Connections and Contradictions Between Progressive and Accommodationist Education Reforms From the 1860s

BY

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THESIS

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<tr>
<td>AMA</td>
<td>American Missionary Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASAALH</td>
<td>Association for the Study of African American Life and History</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACSSSN</td>
<td>Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes</td>
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<tr>
<td>JRP</td>
<td>Julius Rosenwald Papers (from the Special Collections Research Center at the University of Chicago Library)</td>
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<tr>
<td>JRP.SB</td>
<td>Julius Rosenwald Papers, Scrapbook (from the Special Collections Research Center at the University of Chicago Library)</td>
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<td>PEA</td>
<td>Progressive Education Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAACP</td>
<td>National Association for the Advancement of Colored People</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEA</td>
<td>National Education Association</td>
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<td>PEA</td>
<td>Progressive Education Association</td>
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<td>YMCA</td>
<td>Young Men’s Christian Association</td>
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SUMMARY

In my dissertation, I explore the contradictions within the early progressive education movement through a historical analysis of progressive and accommodationist curriculum reforms and reformers. My study suggests a number of limitations within the early progressive education movement, including: ideological contradictions in progressive reforms; the failure of many progressive reformers to challenge white supremacy and racism in schools and society; and a lack of representation of African American scholars and educators.

In my dissertation, I draw heavily from the conceptualization of accommodationist education offered by William Watkins (1993, 2001) and from popular considerations of progressive education (Schubert, 1986; Kliebard, 1995; Cremin, 1964). I conceptualize progressive reforms in education as a part of the larger Progressive Movement, which included efforts to expand economic activity, demand workplace rights, diminish machine politics, and make schools more democratic and relevant (Cremin, 1959). Yet, I acknowledge that the term progressive is both contested and mutable and that the early progressive education movement contained a number of different and even contradictory reforms. As such, I argue that various moderate, conservative, and radical reforms were all considered progressive. I conceptualize accommodationism as schooling that “emphasized vocational training, physical/manual labor, character building, and a social science packages, suggesting the acceptance of racial subservience for Negroes” (Watkins, 1993, p. 324).
I situate my dissertation research within Ann Winfield’s (2010) concept of historical research in the field of curriculum studies, namely that historical research “seen through curriculum theory is multifaceted and requires that we engage in personal as well as political, economic, sociologic, and philosophical analyses” (p. 143). Using a combination of primary sources, secondary sources, and archival data, I examined the manner in which different reform agendas could be considered both progressive and accommodationist and then explored the “embodied” contradictions exhibited by three curriculum workers/funders.

In Chapter 2, entitled Historical Context, and Chapter 3, entitled Progressives and Accommodationists, I analyzed various orientations to curriculum, considered the social forces that contributed to the shaping of progressive movements, and explicated the embodied contradictions of curriculum workers and funders who supported both progressive and accommodationist reforms. I suggested that within a context of scientific racism, regionalism, changing economic and political realities, and theoretic and practical ambiguity within the progressive education movement, many progressive educators supported and/or ignored the creation of accommodationist schooling in African American communities.

In the next three chapters of my dissertation, I explored the embodied contradictions of three leading curriculum workers and funders. In chapter 4, entitled John Dewey, I suggested that while Dewey was a leading progressive who envisioned schools as sites of democratic transformation, he often failed to acknowledge the manner in which social context, access to power, and racism influenced the implementation of progressive reforms. In Chapter 5, entitled Booker T. Washington, I argued that while
Washington was clearly an advocate and spokesperson for accommodationist schooling, he also employed many progressive pedagogical tools in his work at the Tuskegee Institute. As such, he could be considered both an accommodationist and a progressive.

In Chapter 6, entitled *Julius Rosenwald*, I argued that while Rosenwald was a progressive philanthropist who in many ways challenged systemic racism, he was aligned with Washington’s accommodationist model of gradual change. My research suggests that each of the men studied endorsed elements of both progressivism and accommodationism.

I believe this study is significant because it suggests the deep entanglement between the roots of progressive education and accommodationist ideology in ways that continue to impact our schools today. Today, more than a century after the progressive education movement sought to improve schools, the struggle for education justice continues. It is my hope that by complicating our understanding of the relationship between progressive and accommodationist policies, we can learn from the limitations of past progressive movements and that we can begin to envision a progressive movement which addresses both pedagogical reforms and the need to challenge racism and injustice in the classroom and in the larger education system.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview and Context

More than a century ago, the United States was engaged in a Progressive Movement that broadly sought to create more just work conditions, a more representative (and less corrupt) government, and more humane and relevant schools. Within the larger progressive movement, the progressive education movement began as a reaction to pervasive dissatisfaction with traditional schooling and what was perceived to be a dated and irrelevant curriculum. However, within the progressive education movement there was little consensus about the way forward and numerous conservative, moderate, and radical reformers struggled to define and implement a vision for education reform.

Within the progressive education movement, there were internal battles, ideological contradictions, and disagreements about the purpose, politics, and pedagogy of progressivism.

Within the same historic moment that the progressive education movement was growing and gaining recognition, the United States was also experiencing the proliferation of accommodationist schooling for African American children primarily in the American South. Largely funded by wealthy philanthropists, schools focused upon industrial education, manual training, practical skills, and gradual change were being constructed in the South. Booker T. Washington was at the height of his power and had, in 1912, been given a $25,000 donation from Chicago philanthropist Julius Rosenwald to begin a program to build schools modeled after Tuskegee Institute to rural communities in the South. This project would eventually lead to the creation of more than 5000
Rosenwald Schools throughout the American South, all of which, arguably, embraced the tenets of accommodationism.

Yet, while progressivism and accommodationism were impacting education reform movements within overlapping historical eras, I found that there is little discussion in the literature about the connections between the two movements. When the movements are discussed, they are often (though not always) viewed as contradictory. For example, in *Black Orientations to Curriculum*, Watkins (1993) argued that the accommodationist orientation to curriculum “[was] sharply distinguished from the liberal, progressive, and more militant outlooks” (p. 325). However, given that accommodationist curricular reforms were created and expanded during the Progressive Era, the question emerged: why were there not more widespread rejections of such policies, especially by progressives who were at the same historical moment advocating for more child-centered and democratic schooling?

In this dissertation, I analyze the relationship between progressivism and accommodationism. More specifically, I explore the contradictions within the early progressive education movement by examining its relationship with accommodationist reforms that spread rapidly in schools serving African American children in the American South. I believe this study can contribute to the field of Curriculum Studies by challenging scholars and educators: (a) to explicate the relationship between progressives and accommodationists, (b) to ask curriculum workers to more seriously contemplate the manner in which race, class, and power influenced the origins of the field of curriculum; (c) to contemplate and complicate our understanding of both the roots and the contemporary applications of progressive pedagogy, and (d) to articulate the need for
curriculum workers to consider pedagogy, policy, and power in any conceptualization of progressive.

1.2 Problem and Purpose

While there is extensive research about both the history of the progressive education reforms (see, for example, Cremin, 1964; Tyack, 1974; Tanner, 1991; Semel & Sadovnik, 1999) and the history of accommodationist curriculum reforms in schools serving African American children (see Watkins 2001; Anderson, 1988), there is little discussion about the relationship between progressive education and accommodationist education.

The purpose of this study is to illuminate some of the contradictions within the early progressive education movement through a historical analysis of the relationship between progressive and accommodation curriculum reforms and reformers. In this work, I explore this relationship by studying primary, secondary, and archival sources. I have utilized these sources to examine: (a) orientations to curriculum, (b) curricular reform movements, (c) the impact of racism and regionalism on the development and implementation of curriculum reforms, and (d) the embodied contradictions exhibited by leading curriculum workers and funders.
1.3 Research Questions

In my dissertation, I have organized my inquiry by exploring a number of research questions. However, the questions are not designed to be definitively answered within this inquiry. Rather, I seek to explore the questions as to better understand the relationship between progressive and accommodationist curriculum workers and funders from the 1860s – 1930s.

- Were accommodationist curriculum reforms considered progressive? If so, by whom?
- What does the relationship between progressive and accommodationist reforms (and reformers) reveal about contradictions in the early progressive education movement?
- How did leading curriculum workers reconcile their support of accommodationist curricula with their progressive ideology?
- Why does this matter today?

1.4 Methodology and Framework

I situate my dissertation research within Winfield’s (2010) concept of historical research in the field of curriculum, namely that historical research “seen through curriculum theory is multifaceted and requires that we engage in personal as well as political, economic, sociologic, and philosophical analyses” (p. 143). As such, I seek to explore my research questions by not only by examining historical events and the role of specific historical actors, but also by contemplating the impact of philosophy, ideology and context on such actions and actors.
Theoretically, I am influenced by pragmatism, but identify primarily as a critical theorist. I am influenced by pragmatism because it is a philosophic tradition defined by the belief that theory and action are deeply connected and that the purpose of inquiry is to “respond to difficulties which arise within [the American] experience” (Lawson and Koch, 2004, p. 1). Within the diverse pragmatic field, I am particularly drawn to Deweyan pragmatism, which employs “a future-oriented instrumentalism” with a deep analysis of historical conditions to address contemporary social problems (West, 1989, p. 5 and 91).

Yet, I am aware of the limits of pragmatism. Pragmatic theorists have often been silent on issues of racism, white supremacy, and systemic oppression¹ and they were largely absent from the “practical philosophy movement” that supported numerous struggles for civil, economic, and political rights (Lawson and Koch, 2004, p. 1-3). Also, while I appreciate the pragmatic emphasis on relationship between thinking and doing, I fear that because theoretical inquiry is intrinsically connected to “successful doing” that the focus of inquiry may be limited to only such problems that are deemed possible to solve with short term action (West, 2004, p. 228). While I do believe social actors must act within externally imposed limit situations, such actions must be grounded in critical praxis, which Schubert (1986) defined as “an integration of theoretical critique of society and action or practice that seeks to improve society and the individual through education” (p. 318). As such, I agree with West (2004) in that while the pragmatic tradition is an appropriate philosophical tradition to address issues of race (and education) in America, it is imperative to have social analytic tools and “an analysis of the relation of the

¹ There are obvious exceptions, including W.E.B. Du Bois, Cornel West, and Pedro Noguera, for example, are all identified within a pragmatic tradition. However, they all also draw from critical theory.
economy to the state; . . . an analysis of the relation of state to the educational system and its relationship to civil society in general” (p. 225).

The social analytical tools that I find most powerful are based in critical theory. Critical theory is employed to “expose and overcome unjust social hierarchies derived from socioeconomic class, race, gender, sexuality, place, age, appearance, disability, and other hegemonic factors in society and school” (Schubert, 2008, p. 404). When critical theorists seek to link the study of curriculum to social, political, economic, and historic context, the field of curriculum is able to move past technical concerns and address education, transformation, and emancipation. As a critical theorist, I understand the manner in which the determinants of “worthy knowledge” are both laden with sociopolitical significance and situated historically and ideologically. By exposing the power relations involved in both curricular and policy decisions, it becomes possible to disrupt hegemonic understandings of history and envision alternative ways of being.

Within this historical study, I also explored the embodied contradictions of specific curriculum workers and funders. The term embodied has a number of different meanings and is used by feminist theorists, critical race theorists, cognitive psychologists, sociologists, and educators. I am using the term broadly – to include a connectedness between mind and body, theory and practice, emotion and cognition, the physical self and his/her relationship to society. By speaking of embodied contradictions, I seek to move beyond an analysis of theoretical positions on race and education, and rather explore the manner in which positionality, lived experience, and action interact with theory. Also, I utilize the word embodied to denote a sense of historical consciousness, whereas social
actors belong to “a succession of past and future generations as well as to a present community and society” (Glassberg, 1987 p. 958).

Further, as a critical scholar focused upon understanding race and education in the United States, I understand that, as Asa G. Hilliard III (2001) argued, “[e]ducation, like the matter of ‘race,’ is situated in a context” and that the solution to problems within our schools is “not technical, but political” (p. 25, 26). I entered this research with the understanding that education can operate both as a source of empowerment and oppression. I am aware of the manner in which racism and white supremacy have impacted education policy and curriculum reforms impacting African American students (see: Anderson, 1988; Watkins, 2001; Tyack, 1975; Lee and Slaughter-Defoe, 2001).

As a researcher, I understand that neither the process of schooling nor the process of research are apolitical, and I seek to produce work that does what Annette Henry (2006) described as “talking back” to the dominant narrative (p. 333). I believe that historical knowledge is essential to challenge contemporary injustices; thus my historical work is motivated by my desire to impact contemporary policy and curricular changes. As such, I am greatly influenced by what Lipman (2004) described as a social justice framework, which requires a focus on equity, agency, cultural relevance, and critical literacy (p. 16-17). While this work is not designed to create or critique contemporary policies, I believe that understanding the manner in which past systems were constructed can contribute to a re-envisioning of possibilities through a social justice lens.

Finally, I agree with Banks’s (2006) conception that it is impossible to be purely “objective”; as such I seek “strong objectivity” in which I am explicit about my own
subjectivity in relation to this research (p. 781). I am a White woman, a lifelong Chicago resident, a teacher, and a mother. I realize that as someone from outside of the African American community, there are limits to what I can know about schooling in African American communities (Banks, 2006, p. 778). However, I also believe that it is my responsibility as a scholar to challenge notions of mainstream theory that exclude or distort historical memory.

In seeking “strong objectivity,” I must also acknowledge my relationship with progressivism. I am a student of progressivism and while I raise many concerns about the progressive movement, I do so as a scholar who identifies as a progressive. In this research, my intention is neither to advocate for a return to the intellectual traditionalism of the past nor to assign blame for all of the problems within education on the progressive movement. Rather, I seek to raise questions, contextualize current trends, and to understand the limits of the past progressive movements.

1.5 Methods

In this multifaceted historical inquiry, I have used secondary sources, biographies, auto-biographies, printed news articles, recorded speeches, and archival material to better understand the relationship between progressive and accommodationist reforms. In this dissertation, I followed Krug’s advice² (as recorded by Kliebard, 1995) to first write a short essay detailing the major arguments I intended to make in a larger body or research

² In the preface to his first edition of The Struggle for the American Curriculum, Herbert M. Kliebard (1995) wrote that his friend and famed curriculum scholar, Edward A. Krug, recounted how he “like[d] to write an essay covering the major themes [of a project] just to see if it would all hang together” before beginning a new project (p. xvi).
to make sure the content “would all hang together” (Kliebard, 1995, p. xvi). After writing a short research paper, I began in earnest my dissertation research by completing a survey of the literature and a number of articles, books, and speeches written by the curriculum funders and workers featured in this work. I then began research within the archival collections.

My dissertation is seven chapters in length. Chapters 1-3 focus upon my research process, historical context, and the impact of racism and regionalism on the development of the Progressive Movements. In these chapters, I rely heavily on existing literature. In Chapters 4-6, I chose to examine the words, actions, and beliefs of three curriculum workers/funders: John Dewey, Booker T. Washington, and Julius Rosenwald. I chose these men because they were key innovators/spokespersons for education reform. John Dewey is often identified as the “father of progressivism” and can be seen as an exemplar of both the moderate and radical branches of progressivism. I focused upon Booker T. Washington because he was the most famous spokesperson of accommodationist education in the South. He occupied numerous positions (student, principal, and fundraiser) within schools that promoted accommodationism. Finally, I wanted to understand the role of philanthropists in funding progressive and accommodationist reforms. I chose to focus upon Julius Rosenwald, because he was largely identified as the most progressive philanthropist funding African American education during the time period studied.

In attempting to follow Moses’s (2004) advice that historians must move beyond identifying “contradictions within another person’s thinking” and to “discover the processes by which thinkers seek to reconcile or, as some would say, to rationalize their
own contradictions” (p. xii), I have included extensive quotes from John Dewey, Booker T. Washington, and Julius Rosenwald. While I am aware of the dangers of over-quoting (see Pinar et al, 2004, p. 4), I believe it is important to hear from the words of each man being studied as to better understand how he conceived of his own work in relation to progressivism and accommodationism.

To complete my work, I took notes (both pen and paper, and computer-based) on major topics in each reading. Within the archives, I searched for relevant words, phrases, and topics and then read the documents pertaining to those words. I categorized notes by subtopic and then found similarities and contradictions within each subtopic.

