization of teaching, but provides great background on a variety of issues surrounding schools in this time period. For my project, it provided information about the qualifications of teachers, the hiring process, and salaries. Although the feminization of teaching is not a direct subject, the wide range of topics from this book allows the reader to gain information about schools that aids in their own conclusion about teachers and schools from the colonial period until the twentieth century.


In this book, author Chris Enss tells the story of women who traveled to the western United States in the 1840s and 1850s to become teachers, often with little or no supplies or even a salary. Enss argues that these women changed the country forever by providing
education in the Wild West. Her book fits into the context of the culture of benevolence because the actions and attitudes of the female teachers highlighted in the book were fueled by their pious spirits.


This book is essentially the backbone and go-to resource for all questions about schools throughout history, but specifically in the nineteenth century for my research. Kaestle, a professor at Brown University, covers many of the issues surrounding schools in the antebellum era. His overarching argument is that early American ideals of Republicanism, Protestantism, and capitalism shaped the early structure of our nation’s schools. Specifically, this book aided my research about the principles and purposes of early common schools, the role of teachers in this process, and also general information of the ideology of the educational leaders that helped to shape American schools.


Kelly, a professor of History and Women’s Studies at the University of Michigan, studies the intersection of women, education, and public life throughout early American history. Not a book specifically about female teachers, her discussion of women in education puts into context the importance of the field of education in providing women opportunities in the nineteenth century. Kelley argues that education was among the first fields that provided women with legitimate career options outside of the domestic sphere. Additionally, this book provides useful information about Republican Motherhood and the social expectations of women throughout the nineteenth century.


In his study about career ladders and administrative positions in nineteenth century classrooms, Labaree, a professor of education at Michigan State University, outlines the obstacles of inequality for female teachers that allowed their male peers to dominate administrative jobs. Labaree uses anecdotal sources of several nineteenth century teachers, and determines that the most common means of upward movement in the field of education were from country to city, from lower grade levels to higher grade levels, and finally from teaching positions to administrative positions. This thesis uses these three models and builds upon them to further emphasize the difficulties in each of these models for women wishing to climb the career ladder.

Montgomery, a professor in the College of Education at Northern Iowa University, provides a mini historiography of the feminization of the teaching profession in the northeast during the antebellum era. She attempts to reject the “traditional approach” that the issue is simply a matter of economics and women took over the profession merely because they were willing to work for less money. Instead of offering a simple conclusion of her own, Montgomery’s primary argument is that the issue is complex, and that there were many factors that contributed to the rise of female school teachers. This article provides the framework that this thesis is built upon in terms of the complexity of issues surrounding the feminization of teaching.


Perlmann, a senior scholar of economics at Bard College and Margo, a professor of economics at Vanderbilt University, use their combined credentials in economics to study the professional nature of the teaching profession, which a specific emphasis, as the title suggests, on the gendered economics present in the profession. The book studies American teachers from the years 1650-1920, and its section on the nineteenth century teacher focuses on the creation of administrative jobs for men. The authors focus on the fact that these jobs were often available only to men, a fact that is cited heavily and developed in the third chapter of this thesis. This source was ultimately extremely useful in its discussion of the polarization of male and female positions within schools after the professionalization of schools.


Preston was a visiting scholar in Women’s Studies at Harvard University, and in this article she offers a multi-step process for the feminization of teaching in the antebellum northeast. She also introduces the reader to the ideas of prominent 19th century reformers Catharine Beecher and Horace Mann, among others. She does not deny the economic argument that women were willing to work for less and therefore were offered more teaching jobs, but adds to that argument by examining the ways social propaganda and beliefs portrayed women as more suited for the profession.

This book essentially serves as a resource about the Beecher family, which Calvin Stowe married into. It provided general information for the chapter about Calvin Stowe and his life. It also provided this thesis with information about Catharine Beecher, who is referenced several times throughout the thesis.