1.6 Access, Collection, and Analysis of Data

As this is a historical study, I did not need to gain access to individuals. Instead, I relied on a study of historical texts and archival material. I accessed a number of archives including: (a) Booker T. Washington Papers, (b) Julius Rosenwald Papers, (c) John Dewey Collection, and (d) Social Frontier/Frontiers of Democracy.

I conducted a preliminary search of the Booker T. Washington Papers online collection compiled by the University of Illinois Press and edited by Louis Harlan in 2010-2011. In this research, I did word searches (specifically related to key progressive actors) and read a small sample of letters. However, the Booker T. Washington Papers were taken off-line before I could complete an organized analysis of the collections. As such, I did not fully search this collection.
I explored the *Julius Rosenwald Papers 1905 – 1963*, which is a collection held at the University of Chicago Library’s Special Collections Research Center. I began my research of the Rosenwald Papers by carefully surveying the *Julius Rosenwald Paper Finding Guide*. I made note of all material that seemed relevant. I specifically examined information related to: the General Education Board, Chicago-based Training Schools, Hampton Institute, Hull House, industrial schools in the South, philanthropy, prejudice, speeches, articles, YMCA project, Rosenwald Schools Project, Tuskegee Institute, and Booker T. Washington. I explored relevant folders and scrapbooks. I read each document, summarized relevant works it in my research notes, and then organized appropriate data in subtopics related to the subsections in the Rosenwald chapter.

I also searched three databases within the *John Dewey Collection* at the Center for Dewey Studies at Southern Illinois University. Within each database, I searched for relevant words or phrases. For every article, lecture, or letter in which one of my search words appeared, I read and summarized the document and then organized relevant data in a number of sub-topics. Within the “Class Lecture Notes” database, I searched for numerous words, including: Negro, racism, race, segregation, Booker T. Washington, eugenics, Hampton, Tuskegee, Colored, Rosenwald, DuBois, Industrial school, Odell Waller, *Schools of To-Morrow*, and accommodationist. I searched the online editions of the “*Collected Works of John Dewey*” for numerous terms, including: prejudice, Black, eugenics, Johannesburg, Negro, Negro industrial schools, racism, race segregation, race integration, Tuskegee, Hampton, Armstrong, Booker T. Washington, Julius Rosenwald, W.E.B. DuBois, secondary school study, and county day school. However, as per the advice of Dewey Center staff, I did not quote directly from the electronic database. For
any material I quoted or paraphrased in my dissertation, I consulted the print edition of
the *Collected Works* – as such I credit the print editions with relevant citations. Finally, I
searched the “Correspondence of John Dewey” for terms and names of individuals,
including: racism, race, segregation, Tuskegee, Hampton, Negro, Black, Colored,
prejudice, eugenics, Thomas Jesse Jones, Valentine, Booker T. Washington, Julius
Rosenwald, DuBois, Johannesburg, Industrial schools, county day school, American
South, race riot, integration, secondary school study, and accommodationism. Again, I
read, noted, and organized relevant material.

Finally, I did an extensive search of the Social Reconstructionist journal, *Social
Frontier*/*Frontiers of Democracy* through the online archives at Teachers College
Record, which can be accessed (with a paid membership) at:
http://www.tcrecord.org/frontiers. I searched every article published in the journal between
its founding in 1934 and 1939 (the last year included in my study) to find references to a
number of key terms related to progressive education, accommodationist education, and
“Negro” education. However, there is not much of this data included in this dissertation
as there was little regarding opinions on race in general or Accommodationism in
particular until the 1940s, which was beyond the scope of this research.

I also did brief searches of the *Crisis* material online (available through *Google
Books*) and searched from articles, books, and speeches at various online databases to
find material relevant to this study.
1.7 Validity and Reliability

According to Carl Kaestle (1992), the historical profession is “fragmented, ideologically diverse, and somewhat relativistic” (p. 361). In fact, Kaestle (1992) argued that “the more certainly we have (collectively) about something historical, the more trivial it is likely to be” (p. 363). John Rury (2006) asserted that the “task of historian is to make references with the evidence at hand” (p. 323). Yet, this statement is challenged by Annette Henry (2006), who asserted that the “evidence at hand” often represents the interests of the power structure and it is the job of historians to uncover new material that speaks to exclusions from recorded histories (p. 342).

Into this fragmented and diverse field, the search for reliability and validity can be a challenge. To ensure that my dissertation is reliable, accurate, and credible, I followed guidelines offered by O.L. Davis (1991), who argued that historical research in the field of curriculum needs to be authoritative, interpretive, significant, contextualized, representative, well-written, and cognizant of multiple perspectives (p. 79-80). In my work, I began by surveying the existing evidence as recorded in numerous secondary sources. I examined orientations to curriculum and researched documented histories of the progressive and accommodationist movements as to properly situate the curriculum workers, funders, and reforms I was studying within appropriate historical and ideological context. I explored my central question from multiple perspectives and sought to illuminate the significance of the relationship between progressives and accommodationists, while clearly acknowledging a critical perspective. I took seriously the need for historians to understand reasons for internal contradictions in historical figures – as such I sought to move beyond dualisms and stereotypes and to present a
complex and nuanced story of curriculum history. Finally, I limited the number of curriculum workers and funders examined to provide a more thoughtful consideration of each man.

1.8 Project Limitations

There are great limits to the scope of this project: First, I limited the time studied from the 1860s - 1930s. Second, while I considered a large number of progressive curricular workers and movements, I limited my discussion to three men: (a) John Dewey, (b) Booker T. Washington, and (c) Julius Rosenwald. By limiting my focus to three men, I understand that I am neglecting to theorize the voices of progressive women. Also, with the exception of Booker T. Washington, I have not examined thoroughly the voices of African American educators or reformers. A larger study could include individuals such as: Mary McLeod Bethune, Anna Julia Cooper, Jane Addams, Margaret Naumburg, Charles Robinson, Alain Locke, W.E.B. DuBois, and Nannie Helen Burroughs. Third, I have not fully examined the role of Social Reconstructionists in this study. I did complete a survey of each issue of the Social Frontier from 1934 (when it was first published) until 1939 and found very little about race, industrial training, or schooling serving African American children. Most of the Social Reconstructionist discussions of race did not occur until the early 1940s. As such, they are not included in this study. In future studies, it would be important to analyze both the statements and silences of the Social Reconstructionists. Fourth, and most significantly, I did not
examine implemented policy. Rather, I sought to understand how curriculum workers, theorists, intellectuals, understood, and advocated for reform.
2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

To provide historical context to understand the relationship between accommodationist and progressive reforms, I used both secondary and primary sources to: (a) briefly examine the changing national social, political, and economic landscape; (b) explore the history of progressive education and accommodationist education in specific eras, and (c) examine the impact of regionalism on the Progressive Movement. This section will both provide historical context and include a general review of the existing literature.\(^3\)

While there are extensive histories of the progressive education movement (see, for example: Cremin 1964, Kliebard, 1995, Tyack, 1975, Semel and Sadovnik, 1999) and numerous studies of accommodationism (see, for example: Anderson, 1988 and Watkins, 2001), there are few studies that examine the implementation of progressive reforms in schools serving African American children. There are of, course, exceptions and I have relied heavily on the work of such scholars as Ronald Goodenow, Ann Winfield, Bill Lawson, and Frank Margonis who all discuss elements of race and racism in the context of the Progressive Movement in education. The silence/gap in research I seek to address in my work is the relationship between two movements. As such, I attempted to create a more dialectical recounting of the Progressive Movement, which utilizes existing literature to address the formation of progressive and accommodationist movements in both the North and South, serving both African American and White students.

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\(^3\) While I am not including a formal literature review, I am through this section seeking to properly place myself multiple existing conversations and ground my work within existing literature.
2.1 Changing Social, Political, and Economic Landscape

In contemplating the relationship between progressive and accommodationist education reforms, it must be noted that school reform initiatives are often crafted in response to political, economic, and social changes. While identifying direct causal relationships between significant social changes and school based reforms is difficult, it is nonetheless essential to understand school policy as fundamentally shaped in response to ideological beliefs and value laden conflicts about both the nature of schools and the nature of our social, political and economic systems (Tyack and Cuban, 1995, p. 44-47).

Progressive and accommodationist reforms were created and implemented during a time of rapid social, economic, and political changes in the United States. Emancipation, reconstruction, industrialization, immigration, migration, urbanization, and revolutions in both transportation and popular media produced profound changes in our nation. The Civil War ended in 1865, with more than 600,000 people, from both the North and South, dead and many more injured. The thirteenth amendment, which officially ended slavery, was also passed in 1865. Following emancipation, millions of African American freedmen sought political and economic rights, as well as the establishment of schools for their children. However, Black Codes, Jim Crow segregation, and inadequate funding for schooling were utilized to re-entrench existing racial inequities.

In the second half of the 19th century, Cornell West noted that the US became the “first manufacturing nation of the world” (West, 1989, p. 79). At a time of incredible economic growth and expansion, though, not everyone benefited. West (1989) argued
that while the investments in manufacturing grew from one to twelve billion dollars and US factories quadrupled the number of workers during this time period, America developed greater class divisions (p. 79-80). During this time period, the number of children attending schools greatly increased, as did the diversity of the student population. Schools were expected to help adjust students to a rapidly changing social order. As America move from a predominantly agrarian economy to an industrial economy, schools had to contend both with increased student populations and increased demands to prepare students for the workplace.

2.2 History of Progressive Education

The progressive education movement began to appear in popular media in the 1880s, although earlier progressives (like Francis Parker) began their work in the 1870s and the Progressive Education Association was not established until 1919 (Cremin, 1959, p. 1). Progressive education was largely the education component of the larger Progressive Movement, which focused on humanitarian reforms that sought to “apply the promise of American life” to a society that was largely changing due to industrialization, urbanization, and immigration (Cremin, 1959, p.2). The Progressive Movement was expansive, diverse, and somewhat fragmented. It had numerous and often contradictory tendencies and included reformers of various ideological positions. Business progressives called for greater efficiency, while social reformers sought to improve conditions for the most vulnerable and to create more democratic institutions, and a smaller group of radical progressives advocated an end to capitalism. Progressive
reforms included efforts to expand economic activity, dismantle trusts and monopolies, demand workplace rights, end child labor, increase food safety, diminish machine politics, increase productivity, make government and schools more efficient, and make schools more relevant.

It is important to note that reformers associated with the Progressive Movement were often middle class, White, professionals. Many within the progressive movement ignored issues of racial justice, while others actively endorsed racist policies (see Winfield, 2007). It must be noted that the Progressive Movement was most powerful at a time of racial repression and Jim Crow segregation; however, within the larger progressive movement “reformers paid little attention to the poisons of racism, to the problem of minorities in general” (Greene, 1988, p. 44-45). Maxine Greene (1988) commented many “great reformers,” including both John Dewey and Jane Addams did not acknowledge the “sense in which a free society (and its citizens) is morally endangered by unacknowledged mastery, by domination of every kind” (p. 46). Howard Zinn (1980) wrote that during the Progressive Era, “lynchings were reported every week; it was the low point for Negroes, North and South” and progressive leaders did little to address the violence (p. 347).

It is also important to acknowledge the impact of regionalism on the development of the Progressive Movement. Dewey Grantham (1983) argued that while Southern progressives had some common goals, including the desire for community and economic advancement, that many “southern progressives looked toward the creation of a clearly defined community that would accommodate a society differentiated by race and class”
Thus, large numbers of progressives, from both the North and the South, either ignored and/or supported racist policies during this era.

Like the larger Progressive Movement in which it was part, the progressive education movement was large, diverse, and contradictory. It is important to remember that most progressives were “not revolutionaries, but rather people who were interested in fixing specific problems and improving upon the status quo” (Hayes, 2006, p.5). While almost everyone in the progressive education movement agreed that traditional education was problematic, there was little consensus about the character of a new system of education. In fact, in *Experience and Education* (1938/1997), Dewey argued that many within the Progressive Movement conceptualized “new education” only in relationship to its opposition to traditional education (p. 20).

Yet, despite the divisions and contradictions, Lawrence Cremin (1959) argued that there were a number of elements which characterized the progressive education movement: (a) a greater emphasis in schools on “health, vocation, and the quality of family and community life;” (b) a greater focus on “pedagogical principles derived from new scientific research in psychology and social sciences,” (c) a commitment to “tailo[r] instruction more and more to the different kinds and classes of children who were brought within into the purview of the school,” and (d) the belief that all individuals could create and benefit from a new society, with a focus on both the arts and the sciences (p. 2). However, even if most progressives agreed with the broad principles summarized by Cremin, there still existed key struggles within the movement (Kliebard, 1995; Moses, 2004; Cremin, 1959).
In fact, numerous scholars have identified branches, strands, or wings within the Progressive Movement to illustrate some of the ideological and practical differences between groups of early progressive reformers. David Labaree (2005) argued that while today’s progressive movement is largely defined in pedagogical terms, that the early progressive education movement included a struggle between two groups: administrative and pedagogical progressives (p. 277). Tyack (1975) illustrated this point when he argued that administrative progressives, who were focused on efficiency and scientific management, “had little in common in aim either with the small libertarian wing of the educational progressivism or with the small group of social reconstructionism” (p. 196). Labaree (2005) argued that pedagogical progressives, including Francis Parker, William Kilpatrick, Harold Rugg, and John Dewey, had a “common romantic vision” largely focused upon pedagogical changes in the classroom (p. 280). Conversely, administrative progressives, including David Sneedan, Edward Ross, Charles Ellwood, W.W. Charters, and John Franklin Bobbitt, were focused upon efficiency, differentiation, and vocational education (282). John Rury (2002) also identified administrative and pedagogical progressivism as “two wings of progressive reform” (p. 141). Others scholars, like David Setran (2003), identified the competing branches as “liberal” or “conservative.” Semel (1999) identified three “strands” in the Progressive Education movement: (a) child-centered pedagogy which adjusted the curriculum to the child, (b) “social efficiency/social engineering reforms” which adjusted the child to society, and (c) social reconstructionism, which “emphasized the community and especially the development of a more just, humane, and egalitarian society” (p. 10).
Throughout this paper, I will refer to three branches of progressive education as: moderate (child centered), radical (social reconstructionist), and conservative (social behaviorist). While I am identifying each branch as part of the progressive movement, I acknowledge that each branch had different and often competing goals, ideologies, and orientations to the curriculum. Moderate progressives, known by many as pedagogical progressives, embraced an experientialist approach to the curriculum and a focus on the needs and interests of the child. When addressing issues of social change and democratic reform, moderate progressives focused on gradual change through pedagogical reforms. Moderate progressives often believed that if schools supported children and helped educate them to become active citizens and community members, they would create a better society.

Conservative progressives advocated a social behaviorist approach to the curriculum. They were progressive in that they wanted to increase efficiency and modify the curriculum to meet the schools’ needs and perceived potential of each student. They argued that by creating a more efficient school system, schools could better prepare students for successful living after school. Early conservative progressives stressed activities analysis; whereas, experts would study the discrete actions that helped an individual become successful and model lessons on such discrete actions. Conservative progressives’ model of change was based on scientific management and measurement. By tracking students and providing education that was tailored to their “talents,” schools would help craft a more efficient system. By representing the system to be meritorious,

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4 This framework is influenced both by Semel’s (1999) description of three “strands” of progressivism including the radicals, conservatives, and liberals (p. 17) as well as by Schubert’s (1986) orientations to the curriculum, which include intellectual traditionalists, experientialists, and social behaviorists.
this education plan would quell social unrest because it was supposedly objective and unbiased. Many early conservative progressives believed achievement to be racialized and both John Franklin Bobbitt and Edward Thorndike were associated with the Eugenics Movements in the United States (see Winfield, 2007; Selden 1999).

Radical progressives advocated a Social Reconstructionist approach to the curriculum and believed that the purpose of school was to ameliorate social ills and prepare students to create a more just society. Many Social Reconstructionists believed that all schooling was a form of indoctrination and that it was the role of schools to help teach students to reconstruct society. Social Reconstructionists were very active in shaping ideas and discourse, but had limited impact in school-based reforms.

I must note that in conceptualizing three branches of the progressive movement, I do not mean to imply that there were no differences between the branches. In fact, I believe that conservative and moderate/radical progressives were in a struggle to determine the direction of school reform for most of the period studied. I understand that many leading curriculum theorists do not include conservatives focused upon social efficiency or behaviorism within the progressive movement. In fact, Paul Shaker and Elizabeth Heilman (2008) offered a critique of Diane Ravitch’s Left Back: A Century of School Reform in part because her definition of progressive included those within the social efficiency branch of school reform (p. 146-147). Shaker and Heilman (2008) argued that Ravitch ignores key differences in goals, methods, and application of science when she “lump[ed] efficiency-minded social Darwinists together with socially minded progressives” (p. 148). I agree with much of this critique. However, I believe that while all three branches should not be “lumped together” or assumed to be ideologically
unified, it is useful to view all three branches as a part of the same movement because while the three branches were ideologically diverse, they were not mutually exclusive. For example, both the moderates and the conservatives advocated differentiated instruction and project-based curriculum. Radicals and conservatives both asserted that schools should serve as sites of social engineering and social change. All three groups rejected traditional humanistic education and embraced various aspects of developmentalism (see Labarre, 2005). Also, while each branch had distinctive and very different ideologies, Rury (2002) argued that

the lived reality of most educators at the time was considerably more complex than suggested by these widely divergent categories. Many probably took inspiration from both wings of progressivism in education, without seeing them as necessarily at odds with one another (142).

This can be illustrated in numerous reforms. For example, there were both conservative and moderate elements of the efforts to create a “core-curriculum,” industrial education, and life needs and life adjustment programs.

It is also important to understand the manner in which a more moderate message was used to soften some of the more utilitarian and restrictive elements of conservative reform. Labaree (2005) argued that while conservative progressives had greater success because their “reform message appealed to people in power” (284), that the language of moderate/pedagogical progressivism was often coupled with conservative reforms as to make it more acceptable to the public. That there are both overlapping initiatives between the branches and that they were often not distinguishable in school based actions, suggests that the branches should be considered part of the same movement. Viewing both the connections and the contestations between the various branches of progressive
also illuminates the manner in which reforms based upon contradictory impulses often get reconciled in classroom practices.

It is also important to note that much that different branches of progressivism operated in different schooling context. Semel (1999) posited that “child-centered progressive schools were almost all independent, private schools, [whereas] public education was dominated by the social engineering strand of progressivism” (p. 13). Thus, moderate progressivism was largely employed in schools educating more affluent children, conservative progressivism was usually employed to track and sort students in public schools, and radical progressivism, while largely influential in framing the debates about the purposes of education, rarely became dominant within schools.

2.3 History of Accommodationist Education

Unlike the progressive education movement, accommodationism was not a popular movement; rather it was an orientation or approach to curriculum often identified as the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education. Initially developed at schools like Hampton University and Tuskegee University, accommodationist curriculum “emphasized vocational training, physical/ manual labor, character building, and a social science package, suggesting the acceptance of racial subservience for Negroes” (Watkins, 1993, p. 324). In *The White Architects of Black Education* (2001), Watkins examined the ideology and actions of leading supporters of accommodationist education, namely: General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, Dr. Franklin H. Giddings, the Phelps Stokes family, Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, the Rockefeller Foundations, Robert Ogden, William
Baldwin, and J. L. M. Curry. Watkins (2001) argued that together these “White architects” were each a part of hegemonic alliance that sought to “solv[e] the Negro question” as part of an effort to “reunit[e] the country and facilitat[e] the opening of the new corporate industrial order for the twentieth century” (p. 2).

James Anderson (1988) detailed early efforts by ex-slaves to build a new system of education in the South (p. 3); however, a lack of economic and political capital made sustaining such schools difficult. Many schools relied on funding, initially from missionary/religious organizations and later by large corporate philanthropists in the North, to build and maintain schools. Yet, the schools funded by Northern philanthropists largely focused on industrial schools which Anderson (1988) asserted offered a “second class education” that was “designed to adjust black southerners to racially qualified forms of political and economic subordination” (p. 3). Hampton Institute, founded by General Armstrong, was the first industrial school in the South to employ an accommodationist curriculum. The social studies curriculum at Hampton was developed by Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones. Jones popularized his message of accommodationist through his leadership of the Committee on Social Studies of the National Education Association (NEA) and through his work in such publications as the Southern Workmen, an “illustrated monthly” that was produced at Hampton.

Watkins (1993) argued that “[o]f all the Black curriculum orientations, accommodationism was the one most clearly associated with an imposed political and racial agenda” (p. 324). Accommodationist education was seen as both a curricular reform and a direct effort by Northern industrialists and philanthropists to “re-anne[x] the
South in an orderly way,” while maintaining the existing social and economic order (Watkins, 1993, p. 325).

2.4 Education Reform Movements in the 1860s-1930s

Education reforms and reformers are clearly impacted by their social context. The arguments made by many early progressives illustrate the impact of both racism and a middle class bias that were entrenched in many progressive reforms. For many progressives, including Jane Addams, William Kilpatrick, Horace Mann, G. Stanley Hall, and even John Dewey, education, not political action, was the way toward (gradual) social change.

The struggle for the curricula does not simply manifest as an intellectual debate between theorists and educators from different paradigmatic orientations. To understand the curricular reforms during this time, it is essential to understand both the physical and ideological environment in which they took place. While progressive movements in both the North and the South had a common core, which included child-centered curriculum, increased testing, involvement with the Progressive Education Association (PEA), and an increase in philanthropic education endeavors, each region's economic and social conditions influenced the manner in which the progressive ideology was implemented (Goodenow, 1981, p. 195). Southern progressivism was influenced by both economic depression and “the traditional attitudes toward the ‘place’ of blacks in the regional political economy” (Goodenow, 1981a, p. 195). As such, the Southern progressive movement was largely limited by the need to act within existing and socially acceptable
norms. Yet, it was not economics or even ideology alone that created such divergent movements in the North and the South. The South also lagged decades behind the North in establishing a common school system. In the North, the common schools movement began in the 1830s and systems of public education were fairly well established by the beginning of the Progressive Era. Yet, until the conclusion of the Civil War, it must be noted that the South continued to “enac[t] legislation making it a crime to teach enslaved children” to read or write (Anderson, 1988, p. 2). Thus, at the same moment progressives began to demand changes to curriculum in the North, formalized schooling for African American children (and poor White children) was just beginning in the South.

2.4.1 1860 – 1889

In 1860, the United States produced 50% of its national wealth from agriculture and nearly 4 million African American men, women and children were enslaved. By 1861, the United States was engulfed in a bloody Civil War that ended in 1865 with a Union victory, an end to slavery, and a death toll that exceeded half of a million people. The North, an industrial power, sought to unify the country while also shaping the new social and economic order. Beginning in the 1870s, the second industrial revolution brought great advances in industry, transportation, and communications. Yet, it was also a period of increasing wealth disparities, unsafe and unregulated working conditions, and local and national government workers largely influenced by wealthy industrialists.

During this period, common schools in the North were well established and enrollment was increasing. Schools in urban areas served a wide variety of students,
including many immigrants, children of immigrants, and rural children who relocated to urban areas with their families. Yet, northern reformers began to express discontent with traditional education systems, which they believed to be ineffective and unresponsive to the desires, interests, and developmental needs of children. Francis Parker, who Dewey identified as the father of the Progressive Movement, worked in the 1870s to make the child and his or her interest the center of the curriculum (Schubert, 1986, p. 73).

Internationally, the progressive ideas of Friedrich Froebel, Johann Herbart, Johann Pestalozzi, and Leo Tolstoy were being developed and enacted throughout Europe.

During this same time period, directly following the end of the Civil War, universal public education was yet to be established in the South. In the South, following a brief period of Radical Reconstruction, African American citizens were subjected to Black Codes, attacks by the Ku Klux Klan, a system of sharecropping, and low-paying wage labor that made economic success exceedingly difficult. African American Freedmen, eager to “uplift themselves” through education, sought to create schools, but lacked the resources. Sufficient public dollars were never allocated to fund public schools, especially those schools serving African American children. Early schools were funded and supported by northern missionary societies, such as the American Missionary Association. Such missionary supported schools often stressed the need for a classical education (Bond, 1939, p. 269-270). In the South, the focus on classic liberal education, however, began to shift with the founding, and then increasing financial support, of Hampton (1868) and Tuskegee (1881). While sometimes characterized as progressive because of its project-based instruction and connections between the school and the community, the Hampton-Tuskegee model of industrial education stressed an
accommodationist orientation to curriculum (see Watkins, 2001; Anderson, 1988). Philanthropists, many of whom were Northern industrialists, provided funding to schools, often with provisions as to the types of schools created and the curriculum offered (see Watkins, 2001, p. 23).

Thus, while Northern schools were three decades into their publically-funded Common School Movement, African Americans in the South were just beginning to establish schools, often with private money. In the South, the children of the wealthy, White citizens were classically educated, while common schools for lower class White children and newly emancipated African Americans were non-existent (Bond, 1939, p. 267).

2.4.2 1890 -1914

By 1890, the very landscape of the US was drastically changing. Reconstruction, industrialization, increased immigration, and urbanization all produced great social change. Schools were expected to mediate relations between “the family and a puzzling and impersonal social order” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 1). Manufacturing increased rapidly, as did the number of workers employed by factories (West, 1989, p. 80). Unprecedented wealth was amassed by a few; yet, more than 10% of the population lived in abject poverty and “[t]he average workday was ten hours for a six-day week, with an absolutely appalling accident rate” (West, 1989, p. 80).

During the 1890s, as the US experienced increasing urbanization and industrialization, greatly expanding numbers of children in school, booming immigration,
and “new social order,” America experienced an identity crisis. Questions of what (and who) had worth were at the forefront of national debated. In education, the National Education Association’s (NEA’s) Committee of Ten (1893)\(^5\) and the NEA’s Committee of Fifteen (1895)\(^6\) reinforced humanist values for education; however, while there was agreement by the moderate and conservative progressives that a humanistic, liberal education was not working, there was little agreement about the direction education should take. The moderate progressives, primarily composed on child study advocates and developmentalists, argued that schools were failing students and that real learning only took place when students were engaged in “more active pursuits such as manual training or industrial education and more attention to recreation and play activities” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 38). Some moderates, such as G. Stanley Hall, had more specific and detailed programs based upon assumed “stages in development and the history of the human race” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 38). Dewey, a moderate progressive who had many disagreements with child study advocates, opened his Lab School at the University of Chicago in 1896. Dewey argued that schools should “lea[d] the child from present interests to an intellectual command of the modern world “by creating balance between subject and child interest (Kliebard, 1995, p. 55). Yet, the balance between subject, child, and society that Dewey articulated, proved to be a great challenge.

\(^{5}\) The Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies of the National Education Association issued a report in 1893 which “determined that all disciplines would qualify students for college” and thus marked a move away from a classical liberal arts curriculum (Schubert, 1986, p. 73).

\(^{6}\) The Committee of Fifteen of the National Education Association issued a report in 1895 that endorsed William Harris’s view that curriculum should be organized around the “five windows of the soul or basic divisions of knowledge” (Schubert, 1986, p. 73).
During this same time, the conservative progressives were advocating increased efficiency and standardization. After his survey of Northern schools in 1892, Joseph Mayer Rice, a pediatrician and reformer influenced by Herbartians (early experientialists), traveled the country, observed schools, and wrote his findings in regular articles in the popular journal, The Forum (Schubert, 1986, p. 74). Rice advocated for more progressive and scientific schools which would “develop the child naturally in all his facilities, intellectual, moral and physical” through inquiry (Rice, 1893/1969, p. 21). While initially considered a moderate progressive, Rice also was one of the pioneers of the efficiency and standardization movement identified with conservative progressivism.

2.4.3 1915-1929

By the time the US entered World War I in 1914, it was a superpower with a growing economic power. World War I transformed the US. Women had entered the work force in large numbers and young men experienced war. African Americans fought for our country, yet many returned to communities marked by racism and violence. During the Progressive Era, muckrakers, socialists, feminists organizers, proponents of racial justice, middle class professionals, working class laborers all fought for reforms in cities and towns throughout the US (Schubert et al 2002, p. 1-2). There was a large range of demands: while some within the progressive movement demanded mild reforms, others made “demands for equitable distribution of wealth” and a change in the relationship between business and government (Schubert et. al, 2002, p.2).

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7 Rice’s work is not traditionally described as a survey of Northern schools. However, Rice visited schools only in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Washington DC, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota (Rice, 1893/1969, p. 3-4).
During the 1920s, many experienced economic success and numerous movements were active: (a) prohibition was enacted, (b) the Harlem Renaissance/New Negro movement was vibrant, and (c) large scale movements for racial justice were organized. Yet, this period was also marked by an increasing violence against African American citizens (Schubert et al., 2002, p. 32). It was also during the 1920s that there was widespread popular acceptance of eugenics. Winfield (2010) argued that:

> [f]rom the chapter on eugenics in high school biology, texts that recommended sterilization of the unfit, immigration restriction, and a justification of racial segregation . . . young people were charged with carrying the nation to a more eugenic future (p. 152).

In the second decade of the 20th century, both Experientialists and Social Behaviorists opposed traditional education (Intellectual Traditionalism) and the field of curriculum was officially “born” with the publication of *The Curriculum* by Bobbitt (1918), the publication of both *The Project Method* by William Kilpatrick (1918) and the National Education Association’s *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education Report*, and the founding of the Progressive Education Association (PEA) in 1918. In the first two decades of the 1900s, moderate and conservative progressives were active; however, conservative progressives were having the most influence on school based practices (Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Schubert et al., 2002).

During this time period, there were numerous reports and policy changes that impacted schools. In 1918, the National Education Association’s *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education Report* was published, defining education’s purpose as including such things as a focus on: (a) health, (b) vocation, (c) citizenship, and (d) character (Kliebard, 1995, p. 98). A second influential report, issued by the National Education
Association’s Committee on Social Studies in 1916, began a movement to replace history with “social studies” in the curriculum. Although the document itself has been viewed in a number of contradictory ways (from progressive to accommodationist to humanist), it is essential to note that Thomas Jesse Jones, a teacher at Hampton and the director of the Phelps-Stokes Foundation, was the chair of the Committee on the Social Sciences (Johnson, 2000, p. 88). The Committee on Social Studies Report “led a national commission to adopt [Jones’s] Hampton curriculum for all the nation's schools” (Johnson, 2000, p. 91). A third major document, the Smith-Hughes Act, was passed in 1917 and expressed legislative support of vocational training. While vocational schools sometimes claimed inspiration from progressive philosophy, they often operated to train students for work in factories, fields, and homes and were opposed by leading moderate progressives like John Dewey and Jane Addams. Finally, the 1917 Negro Education Report was issued by the US Bureau of Education. Led by Thomas Jesses Jones, the report both acknowledged systemic underfunding of African American schools and advocated “‘modern,’ progressive solutions for southern black public,” which proponents praised as curriculum adapted to the needs of pupils and critics argued “treated segregation as both legitimate and natural” (Ravitch, 2001, p. 108). Together, the Cardinal Principles, Committee on Social Studies report, the Smith-Hughes Act, and the Negro Education Report, changed the direction of education and increased the occurrences of vocation and differentiated instruction, often influenced by race and class.

It is clear that such reforms had impact on the struggle for the African American curriculum. In the early 1900s, many African American children were still not in school.

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8 The report was underwritten by the private Phelps-Stokes fund (Ravitch, 2001, p. 108).
Thus, the struggle for the curricula was happening just as large numbers of schools for African American children were being constructed in the South. Started in part to persuade African Americans to stay in the South during the Great Migration of 1914, an effort to build more schools and ensure universal education began (Anderson, 1988, p. 152). In fact, during the first year of the Great Migration, Julius Rosenwald began his building program in the American South. The movement for universal schooling was largely successful; however, many of the schools established taught not the liberal arts curriculum being advocated by many African American leaders and missionary societies, but were rather industrial schools that were accommodationist in nature. Watkins (2001) argued that industrial education was perceived as a step toward the gradual change and “industrial education was presented as progressive reform” (p.40).