This book by Rury, as its title suggests, examines how different periods in American educational history caused social change. The chapter on the nineteenth century examines how this period in American schooling was effected by cultural norms of the time, namely the Industrial Revolution and the perceived need for more universal coeducation. This chapter was useful in my research because it provides background information on the relationships between the increase in educated females and the entrance of these females into teaching. Rury argues that the increased amount of educated females was a key factor in the feminization of teaching.


Rury’s focus in this 1991 book is the establishment and advancement of women in increasingly professional fields between the years of 1870-1930 as a result of increased educational opportunities. Although it is towards the end of the years of focus for my paper, Rury’s chapter on and female labor force participation and the organization of gendered roles in education is a bit different than Perlmann’s book because it is from a female perspective, but is certainly very useful nonetheless.


Rury, a professor in the History Department at the University of Kansas, wrote this article in 1987. He examines the status of the teaching profession from the beginning of the 19th century to the present. Through the data that is available to him, he concludes that enrollment rates of schools were the variable most closely associated with the amount of female teachers in a given school. He says teachers were nearly always white, increasingly female as time went on, and often from farming backgrounds. This thesis generally agrees with and builds upon Rury’s work about teacher’s backgrounds.

In her 2003 book, Susan Ryan, an assistant professor of English at the University of Louisville, argues that the nineteenth century culture of benevolence that inspired social reformers such as abolitionists in the time period ultimately marginalized the very groups in which they hoped to help. While this book is engaging and reframes the issue of benevolence in the nineteenth century, it is useful for this thesis because it establishes this culture of benevolence as a major theme among social reformers. This thesis builds upon Ryan’s work by arguing that teachers also saw themselves as players in social reform just as women’s rights activists, abolitionists, and temperance movement advocates did. So while her book does not directly address the specific ideas of this thesis, it certainly contributes by bringing the issue of benevolence to the conversation.


This book was used as a resource throughout this thesis for general information about schooling in America. Similar to Kaestle’s Pillars of the Republic, it attempts to broadly explore many issues of American schools. Due to the expansive time focus, only portions of the book were applicable to my research, notably the chapter about the organization of schools in the nineteenth century. Spring argues that the real heroines in the common school movement were the females that were employed in schools. My work at times agrees with this argument, but also provides evidence that the influx of males into administrative positions during this time period were also important in the organization of schools and gender.


Strober and Lanford’s piece is a quantitative study to test their hypothesis that women were more common in formalized school settings as opposed to rural schools in mid-nineteenth century Midwestern and Northeastern schools. Their study supported their hypothesis, and its significance is the idea that men were only interested in being teachers when they could do so on a part time basis to supplement their main occupation.


Learning Together is a book about the issues of coeducation in early American public schools. Tyack and Hansot, both professors at Stanford University, focus on the issues of coeducation among students, but in their exploration also build on Perlmann and Margo’s discussion of men filling administrative jobs toward the latter half of the nineteenth century. This work also argues that women were preferred by male educators because of their submissiveness. Furthermore, it also presents the argument that male teachers that remained in education after the feminization of teaching found their force of
character in question. Each of these arguments is expanded upon in the third chapter of this thesis.


Warren, a professor of History at Indiana University, is the editor of this book, which is a collection of essays from different authors. While each of these chapters focused on a different aspect of teachers, a few were especially relevant to my research. John Rury’s chapter about the social characteristics of teachers provides great insight to how what backgrounds teachers came from, and who decided to enter the teaching profession. Additionally, both David Labaree and Geraldine Clifford have chapters about teachers that are annotated individually.


Welter’s famous article addresses the definition of womanhood in nineteenth century America. She argues that women were expected to show piety, purity, submission, and domesticity in their actions and attitudes. This argument was extremely influential in the description of a teacher’s qualities and was important in the influx of women into the teaching profession. For the scope of my research, Welter’s quantification the roles of women helps to understand the values and perceptions people had of the teaching profession.