During this era, the belief in African American inferiority and the support of industrial education could be found with many White Southern progressives. Following the Civil War, public university administrators filled key leadership roles both within institutions of higher learning and in the emerging progressive movement in the South (Dennis, 1998, p. 42). Michael Dennis (1998) argued that Southern academics, strongly aligned with the Southern progressive movement, provided the ideological support for industrial education and served as “most influential propagandists for a system of instruction designed to maintain Black subservience” (p. 142). Dennis (1998) argued that such men as Edwin Alderman (University of Virginia), Charles Dabney (University of Tennessee) and Samuel Chiles Mitchell (University of South Carolina) combined progressive focus on the practical with support for the maintenance of the race-based
segregation and the current social order (Dennis, 1998, p 143.) Harlan (1983) identified many of the same “southern white college presidents” as serving as members of the Southern Education Board, which in its beginning excluded African American participation in board meetings (p. 187). Harlan reported that the Southern Education Board largely focused on White education, citing Southern Education Board member, Edwin A. Alderman, as stating that educating one White man “to the point that knowledge and not prejudice will guide his conduct . . . is worth more to the black man himself than the education of ten Negroes” (Alderman as quoted in Harlan 1983, p. 189-190). Thus, the education of White children was prioritized. Dennis (1998) argued that Southern progressives often “viewed the Hampton-Tuskegee model as the only acceptable paradigm for Black advancement in the South” (p. 146).

In the 1920s, IQ tests were increasing used. Much time and energy was spent identifying individuals by perceived mental capability. Perceived capability was closely related to educational and occupational goals. For example, those considered “feebleminded” were classified as “merely mental children,” many of whom could be trained as “effective factory workers” (Wiggam as quoted in Winfield, 2007, p. 78). Winfield (2007) argued that, “Feeblemindedness, thus defined, was a motivating force behind the development of technical and agricultural, as well as, gifted and talented education programs” (p. 78). Thus, schools moved away from a standard curriculum and began to differentiate based upon both needs and abilities. This differentiation had different impacts on different student populations. In many private schools, which often served affluent, White children, differentiation could mean following the students’ interests, while in public schools, differentiation often meant sorting children by
perceived ability (see Semel and Sadovnik, 1999). Further, it is imperative to note the influence of eugenic ideology as influential to the development of many progressive reforms.

2.4.4 1930-1939

After the stock market crashed in 1929, the US experienced the worst economic depression in US History. The unemployment rate was at a historic high. In part, spurred by the Depression, many in the United States were organizing against injustice and demanding equity, assistance, and jobs.

During the 1930s, moderate progressives were establishing many child-centered, project-based, naturalistic schools. It was during this era that the Eight-Year Study (Aikin, 1942), which examined 33 high schools in 11 states, illustrated the potential of experimental schools employing progressive pedagogy to prepare students at least as well as traditional schools. While considered a major victory for progressive reformers, the success of the Eight-Year Study, and others like it, needs to be understood in a context of increasing integration of the branches of progressivism. Kliebard (1995) argued that the: so-called core curriculum, one of the most abiding outcomes of the Eight-Year Study, was emerging as a fusion of the social efficiency concern that the schools prepare directly and specifically for the duties of life and the activity curriculum’s overriding emphasis on the needs and interests of the learner as the basis of the curriculum (p. 187).
In the 1930s, Schubert et al. (2002) described this merger of various paradigmatic orientations as a “conciliarist orientation to curriculum” in which the Social Behaviorist model identified with conservative progressivism “became more fully integrated into the fabric of the conciliarists that dominated practice” (p. 63).

At this same moment, curriculum workers were surveying schools, creating standardized scope and sequence charts for the curriculum, and making recommendations to make Southern schools and school systems more efficient. Goodenow (1975) described how early curriculum workers, such as Doak Campbell and Hollis Caswell, were influential in efforts to create curricular guides in schools throughout the US; however, Goodenow (1975) noted that many such guides reinforced racial stereotypes and supported the continuance of segregation. Goodenow (1975) reported that curriculum guides often stressed “cooperation within groups and between groups” (in Virginia); portrayed African Americans stereotypically (Alabama); cited the “need for black loyalty and constructive labor” (Louisiana); and normalized a “life of menial jobs” for African American students (Georgia) (p. 377 – 378). Yet, Goodenow (1975) argued these guides were largely considered progressive. It is important to note that Southern reforms were often praised by progressive organizations in both the North and the South based upon their classroom based pedagogical reforms.

The numerous challenges to the conciliarist approach and child-centered progressivism in the 1930s must be noted. Radical progressives criticized moderate progressives for being too focused on child-centered pedagogy and for ignoring social
context and social justice. In the 1930s, George Counts\(^9\) famously asked “Dare Progressives Build a New Social Order?” Counts (1932b) argued that the progressive movement had no theory and only reflected the view of the “liberal-minded upper middle class” parents who send their children to progressive schools. He argued that while such parents are generally liberal and “are full of good will and humane sentiment” with universal hopes of peace and justice, they have no “abiding loyalties” and who often are “insensitive to the accepted forms of social justices” (Counts, 1932b, p. 5-6). Counts (1932b) further argued that progressive education “cannot place its trust in a child-centered school,” but rather must actively stand on the side of justice (p. 7). Many African American progressives also argued that progressive reforms needed to contain an analysis of power and directly address societal racism.

Despite the result of the Eight-Year Study’s success in illustrating that progressive schools tended to perform better than more traditional schools, the Progressive Movement was still ill-defined and oft-criticized. Essentialists, such as William Bagley, argued that a common curriculum was necessary to create “an effective democracy” (Bagley as quoted in Kliebard, 1995, p. 198). By the 1950s, the Progressive Education Association had disbanded and a growing emphasis on essentialism and “back to basics” education came to dominate most (public) schools. Despite efforts to create more humanistic curricula in the 1960s and 1970s, conservative essentialism has remained a dominant force in our schools. This can be explained, in part, by Tyack and Cuban’s (1995) argument that most successful school reforms do not change core

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\(^9\) Counts was among a group of Social Reconstructionists that in the 1930s spoke powerfully in favor of more direct political analysis and action. Reconstructionist promoted, as summarized by Watkins (2005), “advocacy of a ‘collectivist’ society”; a call to “in[k] education with (collectivist) political ideology” and social action; the need for schools to “participate in reshaping society to realize the true mission of education,” namely citizenship and social good (p. 121-122).
classes or the structure of schools, are “non-controversial” to those in power, are easily monitored and enforced, and are supported by “influential constituency” (p. 57). We must ask how a history of segregation, inequitable funding, and racialized curriculum continues to impact our schools today.
3: PROGRESSIVES AND ACCOMMODATIONISTS

Progressive reforms during 1860s through the 1930s were diverse and often contradictory. As such, many identified accommodationist curriculum and the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education as progressive. Both progressive reforms and accommodationist reforms focused on character building, learning by doing, and industrial training. There were, however, fundamental differences. While accommodationism sought to maintain the existing social order, both moderate and radical progressives sought to create more democratic and just social order. Yet, it could be argued that many progressive reformers did tacitly accept “existing race relations” because they never actively challenged them. In this chapter, I examine orientations to the curriculum, explore the manner in which regionalism and scientific racism was embedded in school reform, and analyze the embodied contradictions of leading curriculum workers. Finally, I explore critiques of the Progressive Movement offered by leading African American progressives such as Ambrose Caliver, Charles Johnson, and Horace Mann Bond.

3.1 Orientations to Curriculum

As Kliebard (1995) has reminded us, the history of curriculum reform is not a story of linear progression; rather, curriculum reform is really a “struggle for the curriculum” with no clear victors. To understand the history of curriculum reform movements, it is necessary to understand the paradigmatic orientations to the curriculum embodied by different reform initiatives. Understanding the ideologies of each
orientation, I believe, is helpful to both frame the debate and to understand the varied, and often contradictory, branches of progressivism. As such, I conducted a brief survey of various orientations to curriculum (Schubert, 1986; Kliebard, 1995; Eisner & Vallance, 1974; Watkins, 1993; Lee and Slaughter-Defoe, 2001).

I found that while each scholar conceived of “orientations” differently, many of the mainstream orientations\textsuperscript{10} did not address the curricular reforms implemented in African American schools. Scholars of African American history have addressed this silence by offering historical models and orientations particular to African American schooling (for example: Anderson, 1988; Watkins, 1993; Woodson, 1933/2008). It is in reviewing the relationship between the mainstream/Eurocentric and Black orientations to curriculum that the complex relationship between progressives and accommodationists emerge. Within this chapter, I focus upon the orientations presented by Schubert (1986) and Watkins (1993).

Schubert (1986) presented three curricular orientations: (a) Intellectual Traditionalism, characterized by a focus on disciplines, studied through the great works and a classical liberal arts curriculum; (b) Social Behaviorism, which stressed efficiency, accountability, and measurement and endorsed a curriculum focused upon “operationally designed skills and knowledge” determined through scientific study to be of practical use; and (c) Experientialism, which ideally struck a balance between the subject matter, students, and society (p. 14-17). The “Experientialist” orientation stressed a curriculum that helped students move from their own interests and needs to a deep understanding of

\textsuperscript{10} Most orientations, even those within a single scholar’s classifications, are not mutually exclusive and reform movements and individuals often draw from multiple orientations.
the disciplines (p. 18). The Experientialist orientation combined both a focus on child study and Social Reconstructionism. While Schubert does not classify any of these orientations as progressive, the Experientialist orientation, aligned with a Deweyan philosophy, would most likely be considered progressive, as it encompassed both moderate (child-study) and radical (Social Reconstructionist) branches of progressive reform. It is also important to note that the Social Behaviorist orientation would be included in the conservative branch of the Progressive Movement (see Ravitch, 2001; Tyack, 1975).

Watkins (1993) presented six “Black Orientations” to curriculum: (a) functionalism, which developed during the time of slavery and focused upon skills needed for survival, human interaction, and “preparation for life”; (b) accommodationism, which focused on vocational training, manual labor, character building, and an ideology of racial subservience; (c) liberal education orientation, which centered on expanding democracy through a classical curriculum and which had a “clear connection to Deweyan themes”; (d) Black nationalism, which sought to “unite various independent ethnic groups under the banner of collective nationalists” and maintain separate schools; (e) Afro-centrism, which aimed to “legitimize expression, public discourse, feeling, myth-making, and emotion as acceptable avenues for inquiry”; and (f) Social Reconstructionism, which was aligned with mainstream social reconstructionism and is based on the premise that education should lead to social change (p.324-333). Watkins argued that these six orientations could be broken down into three distinctive categories. Functionalism and accommodationism were “the result of discriminatory and colonial practices,” while the liberal education orientation expressed “the hope Black
American had for common education in the emerging democratic industrial state”; and Black Nationalism, Afro-centrism, and Social Reconstructionism were “radical responses” to current conditions (p. 323). In Watkins’s orientations, functionalism is clearly outside of the Progressive Movement; however, all of the other orientations could be argued to be progressive.

Watkins, in his introduction to Black Orientations (1993), argued that the racism and segregation in the US society means that “Black curriculum orientations will continue to develop as a part of, and separate from, the mainstream curriculum movement” (p. 321). This is clear in examining the orientations together. There are a few orientations that appear in both Schubert (1986) and Watkins (1993). For example, both have a “Social Reconstructionists” orientation, although Schubert (1986) included the “social reconstructionists” as part of the experientialist orientation, which also includes “child study” advocates. In Watkins’s (1993) orientations (as in Lee and Slaughter-DeFoe, 2001) there is not an orientation which is explicitly “child-centered;” rather, most of the Watkins’s progressive orientations focus on curricula mindful of the child within his or her larger community. This may be explained, in part, by Lindsay and Harris’s\textsuperscript{11} (1977) contention that systems of White domination and African American oppression meant that while Whites “could afford the luxury of individualized learning,” African American schools needed to “sustai[n] Black existence. . . and eventually foster Black Progress” (p. 348).

\textsuperscript{11} Lindsay and Harris (1977) were discussing the absence of progressive Black colleges in the 1930s, yet I would argue that it could be applied to K-12 education as well.
Watkins’s (1993) liberal education orientation is also similar to Schubert’s (1986) intellectual traditionalist orientation. Both draw upon humanistic values and a liberal arts education. Yet, the intellectual traditionalist featured in Schubert’s (1986) orientation was opposed by most progressives during the time period studied. Within the Black Orientations to Curriculum, Watkins (1993) argued that those advocating liberal curriculum, while not directly challenging “the industrial ordering of society,” were progressives who were dedicated to expanding democracy, largely through leadership development (p. 327-328). Further, in the context of African American education, many educators and leaders advocating a classical, liberal education were viewed as oppositionist in contrast with widespread support by the White philanthropic community for industrial education (see Anderson, 1988). For example, many African American leaders saw classic liberal arts curriculum as the “best intellectual traditions of their era and the best means to understand their own historical development and sociological uniqueness” and argued while not specific to African American history or culture, at least a liberal arts curriculum did “not necessarily convince black students that they were inferior to white people” (Anderson 1988, p. 28-29). Thus, many of those who actively opposed the accommodationist Tuskegee-Hampton model (even those like Du Bois who are clearly considered part of the Progressive Movement) advocated not for a strictly

12 It should be recognized that W.E.B. DuBois, one of the most vocal critics of accommodationist education, could be conceptualized in numerous curriculum orientations. Alridge (2009) defined W.E.B. DuBois as an “afrocentric pragmatist” who believed in classical and liberal education and that “education should be grounded in Black history and culture to help Blacks better navigates the larger world” (p. 28-29). Watkins (1993) referenced DuBois in numerous orientations, noting connections between DuBois’s “Talented Tenth” plan and the Liberal Education Orientation (p. 328) as well as his connection to Social Reconstruction, stating that “[w]hile formal ties between Social Reconstructionism and radical Black educator activist were few it can be argued that an ideological connection certainly did exist” between DuBois and the Frontiersmen (p. 333). Frontiersmen, including John Dewey, represent the radical, Social Reconstructionist, branch of progressivism.
experientialist curriculum, but rather access to a strong liberal arts education for African American students (Anderson, 1988, pp. 66-67). As such, African American leaders may have been aligned (or perceived to be aligned) with Intellectual Traditionalists, not the Experientialists (or Social Behaviorists) who were often viewed as the progressives. Thus the question must be asked, did Northern progressives support accommodationism because of their opposition to liberal arts curriculum? Did this put White Northern progressives in conflict with African American leaders, teachers, and students who were advocating for expanded access to a liberal arts curriculum that northern progressives deemed outdated and traditional?

Watkins’s (1993) functionalists, Black Nationalists, and Afro-centric orientations do not appear in Schubert’s orientations. In fact, in all of the mainstream orientations examined, “education for Black self-determination,” of which Afro-centrism and Black Nationalism could be part, is absent. This is significant because it means that an important component of Black resistance to mainstream curricular reforms is missing (Lee and Slaughter-DeFoe, 2001). While such orientations were defined in the context of schooling for African American children, it is important to note their absence in mainstream curricular reform, because it could serve to limit both historical knowledge and social imagination.

Finally, Watkins’s (1993) accommodationist orientation presented a clear dilemma. While Watkins argued that accommodationism is not progressive, it could be argued that many within the progressive education movement of the 1900s would have considered it so (see Generals, 2000; Ravitch, 2001). The focus on project-based instruction could have aligned accommodationism with experientialism, thus including it
as a progressive reform (Generals, 2000). It is clear that many funders were equating the “practical” education received at schools like Hampton and Tuskegee as ideals of progressive pedagogy (see Ascoli, 2006; Heffron, 1999). As such, accommodationism has connections to both the conservative branch (social behaviorism) and the moderate (child-centered) branch of the progressive movements.

3.2 Scientific Racism Embedded in Progressive Ideology

In understanding the manner in which progressive reforms internalized racialized understanding of progress and development, it is impossible to neglect the pervasive role of scientific racism on the establishment of an unjust education system. Scientific racism, which Watkins (2001) argued was not formally abandoned until Brown v Board of Education in 1954, “has been used to endorse progressive pedagogic and disciplinary practices, and has operated to define and enforce access in society” (Winfield, 2010, p. 153). Scientific racism also led to widespread acceptance of eugenic ideology, which Lenard (2005) argued was considered widely endorsed by individuals from numerous countries and various ideological persuasions during the progressive era (p. 216). Eugenics was a wide spread, popular ideology taught in our schools and used to justify education and social science policies.

In Eugenics and Race in America (2007), Winfield argued that modern schooling (including progressive reforms) developed during the very period of intense eugenics ideation in the US (p. xvii) and that the eugenics movement was “part of the Progressive Movement” (p. 150). In fact, “eugenic ideology was promoted within a progressive
context and offered to the public as a way to make the world a better place” (Winfield, 2010, p. 146). Eugenic ideology led to school-based tracking of students, advocated both by conservative progressives, like Thorndike and Bobbitt, and moderate progressives like G. Stanley Hall (Winfield, 2007, p. 11). Also, the very notions of recapitulation theory (advocated by Hall, but endorsed by many other progressives) were used to advocate for different forms of education based on the perceived differences in evolutionary progress amongst different racial groups.

The very concept of developmentalism, part of the moderate progressive philosophy of education and strongly supported by the advocates of Child Study Movement, similarly operated within racial subtext. Developmentalism transforms the education process, by which children followed “a natural path of development, the best kind of civilizing process,” was really a way to instill self-governance, eradicate rebellion, neutralize knowledge, and preference individualism (Walkerdine, 1990, p. 20-22). Bernadette Baker (1999) argued that the very notion of developmentalism, despite good intentions, served to provide a scientific basis to sort students and to normalize White males at the expense of people of color, women, and those with disabilities (p. 820). In this way, individualized instruction and tracking, whether to meet the needs of society or to meet the perceived needs of the child, contributed to the provision of inequitable education for students of color. This is precisely what happened, argued Tyack and Cuban (1995), when conservative (administrative) progressives cited children’s “different abilities, interests, and destinies in life” to mean justify different (and often inequitable) education provisions (Tyack and Cuban, 1995, p. 20). As such,
“[p]rogress to these experts meant a place for every child, and every child in his or her place” (Tyack and Cuban, 1995, p. 20).

3.3 **African American Progressives: Critiques of Progressive Reforms**

Leading African American progressives often critiqued the direction of the education reforms. In 1909, while speaking at the National Negro Conference, W.E.B. DuBois rejected notions that industrial training would help build a sufficient economic base to make political rights unnecessary (or at least secondary). In 1933, Ambrose Caliver, who was the Senior Specialist in the Education of Negroes, advocated for a “philosophy of Negro education” that focused upon “intellectual and social reconstruction” as the approach that is best aligned to the “fuller, freer, and richer life so much desired and striven for by Negroes” (Caliver, 1933, p. 438). Such a philosophy, Caliver explained, should be understood as a commitment to prepare every individual for the “fullest possible contribution to society commensurate with capacity, interest and effort” (p. 439). Most important, Caliver argued, more teacher qualifications or salaries or even answers to the question “what and how shall we teach”, is the contemplation of the questions “*For what* shall we teach and why?” (p. 440). Caliver (1933) stated that such questions cannot be answered without reference to the larger problems of education in our American democracy, nor can they be adequately considered apart from the practical life and necessities of the Negro race in its relation to our social order (p. 440).
According to Caliver (1933) there were a great number of improvements that needed to be made, including increased pay, certification of teachers, and the “same general type of preparation for productive and happy citizenship as white children” was given (p. 439). Horace Mann Bond (1935), an influential historian and educator, argued that the need to understand curriculum as an entity that has both “‘form’ and ‘force’ no less than the finished process” and that such understanding of social forces and institutional histories must be considered (p.159). Bond (1935) argued that many calls for curriculum revision were not aligned with calls for greater equity and argued that “until a radical redirection is given to those social forces, our institutions will not greatly change” (p. 165-166). Until society changed, social context must be considered in any curricular reform.

Referring to the popular “activity analysis” used by curriculum workers to help develop curriculum, Bond (1935) commented that “the method of ‘activity’ analysis in the construction of a curriculum presupposed an elastic, democratic social order in which there are no artificial barriers set against social mobility of the individual” (p. 168). Yet, such mobility was not always possible and a conflict arose when activity analysis, which was “theoretically founded on equalitarianism.” was applied to a social context “which is shot through with inequality” (p. 168). Bond (1935) argued that curriculum workers must neither ignore nor accept the existing social order, but rather create a curriculum which helps students understand the world and begin to make rationale and informed choices about the future (p. 168).
Bond (1966) argued that the goals detailed in National Education Association’s (1918) *Cardinal Principles*, for example, are all important to be included in curriculum for African American students; however, while the goals of curriculum needed to reflect social analysis and possibility (p. 10). Bond (1966) believed that while schools were important in the struggle for social equality, they alone could not solve the problems in the country. As such curriculum workers had to understand the social context in which they were operating and create curriculum that reflected social need and possibility.

African American Progressive Education Association (PEA) members like Alain Locke and Charles Johnson called for progressive policies and an analysis of race, power, and oppression. By directly linking progressive education to democracy and African American interest, many African American progressives advocated for both “democratic social change and black awareness” and “[p]rogressive education [that] was not only healthy for the individual child, but for the race” (Goodenow, 1975, p. 380). In a study inspired by the Eight-Year Study, the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes (ACSSN), with funding from the General Education Board, began a study of 16 Black schools13 as to formally “study progressive movements in education” (Robinson, 1944, p.146). In this study, Robinson acknowledges that progressive rhetoric could be used by all sides to justify their own ends; however, he argued that “blacks could use progressive education’s democratic rhetoric and philosophy” to improve conditions (Goodenow, 1975, p. 379). As such, progressive education *could be* used as a source of social amelioration and even transformation; however, such improvements were not

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13 While the actual study (1940-1948) occurred outside of the era addressed in this paper, the planning for the study began in the 1930s and reflected a growing engagement with Southern progressivism in African American schools.
inevitable. As progressive ideas could be used to justify all sides of the argument, it is important to intentionally craft a pro-social justice, anti-racist, and liberatory vision of progressive reforms.

3.4 Embodied Contradictions

Many African American leaders, reporters, educators, and even former students of industrial schools, were vocal opponents of the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education (Anderson, 1988). In fact, a reporter named John Wesley Cromwell visited Hampton Institute and described such dehumanizing treatment of African American students that he argued it was “better, far better, yes infinitely better that we have no high schools and colleges, if our youth are to be brought up under such baneful influences” (Anderson, 1988, p. 63). Resistance to industrial education was also strong amongst missionary societies, many of whom founded and operated colleges with strong liberal arts curriculum (p. 67). However, Anderson (1988) stated that:

[i]n sharp contrast to its rejection by black teachers and the leaders of black schools and colleges, leading American politicians, businessmen, and philanthropists came to view Hampton and Tuskegee as pointing the way toward a national and even worldwide solution of the Negro problem (p. 72).

In fact, at the turn of the century, in the midst of what Kliebard (1995) termed the “struggle for the curriculum,” there was widespread support for the Hampton-Tuskegee model. William Harris, the US Commissioner of Education and a leading member of the National Education Association’s Committee of Fifteen, stressed liberal education, rejected specialized vocational training, and opposed the differentiated curriculum being
advocated by child developmentalists (Kliebard, 1995, p. 14-15). Yet, Harris wrote Washington a letter of great praise and wrote that Washington’s education plan (of industrial education) could “solve the problems left by the civil war" (Harris as quoted in Harlan 1976, p. 687).

Progressive support for accommodationist education was strong amongst at least conservative and moderate branches of the Progressive Movement. Thus, it is important to acknowledge that accommodationist policies advocated by Washington, were “legitimiz[ed] and, to a large degree, orchestrat[ed]” by leading liberals and progressives (Wagoner, 1981, p. 28). Conservative progressives largely applauded accommodationist education and vocational training as a solution to make education more efficient and cost effective. Yet, it was not simply the conservative branch of the Progressive Movement that lauded accommodationist education. At the 25th anniversary of Tuskegee Institute, for example, Louis Harlan (1983) writes that “[o]n the platform with Washington as principal speakers were three symbolic figures of white America, Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, the quintessential capitalist Andrew Carnegie, and the Secretary of War, William Howard Taft, heir apparent to the presidency” (p. 165). Harlan (1983) argued that this is an example of the manner in which “cultural, economic, and political leaders” supported Washington’s solution to the “race problem” (p. 165). However, this picture also represents the support of progressives. Many consider Carnegie a conservative (business) progressive and William Howard Taft a moderate progressive; however, most

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14 According to Merle Curti (1959/1978), William Harris stated that Booker T. Washington’s plan was “so universal a character that it applies to the down-trodden of all races, without reference to color” (p. 309). Connections between schooling for Blacks and schooling for the poor need to be considered.
relevant to this study is the inclusion of Charles Eliot, a key figure in the progressive education movement.

Charles Eliot, in addition to serving as President of Harvard and one of the leader’s of the National Education Association’s Committee of Ten (1893), was also the first honorary president of the Progressive Education Association (Kridel and Bullough, 2007, p. 26). Eliot could clearly be seen as a leading moderate progressive, albeit a progressive with strong intellectual traditionalist leanings. Eliot believed in the humanist ideals of beauty, truth, reason, and character would benefit all students (Kliebard, 1995, p. 10). In fact, Eliot, almost a century before revisionists historians like Joel Spring (1989) argued that schools are national sorting machines, stated that it was impossible to:

believe that the American public intends to have its children sorted before their teens into clerks, watchmakers, lithographers, telegraph operators, masons, teamsters, farm laborers, and so forth, and treated differently in their schools according to these prophecies of their appropriate life careers. Who are we to make these prophecies? (Eliot as quoted in Kliebard, 1995 p. 13).

Yet, despite his role as a progressive leader, Charles Eliot also supported accommodationist education policies for African American students. Eliot was a member of the General Education and a part of the Armstrong Association with such men as Hollis Burke Frissell (president of Hampton University), Andrew Carnegie (a leading supporter of industrial education), and Booker T. Washington (Wagoner, 1981, p.32). In a position that seemingly contradicts Eliot’s advocacy of liberal arts education for all, Eliot stated that: “I know of no educational or philanthropic object which should more commend itself to American patriots” than the models of education pursued at Tuskegee and Hampton (as in Anderson, 1988, p. 72). Such admiration for the Tuskegee model
can also be seen in a series of letters between Washington and Eliot. In a letter dated May 28, 1896, Eliot told Washington that he would be awarded honorary degree from Harvard (Harlan, 1975, p. 174). This degree was awarded soon after Washington delivered the “Atlanta Compromise” speech and can be interpreted as an acceptance, if not endorsement of, the “compromise” Washington advocated (Wagoner, 1981, p. 27-28).

In a 1904 speech at a meeting of the Armstrong Association, so named after Samuel Armstrong, Eliot began his speech with the following words:

[t]here is no larger or graver problem before civilized man . . . than the prompt formation of a sound public opinion about the right treatment of backward races, and Hampton possesses the keywords of that great problem – education and productive labor (p. 8).

Eliot further argued that higher education (presumably provided by institutions like Hampton) were necessary because a democracy could not survive “millions of a race but recently delivered from slavery, breeding fast and left in ignorance, or even without guidance and incentives to intellectual and spiritual life” (Eliot, 1904, p. 14). In discussing crime in the North, Eliot (1904) stated that crime increased when the “ignorant and corruptible” people have “emancipated themselves from accustomed restrains, but have not yet been provided with any new effective restraints either from within or from without” (p. 14). Eliot believed self-help and racial uplift that would “allo[w] the black to earn a ‘‘respectable’ place for himself in a socially segregated American society” (Wagoner, 1981, p. 40). Like other accommodationists who argued for gradual,

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15 In a speech at the Cotton Exposition State Fair in Atlanta in 1895, Washington asserted that African Americans should focus on economic development (beginning with common labor) before fighting for political rights. Washington (1901/1986) famously argued that, “[i]n all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the finger yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress” (p. 221-222).
generational change, Eliot argued for an expansion of academic schooling (even arguing that Tuskegee needed to better balance the academic and the vocational), yet he also “gave his blessing to the system of dual schooling in areas where the black population was sizable” (Wagoner, 1981, p. 40-41).

Yet, it must be noted that Eliot was so impressed with the work the General Education Board in the South that he influenced the Board to help fund the Lincoln School of Colombia University’s Teachers College in New York (Heffron, 1999). Eliot argued that: “The best work the Board has done seems to me to be the agricultural instruction and the promotion of the establishment of High Schools in the South.” Consequently, he argued that the GEB should continue “promoting pioneering and experimental work” (Eliot as quoted in Heffron, 1999, p. 151).

John Heffron (1999) describes Charles Eliot as “a bundle of contradictions.” Clearly opposed to many of the principles established by the Committee of 10, which Eliot supported, the Lincoln curriculum had aspects of each branch of the Progressive Movement. Interestingly, this attracted the children of many influential citizens, including John D. Rockefeller Jr. The school, which the director claimed was “a center of progressive school reform” had the support of Rockefeller, who praised the teachers who “taught abstruse subjects like mathematics ‘in a way to give them life and to relate them to the practical affairs of life’” (Rockefeller as quoted in Heffron, 1999, p. 148). Of course, despite broad pedagogical and curricular similarities, Lincoln was very different from industrial schools in the South.
Charles Eliot was not the only moderate progressive who supported aspects of accommodationist schooling. G. Stanley Hall (1844-1924), an early leader in the Child Developmentalist Movement endorsed Social Darwinism and some aspects of eugenics (Curti, 1959/1978, p. 405-406). Hall strongly rejected the Committee of 10 (1893) and argued that traditional liberal arts education resulted in too much uniformity, and rejected the claim that “fitting for college is essentially the same as fitting for life” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 12). Hall believed that the primary purpose of school was to teach “the virtues of robust health and racial vitality” and that all else, including intellectual development, was “subordinate” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 43).

Hall, described as the “Darwin of the mind,” argued that curriculum should be “determined from the data of child development” (Cremin, 1964, p. 101-103). Hall called for curricula that addressed differences in ability (thus rendering a common curriculum unworkable). Curriculum, he argued, was dependent on mental aptitude and “evolutionary developmental stage,” which he argued was less developed in African Americans, Native Americans, and immigrant populations (Johnson, 2000, p. 74). Hall was a proponent of recapitulation theory and asserted that “wherein non-White people were in a stage of evolutionary development the pinnacle of which was European American and, since all groups were evolving, the hierarchical division was permanent” (Winfield, 2010, p. 150). Hall argued that each child reproduced the “entire evolutionary history” of the world, but that only the more “advanced” races could successfully engage in higher study, relegating the “lower rungs of the evolutionary ladder” to handle concrete operations usually associated with manual labor and the study of tangible materials within their own immediate neighborhood” (Johnson, 2000, p. 74). In fact, Hall
believed that “[n]o two races in history, taken as a whole, differ so much in their traits, both physical and psychic, as the Caucasian and the African” which, he argued, required that we “qualify if not imperil every inference from one race to another, whether theoretical or practical, so that what is true and good for one is often false and bad for the other” (p.10). Hall believed that such differences resulted in different potential and the need for different systems of education. In this way, discussions of child developmentalism were closely linked not only with stages of development, but perceived racial differences. It is no surprise, then, that Hall supported accommodationist education; in fact, Hall specifically supported the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education popularized by Washington (Curti, 1959/1978, p. 413).

The embodied contradictions of leading curriculum workers are not limited to Harris, Eliot, and Hall. In the next three chapters of this dissertation, I seek to explore the embodied contradictions of three leading curriculum workers: John Dewey, the quintessential progressive; Booker T. Washington, the spokesperson of accommodationist education in the South; and Julius Rosenwald, the most “progressive” of philanthropists funding education for African Americans in the time period studies. By examining key statements and actions of each of these three curriculum workers/funders, I explore the manner in which early progressives lent implicit (and occasionally explicit) support to accommodationist policies in the American South.
4. JOHN DEWEY (1859-1952)

4.1 Purpose and Process

John Dewey was a progressive theorist, a pragmatist, a philosopher, and arguable the most influential American educator of the 20th century. Yet, despite extensive documentation about John Dewey’s philosophies of education and democracy, there is little research and no consensus about Dewey’s views about race and racism, especially as they relate to schooling. While some scholars argue that Dewey was a progressive advocate for equity and equal rights, others point to Dewey’s silence on issues of race and argue that he failed to adequately challenge racist policies of his time.

In this chapter, I seek to understand Dewey’s views on race/racism in general and accommodationist education in particular. I have widely surveyed Dewey’s published work, personal letters, and classroom lectures, though I will primarily focus on a few important published works and speeches. I will argue that Dewey, despite an expressed commitment to full and equal rights for African American students, did implicitly (and at times explicitly) endorse aspects of accommodationist education reforms for African American children.

4.2 Biographical Sketch

John Dewey (1859-1952) is often regarded as the father of progressive education. Born in Burlington, Vermont, Dewey was raised by his father, a businessman and former
Union soldier, and his mother, a religious woman from a politically influential family. Dewey spent most of his childhood in Burlington, a small city with a small African American population (see Carle, 2011, p. 251); however, Dewey and his family did live in Virginia for a few years as the Civil War was ending (Levine, 2012).

At 15, Dewey entered the University of Vermont. Upon graduation, he worked for a few years as a secondary educator before studying at Johns Hopkins University, where he received his Ph.D. in Philosophy in 1884. Dewey was a professor at the University of Michigan (1884-1888 and 1889-1894) and the University of Minnesota (1888-1889) before accepting a position in the department of philosophy at the University of Chicago (1894). In 1866, Dewey married his first wife, Alice Chipman, with whom he had seven children. In 1896, Dewey opened the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago and his wife, Alice, served as the school’s first principal. The Lab School provided a classroom environment for John Dewey to explore, formulate, and test his new educational theories. In this school, Dewey sought to balance the needs of the discipline with the students’ interest and to move, incrementally, from the psychological (interest) to the logical (discipline) (Kliebard, 1995, p. 59-65). However, in 1904, after a disagreement with University of Chicago President William Harper, Dewey left the university. Soon thereafter, he accepted a position at Columbia College, where he remained a professor until his retirement in 1930. Following the death of his first wife, Dewey married Roberta Lowitz Grant, with whom he adopted two children. Dewey died at age 92 at his home in New York.

Dewey, who both represented and critiqued the moderate and radical branches of the progressive education movement, was a national (and international) leader in matters
of philosophy and education reform. Dewey was a prolific writer, publishing hundreds of books and articles during his lifetime. Dewey was the second honorary president of the Progressive Education Association, a founding member of the NAACP, and a member of many groups, including: the National Education Association, the League of Independent Political Action, and the National Kindergarten Association. Dewey was also a regular contributor to *The Social Frontier*.

4.3 Literature Review

I am joining an ongoing conversation about Dewey’s views about race, but also trying to understand in greater depth Dewey’s ideas about accommodationist schooling. Many contemporary scholars characterize Dewey as progressive, not only on matters of education, but also in his theorizing about democracy and race. Susan Carle (2011) argued that Dewey’s works “paved the way for the development of a discourse about what we today call multiculturalism, as well as opening the eyes of moderate White progressives to the evils of racial injustice” (p. 249). Yet, not all contemporary scholars would agree. For example, Frank Margonis (2009) pointed to Dewey’s positive comments about PS 26, a public school for African American students in Indianapolis featured in Dewey and Dewey’s (1915/2008) *Schools of To-morrow*. Margonis (2009) asserted that PS 26 was "a type of vocational education for Blacks similar to that championed by Booker T. Washington” (p.18). In their text, John Dewey and his daughter, Evelyn, focused on the school’s “ideal of community [which] allowed the Deweys to myopically focus attention on the school and the surrounding community,
leaving readers with the forward-looking sense that a caste-style education is actually democratic” (Margonis, 2009, p. 35). Margonis (2009) further asserted that Dewey’s silence on matters of race and racism, his normalization of the experience of White students, and his support of PS 26, was evidence of his “racialized philosophy of education” (p.18). Like Margonis, Mwalimu J. Shujja (1994) pointed to significant gaps in Dewey’s theorizing. Shujja (1994) argued that while Dewey advocated democratic living and articulated an understanding of the multiple cultures within the United States, he largely ignored the “dialectics of domination and resistance associated with these cultural differences” (p. 29).

Most scholars take a more moderate view. They argue that while Dewey did some good work in relation to race, he often did not go far enough. Michael Eldridge (2004) wrote that Dewey was “not terrible” on race, but neither was he “heroic.” Eldridge (2004) claimed that Dewey’s “failure to write for the Crisis16 and his lack of intimacy with Blacks” illustrate Dewey’s general disengagement with issues of race. Pappas (2004) found that Dewey’s historical-contextualist philosophy and his insistence on working with specific problems, rather than generalities, meant that Dewey never fully contextualized the problem of racism in our society (p. 26). That Dewey was theorizing about democracy as much as education, made the lack of engagement on race even more problematic. As West (2004) argued, Dewey was as a person “anti-racist,” however, he “never saw white supremacy as a major priority in wrestling with philosophy and democracy” (p. 226).

16 W.E.B. DuBois requested that Dewey contribute an article to The Crisis, the NAACP’s magazine, on education for African Americans.
Despite the large body of research on John Dewey as well as emerging research on Dewey’s views on race (for example: Margonis, 2009; Pappas, 2004; Carle, 2011), there is still a gap in existing literature. Scholars have not previously theorized Dewey’s views on accommodationist schooling. In this chapter, I seek to speak into the gap by analyzing Dewey’s words and works to better understand his views of accommodationism.

4.4 Key Statements and Actions

While often accused of being silent on issues of race and racism, Dewey did write a few pieces that illuminate his views on race and schooling. In this section, I will briefly examine, in chronological order, key writings about issues of racial justice and education. I will then explore Dewey’s actions regarding race.

4.4.1 Speeches at NAACP Meetings

John Dewey was one of the initial signers of the Lincoln Day Call, which was a national call for a discussion about the struggle for civil rights for African Americans. The conferences that resulted from the Lincoln Day Call led to the creation of the NAACP. Dewey’s involvement with the NAACP was not extensive; however, it was significant. As one of founding members of the NAACP, John Dewey’s involvement was highlighted by the leadership of the NAACP to promote membership and support from academics and progressives throughout the US. Dewey also presented a number of
speeches to the NAACP that expressed solidarity with the mission of the NAACP. I will examine three such speeches.

In 1909, Dewey presented an address at the National Negro Conference. In his short address, Dewey expressed his “sympathy with the purpose of this gathering,” and remarked that any assumption of biological or inherited differences based on race has been disproven (p. 71-72). Dewey (1909) argued that this meant that each individual should have “full, fair, and free social opportunities” (p. 72). Dewey insisted that denying opportunities or failing to create an environment which allowed each individual to develop to his or her fullest capability not only harmed the individual, or the race, but the entire society (p. 73).

A year later, in an address at the Second Annual National Negro Conference, Dewey discussed the links between public education, democracy, and the “extension of the franchise” (Dewey, 1910, #22389). Dewey argued that African Americans in the South were making huge advancements in education. Dewey argued that schools should integrate “literary and vocational types of education.” Then, in a statement that seemingly endorsed accommodationist education in the South, Dewey (1910) stated that he wondered if:

one of things our colored friends may do for us in the South will be to develop for us, for the first time in the history of the human race, a really perfect system of

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17 The National Negro Conference was the first conference of the National Negro Committee, a group that organized in response to the race riots in Springfield, IL in 1908. The Committee called for a national conference, to be held on the birthday of Abraham Lincoln. The 1909 conference was the first meeting of a group that would, a year later, become the NAACP.

education, that the education of head and hand be brought completely and accurately together (#22389).

Dewey argued that the combination between the literary and vocational could improve education for all (Dewey, 1910, #22389).

In a third address to the NAACP, delivered in 1932, Dewey argued that while the Depression had horrible consequences, it did encourage people to “think more fundamentally on social matters, economic matters, political matters, than we have been thinking for many years” (Dewey, 1932/1985, LW.6.224). Dewey acknowledged that minority groups, and specifically African Americans, had experienced the worse of the economic crisis, but that the Depression had given “the minority, the oppressed, groups of this country a better opportunity to express themselves, their needs, their wrongs, and their demands for greater freedom” (Dewey, 1932/1985, LW.6.225). In this speech, Dewey (1932/1985) also pointed to the spread of disenfranchisement and “un-enfranchisement” as a result of a lack of real choices in elections (LW.6.226). Dewey asked for the audience’s support for the creation of a third political party, one which, unlike the two existing political parties, could offer solutions to the economic and political problems of the day (LW.6.228).

Arguing that the key political issues are really economic, Dewey stated that the African American audience had already experienced the harm of the economic system.

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19 According to an editor’s note in the Collected Works, this address was delivered at the 23rd Annual Conference of the NAACP (Editor’s note in Dewey, 1932, LW.6.224).
Dewey (1932/1985) asked:

What was slavery except a manifestation of the motive for private gain? Why is it that the denial of civil liberty, of cultural equality still continues, except as an aftermath of that economic oppression from which you once suffered? And this is not simply a question of the past and what holds over from the past. What is the economic order in which we live today excepting one of competition? (LW.6.229)

Dewey (1932/1985) believed that it was only through the creation of a more cooperative social order would there be the opportunity for “equality among human beings, irrespective of race, color and creed” (LW.6.230).

4.4.2 *Schools of To-morrow (1915/2008)*

In *Schools of To-Morrow* (1915/2008), John Dewey\(^20\) and Evelyn Dewey featured a number of American schools that were enacting elements of progressive education reforms (J. Dewey, 1915/2008, p. 1). While Dewey and Dewey acknowledged that they had not addressed “the reorganization of the rural school and the utilization of agriculture in education,” John Dewey asserted that this movement “shows the same tendencies” of education reform as many of the features schools (p.2). Dewey and Dewey argued that the rural education movement:

is just as far reaching in its scope and wholesome in its aims as anything that is being done, since it purposes to overcome the disadvantages of isolation that have handicapped the country schoolteacher, and to make use of the natural environment of the child to give him a vocational education, in the same way that the city schools use their artificial environment (p. 165).

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\(^{20}\) It is important to acknowledge that John Dewey did not visit most of the schools featured in this text.
As such, even though this text did not explicitly address rural schools in the South, it was still relevant to this study because Dewey saw similarities between progressive schools and schools in the “rural education movement” of which accommodationism would have been part.

Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) asserted that progressives shared many commonalities, including: (a) a focus on students’ physical well being, (b) a pedagogy that emphasized “learning by doing,” (c) the promotion of students’ intrinsic desires to learn and to work, (d) the use of authentic assessments, (e) purposeful connections between home and school; and (f) emphasis on democratic living (p. 165-174).

In terms of general progressive philosophy, Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) discussed the value of education through industrial training. Many of the schools featured in this text included vocational workshops, including carpentry, millinery, and farming as part of the daily curriculum. Industrial training was useful because it showed students by how objects in their daily life were produced, taught students responsibility to the community, and illustrated the importance (and joy) of hard work. Dewey and Dewey insisted that all students should engage in industrial courses because:

It is just as valuable for the man who works with his brain to know how to do some of the things that the factory worker is doing, as it is for the latter to know how the patterns for the machine he is making were drawn, and the principles that govern the power supply of the factory (p. 152).

Of the schools featured, one served African American students. The principal, Mr. Valentine of Public School 26 in Indianapolis, wanted to create a “true school” that served the community, and focused and helped his students “become healthy, happy, and
competent both economically and socially” (p. 120). Dewey and Dewey emphasized that the school was not designed to solve the “race problem,” but that the school experiment could “mean a real step forward in solving the ‘race question’ and peculiar problems of an immigrant district as well” (p. 120).

In the text, PS 26 is provided as an example of a “school as a social settlement” that was creating deep connections between the school, the home and the community (p. 120). Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) reported that before progressive reforms at PS26, the school had little parental or community support, high truancy rates, and numerous incidence of “extreme disorder,” including violence in the school (p. 121). In addition to reforming the curriculum, the school bought land and created a manual training building, a cooking and domestic science building, and a boys’ clubhouse. Students learned how to use tools and created useful, their families, and the community to whom they sold products (carpentry, food, hats) (p. 123). Community-school relationships were key and there were numerous programs, including: mentorship programs (between older and younger students), student “saving banks”, a focus on utilizing the community library, and the use of the school as a meeting place for parents, community groups, and alumni (p. 127-128). As a result of the reforms, Dewey and Dewey reported that parental and community support had increased, teachers and parents strengthened their relationships, juvenile court cases decreased greatly, older students began to mentor and support their younger classmates, “street loafing” and gang activity decreased, and the girls were taught “how to live a comfortable and self-respecting life” (p. 126-129).

Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) concluded that Public School 26, like the Gary Schools that served largely immigrant children, was designed to meet the:
particular needs of children of the community, physically, intellectually, and socially. Both schools are looking towards a larger social idea; toward a community where the citizens will be prosperous and independent, where there will be no poverty-ridden population unable to produce good citizens. While changes in social conditions must take place before this can happen, these schools believe that such an education as they provide is one of the natural ways and perhaps the surest way of helping along the changes (p. 130-131).

4.4.3 Speech and Writings While in China

Invited by his former Colombia students, Dewey lived and studied in China from 1919-1921. During this time, he gave a speech and wrote a short piece about racial prejudice that I will analyze. In both pieces, Dewey sought to understand the logical basis of prejudice and offered ideas about how to combat prejudice.

In Racial Prejudice and Friction (1922/198321), Dewey asserted that we must address “race prejudice morally before we have dealt with it scientifically” (MW13.242). Dewey argued that “banish[ing]” prejudice before understanding its causes will inevitably lead to failure. Dewey further stated that prejudice, is in fact, not a judgment (which is asserted by advocates of intellectualistic psychology), but rather a bias, which precedes and obscures judgment (MW13.243). Dewey argued that while “instinctive dislike and dread of what is strange” causes prejudice, it “is converted into discrimination and friction by accidental physical features, and by cultural differences of language and religion, and especially at the present time, by an intermixture of political and economic forces” (MW13.251).

21 According to an editor’s note in the Collected Works of John Dewey, this article was originally published in Chinese Social and Political Science Review 6(1922): 1-17 (MW13.242).
Dewey (1922/1983) believed that what we think of as “racial” prejudice is really “nationalistic” or political bias (MW13.247). Racial prejudice remained, Dewey asserted, because those with political power believe themselves to be superior to those against whom they discriminated and they used their power to continue inequitable relations (MW13.248). As to provide an example, Dewey recounted that in the US, the results of psychological tests used in military testing were used to deem African Americans as intellectually inferior. This argument continued to be articulated even when deeper analysis revealed that “the Negro group from the northern states, where the Negroes though not fairly treated receive better treatment, stood distinctly higher from the southern in the intelligence tests, thus proving the effects of environmental opportunity” (MW13.248). Dewey argued that the dominant group justifies their dominance by blaming those oppressed for their oppression. War and political conflict only made such prejudice worse (MW13.249).

Yet, while political and religious differences were important, Dewey (1922/1983) commented that economics was “the most rational factor in the confirming of racial animosities” (MW.13.250). Specifically, Dewey pointed to the concern of workers that immigrants would both compete for available jobs and accept lower wages and longer work hours. The move to restrict immigrants, largely organized by labor unions, was a move to protect workers from competition (MW13.250-251).

In terms of ways to combat race prejudice, Dewey (1922/1983) believed that increased intercultural interaction was important, but that significant changes to the political and economic systems were needed (MW13.251-254). He advocated for continued immigration restrictions because he did not believe the world to be “civilized”
enough to live cooperatively and he feared that “nothing is gained and much will be lost ignoring the deeper causes and aiming only at effects” (p. 252).

In *A Philosophical Interpretation of Racial Prejudice* (1921-1922/1983), which was published in the Collected Works of John Dewey as an appendix, Dewey repeated much of his argument in “Racial Prejudice.” He called for a more thorough and scientific understanding of the cases of racial prejudices (MW13.437) and posited that racial prejudice was influenced by physiologic differences, cultural (religious and political) differences, and economic factors (MW.13.438-439). While prejudice begins as fear and even hatred of the “other,” Dewey argued that “antagonism is changed to permanent prejudice by cultural differences, such a language, custom, and religion, by accidental physiological differences, such as color of the skin, and by the accompanying political and economic competition” (MW13.439). While there was no single answer to address racial prejudice, Dewey argued that education and the “growth of social intercourse” will help; however, he again reminded readers that fundamental changes to international economic and political relations were necessary to “completely eradication racial discord” (MW13.439-440).

### 4.4.4 Speeches at the South African Education Conference

Dewey was one of a small group of American academics who traveled to South Africa for a conference entitled the *South African Education Conference in Capetown and Johannesburg* in July of 1934. The Conference, convened by the New Education Fellowship, had more than 4,000 participants. Of the three speeches Dewey gave while in
South Africa, two of his speeches, *What is Learning* (1934a/1987) and *Growth in Activity* (1934b/1987), largely focused on structures of learning and their implications for pedagogical reforms. In the third speech, *The Need for a Philosophy of Education*\(^2\) (1934c/1986), Dewey articulated the need for a new philosophy of education, which should reflect a “discovery of what actually takes place when education really occurs” (LW.9.194). Dewey (1934c/1986) stressed the social aims of education and argued that schools are successful only when all students realize their potential and then apply that which is learned to improve “the common life of all” (LW.9.202). Dewey stated that within a “world that has so largely engaged in a mad, often brutal, race for material gain,” schools must teach cooperation within this environment (LW.9.203). Dewey argued that “the schools of the world can unite in effort to rebuild the spirit of common understanding, of mutual sympathy and goodwill among all peoples and races, to exorcise the demon of prejudice, isolation, and hatred” (LW.9.203).

### 4.4.5 Actions and Activism

In addition to his speeches and writings, Dewey was active in many campaigns that addressed race and racism. Through the National Kindergarten Association Board of Directors, Dewey advocated for, and eventually secured, funds to begin a demonstration kindergarten for African American children in the South (see Dewey, 1913, #08164 and Dewey, 1914, #04876). While clearly the money was to support a segregated school,

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\(^2\) An editor’s note in *The Collected Works of John Dewey* indicates that this article was “first published in New Era in Home and School 15 (November 1934): 211-214 from an address to the South African Educator Conference in Capetown and Johannesburg, July 1934” (LW.9.194).
Dewey was advocating for progressive reforms to be conducted in schools serving African American children.

In 1917, Dewey delivered a speech entitled *Federal Aid to Elementary Education* at a conference dedicated to ending child labor. Dewey (1917/1985) argued that keeping children out of factories was not enough – schools must be created to serve children as “that in saving them from something harmful, we are also delivering them to something that is ennobling, elevating, and progressive” (MW.10.125). Dewey called for increased federal aid, including money to specifically address African American illiteracy (MW. 10.127). In this speech, Dewey focused upon the need for an increased spirit of independence and an understanding that all citizens have a joint destiny and must improve conditions for all (MW.10.129).

In the 1930s, Dewey worked with William Kilpatrick and other leading progressives to found the Council Against Intolerance in America (Goodenow, 1975, p. 376). Also in the early 1930s, Dewey was active in an unsuccessful campaign to exonerate Odell Waller, an African American sharecropper convicted of murdering his landlord.

Dewey worked closely with Albert Barnes and the *Barnes Foundation*. In his *Dedication Address of the Barnes Foundation* (1925/1984), Dewey described the Foundation as an “epoch-making enterprise” (LW.2.383). For Dewey, the Foundation’s education and artistic work had the potential to ameliorate race relations, because art

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23 According to an editor’s note in the *Collected Works of John Dewey*, this article was “First published in *Child Labor Bulletin* 6 (1917): 61-66, from an address to the Thirteenth Child Labor Conference” (MW.10.125).

24 According to an editor’s note in the *Collected Works of John Dewey*, this article was first published in *Journal of the Barnes Foundation* (May 1925): 3-6” (LW.2.382).
forcefully illustrates the equality and human worth of all people. Dewey (1925/1984) wrote:

[w]e may well rejoice at every demonstration of the artistic capacity of any race which has been in any way repressed or looked upon as inferior. It is the demonstration of this capacity for doing beautiful and significant work, which gives the best proof of the fundamental quality, and equality, of all people. It serves . . . the cause of bringing all people from all over the world together in greater harmony (LW.2.384).

As a believer in art as truth-exposing scholarship, Dewey was incredibly impressed with the work of Jamaican born poet, Claude McKay. Dewey (1953/1990) wrote the introduction to the Selected Poems of Claude McKay25 (LW.17.58). Dewey’s introduction is of great interest, because this is one of the few times Dewey wrote explicitly about his lack of knowing or understanding the experience of African Americans in the United States. Dewey commented that of one of McKay’s poems, Baptism, “is deeply dyed with hate, but with hate that is clean, never mean nor spiteful. No White man can do more than express his humiliated sympathy” (LW.17.60). Dewey was both inspired by the work of McKay and humbled by that which he did not know.

Finally, in 1950, Dewey was part of a group of educators that wrote a letter to the editor of the New York Times, advocating for increased “federal aid to school.” Dewey argued that such aid could help address the “[i]nequity of educational opportunities” that came from vastly different levels of state funding. In calling for federal money, Dewey and the other signers explicitly argued that there must be explicit language “against

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discriminatory treatment of Negro and other minority groups” and that segregation must be ended (Dewey et al., 1950, 21616).

Dewey was active in many campaigns that sought to expose racism; however, it must be noted that many of these actions were in the 1930s, after many of Dewey’s most influential works on education had been published. It is not clear how Dewey’s analysis of race and racism impacted his education philosophy.

4.5 Findings: Dewey’s Views on Race, Schooling, and Accommodationist Education

While it is clear from his words and actions that Dewey was engaged in the national discussion about race and schooling, it is also clear that there were a number of in-actions and silences that must be discussed. As Dewey was not only a leading philosopher and educator, but also a public intellectual, his views on race mattered deeply. While he expressed a belief in the fundamental equality of all peoples, he also advocated a gradual approach to improving race relations and seemed to support aspects of accommodationist education for African American students. By examining Dewey’s actions and key pieces of writing, it can be argued that while Dewey had a systemic critique of our schooling practices, Dewey normalized the experiences of White students, failed to fully theorize the impact of race and socioeconomic status on the implementation of progressive reforms, and supported segregated schools. As such, Dewey, a leading progressive theorist, lent his implicit (and occasionally explicit) support to some aspects of accommodationist schooling.
4.5.1 Systemic Critique of Racism

Unlike many of his peers, John Dewey did offer a critique of the larger economic and political systems impacting schooling for African American children. Dewey advocated for system-wide changes to political and economic systems that promoted equity. In fact, Dewey (1932/1985) argued that our competitive economic system focused only upon amassing private gain was responsible for both slavery and the continued denial of social equality (LW.6.229).

In numerous works, Dewey also acknowledged the inequitable manner in which our nation funded schools. For example, Dewey (1930/1984) explained that in the South, the government spends almost three times more per pupil educating White children than educating African American children (LW.5.314). Further, Dewey (1910) spoke out against a system of double taxation and acknowledged the unfair burden on African American communities to contribute personal funds for schools (#22389). This statement offered a critique of unfair tax policies as well as a powerful rebuttal to the racist argument that African American communities did not value education as much as their White counterparts.

In the 1930s, Dewey challenged school inequity in an essay entitled “Our Illiteracy Problem” (1930/1984)26. In discussing illiteracy rates in the African American community, Dewey argued that illiteracy is a symptom of the larger “Negro question” and cannot be understood without examining systemic inequities (LW.5.313). Dewey (1930/1984) pointed out that students in segregated schools serving African American

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26 According to an editor’s note in the Collected Works of John Dewey, this article was “First published in Pictorial Review (Aug 1930) 28, 65, 74.” (LW.5.311).
children generally had “[l]ess school time, more pupils to a teacher, poorer buildings and equipment, more poorly paid and therefore less well-equipped teachers” and less time in school (LW.5.314). This is significant because, as Dewey (1922/1983) argued forcefully in *Racial Prejudice and Friction*, those in power often used statistics to condemn those who are being oppressed by the system (MW.13.248). Thus, while many of Dewey’s contemporaries were using statistics to justify notions of White racial superiority, Dewey was actively disrupting that narrative by forcing the reader to contend with the inequities in the system.

4.5.2 *Gradualist Approach: Pedagogical and Dialectical Responses to Racism*

However, despite Dewey’s critique of political and economic systems, most of his suggested solutions focused upon a gradual harmonizing of racial relations through schooling, and not through political action27 (Goodenow, 1975, p. 369). West (1989) argued that Dewey’s “gradualism is principally pedagogical in content, and his reformism is primarily dialogical in character” (p 102). Dewey, then, believed that by cultivating democracy gradually, by teaching our young people to live and think as democratic citizens, there would be great potential for change. For Dewey, a focus on pedagogical reforms, arts education, and community building, was often more important than political change28.

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27 Yet, it is important to note that Goodenow (1975) argued that this was in fact a departure from Dewey’s earlier work, which focused upon an analysis of economic and political systems and the manner in which they created “racial and ethnic conflict and discrimination” (p. 368).

28 Yet, Dewey was politically active. He often campaigned for candidates and worked to advocated for the creation of a third party in the US.
Dewey’s gradual approach to social change may be related to his early attraction to models of Cultural Epoch Theory. During his time at the Lab School, Dewey still accepted a form of cultural epoch theory, a theory largely popularized by the Herbartians that held that children went through developmental stages that mirrored the experience of the human race moving from a primitive to civilized state. As Thomas Fallace (2010) explained, Dewey’s views pre-1909 were similar to those of most academics of his time. He endorsed a form of linear historicism, which articulated “the belief that all societies and culture of the world could be placed on a single continuum of social progress leading through stages of savagery, barbarianism, and civilization” (p. 472.) Linear historicism was hierarchical, so even as Dewey rejected notions of biological White superiority of Western/White culture, he did believe that the West was more advanced stage (Fallace, 2010, p. 474). Fallace (2010) did acknowledge that Dewey’s views changed following the first World War, when in his writing he began to focus upon the concept of cultural plurality and began to articulate a systemic analysis of racism (p. 476).

While Dewey did not believe that schools operated as panaceas that could single-handedly address all social ills, he did believe that they were politically contested spaces that could serve as sites of social change. In *The School as Social Center*29 (1902/1976), Dewey stressed the social nature of school and argued that schools must both educate students and serve as well-resourced social centers for the community (MW.2.80). Dewey (1902/1976) asserted that:

29 According to an editor’s note in *The Collected Works of John Dewey*, this address was first “delivered before the National Council of Education, Minneapolis, Minn., July, 1902.” The note goes on to state that the “First published in *Elementary School Teacher* 3: 73-86, and in *Proceedings and Addresses* of the National Educational Association, 1902, pp. 373-83” (MW.2.80).
We find that our political problems involve race questions, questions of the assimilation of diverse types of language and customs; we find that most serious political questions grow out of underlying industrial and commercial changes and adjustments; we find that most of our pressing political problems cannot be solved by special measures of legislation or executive activity, but only by the promotion of common sympathies and a common understanding (MW.2.84).

In this context, schools are the most important institution to address issues the “race questions” and help students and communities adjust to social, political, and economic changes (MW.2.90-92). By crafting schooling experiences that “assimilate different races to our own institutions,” Dewey (1902/1076) believed that schools were more effective than legislative changes in creating more just social relations (MW2.85).

In his speech in 1922, Dewey argued that the first step to combat racial prejudice was to understand it and not simply to have “an indiscriminate reaction against it” (MW.13.253). Without understanding those “deep-seated causes” and working to address them, racial discrimination would not end. This sentiment continued in the 1930s, when Dewey helped found the Council Against Intolerance in America, a group, which challenged racism and supported intercultural cooperation. Yet, according to Ronald Goodenow (1975), Dewey and his colleagues focused greatly on the creation of social harmony and “downplayed social change and forms of actual race relations that might prove disruptive” (p. 376.)

In conjunction with his intercultural work and focus on education, Dewey also believed that art could spur social change. In Art as Experience (1934d/1987), Dewey wrote that studying art produced in time periods and culture difference from one’s own could help us overcome our fear/misunderstanding of the “other” and begin to appreciate other cultures (Dewey, 1934d/1987, LW.10.337). Through art, Dewey (1934d/1987)
believed, “[b]arriers are dissolved, limiting prejudices melt away, when we enter into the spirit of Negro or Polynesian art. This insensible melting is far more efficacious than the change effected by reasoning, because it enters directly into attitude” (LW.10.337).

It is imperative to note here that Dewey believed that schools should help individuals to develop the creative intelligence and the critical thinking/literacy skills to analyze their society and act for its betterment, not indoctrinate students toward a specific social order. While many radical progressives, such as George Counts, argued that all schools indoctrinate students, Dewey (1937) countered that while indoctrination did occur in schools, it was harmful and did not justify counter-indoctrination efforts (Dewey, 1937, p. 235-238). For Dewey, indoctrination was not education because students were not actively constructing knowledge; Dewey argued that replacing conservative indoctrination with more progressive or even radical indoctrination was wrong. As William Stanley (2006) summarized, Dewey believed that “any attempt to inculcate preconceived theory of social welfare would ultimately work to subject his approach to pedagogy and be antithetical to education for democracy” (p. 96). Yet, rejecting indoctrination did not mean accepting the status quo. Dewey (1934c/1986) asserted that schools

must make ceaseless and intelligently organized effort to develop above all else the will for cooperation and the spirit which sees in every other individual an equal right to share in the cultural and material fruits of collective human invention, industry, skill and knowledge (LW.9.203).

For Dewey (1934c/1986), education could help prepared students to construct a “new and more just and humane society” (LW.9.203). Yet, Dewey’s approach never fully addressed how schools, which are products and producers of social norms and culture,
could implement democratic change in the classroom without explicitly addressing undemocratic contexts.

While many of the pedagogical changes (and focus on the arts) were beneficial, it is problematic that Dewey never fully explained the relationship between pedagogical and political change. Dewey (1922/1983) acknowledged that personal attitudinal changes were important, but only in so much as the change in attitude helps individuals take actions to address structural (political, economic, industrial) causes of racism (MW.13.252-253). Yet, education does not, for Dewey, always lead to action – thus even when attitudes change, action does not necessarily follow. For example, even when acknowledging double taxation and underfunding of African American schools, Dewey does not call for political actions, rather he articulates a great respect for the African American race’s “superior interest in the education of themselves . . . [and sees such commitment as] the surest step possible to gain their full political re-enfranchisement” (Dewey, 1910.#22389). This implied that African American communities would need to continue to operate in an unjust system until, though education, they achieved the political re-enfranchisement necessary to change the unjust system. Yet, the act of moving from greater education to increased political rights (especially within a reality of what Dewey characterizes as an unjust economic system) is never explained.

The gradualism Dewey advocated reflected, in part, a lack of urgency in addressing racism. In his introduction to the Middle Works of John Dewey, Volume 13, Ralph Ross (1998) described Dewey’s quest to understand the logical basis of racial prejudice. Ross wrote that Dewey had “known of all kinds of racial prejudice”, specifically as it impacted many of his Jewish students; yet, Ross argued that become
“[t]he time of the holocaust was not yet come . . . he could be cool and detached [in his discussion of racism] in a way that the advent of Hitler permitted no one” (MW.13.xxvii).

While this is Ross’s interpretation and not Dewey’s, it is not questioned that Dewey did take a gradualist, long-term approach to eliminating racial prejudice. Ross’s analysis is deeply problematic because it seemed to ignore that in Dewey’s home country, during his lifetime, African Americans were enslaved. Following emancipation and reconstruction, African Americans were subjected to Jim Crow laws of segregation and denied political, economic, and social rights based because of white supremacy and racial prejudice. During the very period that Dewey gave a lecture entitled Race and Racial Friction (1922) in China, the Tuskegee Institute reports that more than 50 African Americans were lynched (that is of the total of more than 3,400 African Americans lynched between 1882–1940\(^{30}\)). As such, I would argue that any discussion of education or democracy would need to include contemplations of the legacy of racism as a fully embodied, and not detached, manner.

\(4.5.3\) **Normalization of White Student Experiences**

Cornell West (2004) argued that one of Dewey’s most powerful contributions to the field and to philosophy in general is that he both historicized and Americanized conceptions of philosophy. Yet, it is essential to understand that Dewey’s historical analysis often failed to acknowledge the racist context on the history of the United States (West, 2004, p. 226). For example, Dewey talked in detail about the shift from agrarian

to industrial economy; however, he often ignored the manner in which slavery and exploitation existed in the agricultural economy\textsuperscript{31}.

Dewey’s general silence on racism and his failure to confront white supremacy normalized the experiences of middle class White Americans. Dewey wrote from the perspective of what he referred to as the “average white American.\textsuperscript{32}” This is deeply problematic when contemplating the manner in Dewey’s writings about education, largely influenced by his experience at the Lab School, universalized a progressive pedagogy. At the Lab School, where Dewey conceptualized, designed, and tested many of his theories of education, African American students were not even admitted until the 1940s, well after the time that Dewey left Chicago. The Lab School’s student population, according to Diane Ravitch (2001), was never “representative of the Chicago population” (p. 174). With a one-to-six teacher to student ration, “the leadership of John Dewey, a remarkable staff, highly educated parents, and a network of supportive individuals,” the private, tuition-based Lab School could not, according to Ravitch (2001), be replicated in a public system (p. 173-174). Ravitch (2001) further critiqued Dewey’s position in \textit{Schools of To-Morrow} (1915/2008) arguing that the majority of schools featured “were private, child-centered schools populated – like the Dewey school– by white children from upper-middle class families” (p. 175). Of course, Dewey had many influences beyond the Lab School. For example, Dewey worked closely with Jane Addams and was

\textsuperscript{31} Later in his life, Dewey did begin to write more about the legacy of slavery. For example, Dewey (1941/1988) argued that while Americans were quick to critique Germany or Italy for its “tragic racial intolerance”, they had yet to contend with “[o]ur anti-democratic heritage of Negro slavery has left us with habits of intolerance toward the colored race–habits which belie profession of democratic loyalty” (LW.14.277).

\textsuperscript{32} In \textit{Racial Prejudice and Friction} (1922), Dewey while religious differences between “ordinary white Americans” may not “cause attention,” Americans are much more likely to feel threatened or bothered if the person of a different religion is also of a different race (MW.13.247).
influenced by the work of the Hull House. Yet, when Dewey writes extensively about his philosophy of education, he never addressed the fact that his philosophy was largely developed by studying and thinking about schools serving White children. That Dewey worked within the Lab school is not at all problematic; however, that his experiences were universalized, even though his experiences were greatly limited, means that we should understand Dewey’s philosophy and vision as influenced by the context in which they were developed.

Dewey often failed to theorize the experiences of children of color, including African Americans. While focusing upon the goal of progressive education to create more democratic communities, Dewey never truly contended with the manner in which progressive pedagogy could serve democracy within under-resourced schools and a racist social context. To pursue school-based democracy, without acknowledging systemic constraints to students success, is problematic because many of the policies being advocated by progressives (differentiated curriculum, industrial training) operated very differently in schools serving African American students than in those serving White students.

In 1931 – 1932, Dewey was asked to comment upon African American education in *The Crisis*. W.E.B. DuBois wrote three separate letters requesting Dewey write an article about African American education (DuBois, 1931, #07496). Yet, there is no evidence of a response from Dewey and there does not appear to be an article in *The Crisis* written by Dewey. While Dewey received countless letters and could not be expected to respond to each one, it is significant that within the context of his general

33 See DuBois, 1931a (#07496); DuBois, 1931b (#07497); and DuBois, 1932 (#07500).
silence to engage in a discussion of race relations, Dewey did not reply to DuBois’ request to address race explicitly.

### 4.5.4 Acceptance of Segregation

I have found no evidence that Dewey spoke out publically against segregation until the 1940s. As previously noted, Dewey founded and worked at the Lab School, a segregated, private school affiliated with the University of Chicago. In *Racial Friction and Prejudice* (1922/1983), Dewey argued that immigration should be restricted because he did not believe the world to be “civilized” enough yet for successful cross-cultural exchanges, which could actually make “frictions” worse (Dewey, 1922/1983, MW.13.252). While Dewey’s words were about international immigration, could such a sentiment also have applied to segregation in the United States? I would question if Dewey’s early silence on matters of segregation may have reflected a belief that segregation was necessary until people within the United States were more ready for such cross-cultural exchange.

Dewey’s silence on the issue of segregation was also evident in his text, *Schools of To-Morrow*. When discussing the Gary School system, Dewey and Dewey (2008/1915) applauded the Gary Schools and stated that a European immigrant had an equal opportunity “to prepare for a vocation” suited to his “capabilities” as any other

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34 This must, however, be viewed within historical context. According to Lab School’s diversity statement, in 1942 “a parent arose to call for integration” and the school, which had both a commitment to equality and a “long-standing history of enrolling Asian and Jewish students,” became the “first private school in Chicago to admit African American students” ([http://www.ucls.uchicago.edu/about-lab/diversity-statement/index.aspx](http://www.ucls.uchicago.edu/about-lab/diversity-statement/index.aspx)).
child (p. 148). Yet, Dewey and Dewey made no mention that most of the Gary Schools while formally integrated\(^3\), had “Black children . . . on a different vocational track than white children” (Semel and Sadovnik, 1999, p. 364-365). Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) also featured Indianapolis Public School Number 26, a segregated school that served African American students. Other schools featured in the text, including the Organic School and Arthurdale, were segregated and excluded African American children. Yet, nowhere in the text did Dewey and Dewey mention segregation (1915/2008), which suggests that it was accepted as normal. To be fair, Dewey did actively speak out against segregation in his later life. In 1950, Dewey was amongst a group of educators calling for increased federal funding and an end to segregation (see Dewey et al, 1950, #21616).

### 4.5.5 Support of Industrial Schooling

John Dewey rejected two-track academic systems and challenged conservative progressives who supported vocational education as a separate track for those not college-bound. However, Dewey, like other moderate progressives, argued that industrial education was necessary because it engaged the whole person, and not simply the

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\(^3\) An article entitled “National Association for the Advancement of Colored People” appeared in the January 1917 issue of the *Crisis*. The paper reports that “The Gary Branch [of the NAACP] is very much worried over the question of segregation in the schools: (p. 121). The paper reports that even in the Froebel School, which was integrated, “the colored classes” were still “separate” (p. 121). Superintendent Wirt, responding to NAACP protests, is quoted as saying: “The colored children in the public schools in Gary, Indiana have been segregated from the very beginning. It is a settled policy in this community to continue this segregation” (p. 121)
intellect (Chambliss, 1996). In *The Way Out of Educational Confusion*36 (1931/1985), Dewey wrote that vocational education was both useful for economic reasons, but also as a way in which to “liberaliz[e] and humaniz[e]” what Dewey refers to as “practical activities” (LW.6.83). Dewey believed that by combining traditional and industrial subjects, schools would become more democratic.

Dewey (1934c/1986) explained that historically, liberal arts courses were restricted to the “well-born and the well-to-do” and as such the acquisition of such knowledge became a status symbol while useful knowledge was “necessary only for those compelled by their class status to work for a living” (LW.9.202). Accordingly, liberal arts education was given more value, though both courses in the humanities and courses in the trades/industrial arts were valuable. Dewey (1931/1985) asserted that the curriculum must be reorganized to make connections between the practical and the theoretical and to ensure that education is individually and socially meaningful (LW.6.88-89).

Yet, while Dewey advocated for a balance between the theoretical and the practical, it was clear that such a balance was not often achieved. Within this context, Dewey failed to consider the manner in which industrial schooling in particular and larger progressive reforms in general would be implemented differently in different communities, largely based on social, cultural, and economic capital. If fact, Semel (1999) asserted that “child-centered progressive schools were almost all independent, private schools, [whereas] public education was dominated by the social engineering

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36 According to an editor’s note in *The Collected Works of John Dewey*, this article was: “First published as The Inglis Lecture, 1931 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 41pp., from the Inglis Lecture on Secondary Education at Harvard University on 11 March 1931” (LW.6.75).
strand of progressivism” (p. 13). This trend can be seen within the schools featured in *Schools of To-Morrow*. Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) asserted that each student should have the same opportunity for success. However, the implementation of industrial courses appeared to be very different in those schools serving students preparing for college and those preparing for work. For example, at Interlaken (a school serving more affluent students), Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) reported that most students were bound for college (p. 54), while only a third of the students from the Gary School system attended college (p. 113), and there is no mention of college at the school serving African American students.

Dewey acknowledged, but under-theorized the manner in which schools react to social conditions. In this text, the problems of Indianapolis Public School 26 were largely attributed to the community – the dangerous environment and lack of parental or community support. While the text shows how education reform could better engage the community, it did little to address some of the systemic barriers faced by the students in poor, segregated areas in Indianapolis. For example, the role of white supremacy, racism, and lack of economic opportunities were not even noted. Industrial training seemed to be primarily aimed at preparing students for existing jobs, not liberalizing the manner in which they understood the world. Diane Ravitch (2001), recounting the debate between Dewey and University of Chicago President Robert M. Hutchins, observed that examining the Indianapolis public schools in general, and PS 26 in particular, illustrated “how industrial education, then popular with progressive educators and philanthropists, would restrict students’ opportunities for higher education” (p. 175). Yet, according to Ravitch (2001) Dewey failed to consider the consequences of industrial training, rather
he “preferred to believe in his nonexistent ideal of a liberalized vocational education rather than confront the reality of narrow training for existing jobs” (p. 306). This same critique could be applied to accommodationist schools in the American South. When looking only at the pedagogical tendencies in each school, including an increased focus on working with one’s hands, a connection to community, and interdisciplinary, project-based instruction, many accommodationist schools would clearly be considered part of the progressive movement.

4.5.6 Dewey’s Followers

While some scholars argue that Dewey’s influence was greatly exaggerated, it is clear that Dewey changed the conversation about education and schooling in the US and worldwide. Dewey’s ideas were implemented, albeit often by individuals or institutions who misinterpreted many of his beliefs, in schools throughout the US. Dewey’s influence was also felt throughout the developing world, where the ideas of Dewey and one of his most famous disciples, William Kilpatrick, were implemented in countries such as Chile, Niger, and India (see Goodenow, 1990). Thus, while it is very clear that Dewey’s work and philosophy were often misinterpreted, it is important to understand the beliefs (and actions) of Dewey’s followers. Countless curricular workers from a variety of ideological perspectives claimed to have been influenced by Dewey. Even though scholars offered varied and often-contradictory projects, they must be considered, as they identified as progressives.

Kliebard (1995), in fact, argued that Dewey’s “actual influence on the schools of the nation has been seriously overestimated or growly distorted” (p. 27).
Louise Anderson Allen (2006), in an article entitled *Silenced Sisters: Dewey’s Disciples in a Conservative New South, 1900-1940* described the progressive projects of two of Dewey’s followers. Allen (2006) recounted the work of Celeste Parrish, an educator who studied at the University of Chicago under Dewey for two consecutive summers (para. 14). Parrish founded Georgia’s Muscogee Training School, described as a “short lived effort to create a Chicago style laboratory school as an adjunct to teaching training in the Deep South” (para. 14). Yet, Allen noted that when Parrish later became a state supervisor in Georgia, she focused less on creating “an ideal education” to securing “any kind of education” for students in the South (Parrish as quoted in Allen, 2006, p. para. 29). While the struggle to secure schools was a very real problem, many of the schools appeared to be accommodationist in nature. The second educator Allen (2006) described is Grace Bigelow House, a Northern born teacher and administrator who completed her studies at Columbia’s Teachers College, a leading progressive institution (para. 30). Yet, after working at Hampton, House became the principal of Penn School, a school “devoted to progressive education with an African American student body” (para. 15). While clear connections between the Penn School and the community were considered progressive, the school was also based on the industrial model of education. Allen (2006) described Penn as a school formed by abolitionists that underwent a change in the early 1900s from a school focused on classical academics (New England model) to an industrial school “updat[ed] along Hampton lines” (para. 34). Again, this version of “progressivism” seems much more closely aligned with accommodationist education than moderate progressivism. Yet, both women have connections to John Dewey and progressive reforms in the North. This indicates that even those enacting
accommodationist reforms may have believed that the work they were doing was consistent with the work of Dewey and the larger progressive movement.

### 4.6 Conclusions and Significance

From this study of John Dewey’s speeches, writings, actions, and inactions regarding race in general and accommodationism in particular, it is clear that Dewey had a critique of larger systems of oppression and a gradualist approach to confronting such system. As such, Dewey was a progressive who at times supported accommodationist reforms.

#### 4.6.1. Understanding Dewey within His Social Context

It is important to view Dewey’s contributions to education in the appropriate social context. Dewey wrote over many decades with greatly changing social conditions. During his lifetime, Dewey, in many ways, was more of an advocate of racial justice than most of his White contemporaries. Dewey was among the initial founders of the NAACP in 1909, was an active participant in numerous campaigns to support an end to discrimination and injustice, and actively rejected concepts of eugenics and biological White superiority popular during his lifetime. He advocated an expansion of democracy and the provision of high quality schooling for all children. In comparison to such conservative progressives as John Franklin Bobbitt and Edward Thorndike and moderate progressives such as G. Stanley Hall who endorsed eugenics ideation and advocated for a
very undemocratic two-tier system, Dewey was an advocate for racial justice. However, in comparison with many leading African American progressives, Dewey failed to adequately confront racism, segregation, and concepts of white supremacy in schools.

It is important to note that in 1909, W.E.B. DuBois, a leading African American intellectual and an influential critic of accommodationist education, delivered a speech entitled *Politics and Industry* at the same NAACP conference at which Dewey spoke. In this speech, DuBois spent no time refuting notions of White Superiority, for DuBois began with the premise that all people deserved equal rights and that it was imperative to achieve political and economic justice for all. DuBois (1909) argued that both economic and political rights were needed for true progress, and rejected industrial education as the solution for racial discrimination. Yet, this analysis, with which Dewey may have agreed given his emphasis on the economic nature of racial prejudice, did not appear in Dewey’s comments about schooling in the US. Dewey also did not fully theorize the impact of racism on the development of schools and the implementation of progressive reforms within schools serving African American children.

### 4.6.2 Dewey and Progressive Education

As a scholar responding to the sociopolitical and economic changes in his society, Dewey wrote often about the shift from agricultural to industrial economy that would inevitably change the life of schools – a change that Dewey welcomed as he rejected the largely static, irrelevant, and authoritarian trends in schools. Dewey advocated for democratic, child-centered schools, that would ensure that each student reach his or her
potential and to contribute to the social good. By balancing the needs of the learner, the society, and the discipline, Dewey argued that students must have an active role in their own learning, while the teacher had to provide activities and an environment which promoted growth. Dewey advocated a philosophy and practice of community-based, engaging, student-driven learning that balanced the needs of society, the learner, and the discipline. Dewey rejected the ideas that schooling is simply training by arguing that education “is a process of living and not a preparation for future living” (Dewey, 1897, p. 7). Schools, according to Dewey (1897), “must represent present life- life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in the home, in the neighborhood, or on the playground” (p. 7). As such, schools operate as small learning communities, as knowledge was uncovered and the practice of citizenship and community were embraced (Chambliss, 1996). Dewey believed that all children should have progressive, exploratory, life-affirming, democracy-creating schooling experiences that prepared them to be healthy, productive, and engaged members of society.

4.6.3 Dewey and Accommodationist Education

Yet, despite Dewey’s progressive visions of schooling, Dewey implicitly (and a few times explicitly) supported accommodationist education policies in the United States. According to Watkins (2001), accommodationist curriculum was initially developed at schools like Hampton and Tuskegee and emphasized industrial education, vocational training, character building, and an acceptance of “existing race relations.” Dewey was a proponent of industrial education and skills-based hand-work, although he believed them
to help create a more democratic society by teaching everyone to combine practical and theoretical focus. While Dewey rejected tracked vocational programs, he did support many schools that had industrial programs and did not address the manner in which vocational and industrial programs operated differently in different communities. Dewey believed that schools, as central sites of assimilation and acculturation, should educate the whole child in part by developing attitudes, habits, and character. The last component of accommodationist education, namely the acceptance of “existing race relations” is more difficult to evaluate. Dewey was a proponent of democracy and often spoke out about the harms of racial prejudice. He did critique the system of double taxation and funding inequities in schools serving African American children and he advocated increased funding and better opportunities for all students. As such, it would appear that he challenged existing relations. However, Dewey’s gradualist approach to social change, relative silence on segregation and racism, and normalization of the experience of White students did little to actively change the status quo regarding race relations.

There were also two occasions where Dewey appears to have lent more explicit support to accommodationist education. In Schools of To-Morrow (1915/2008), John and Evelyn Dewey38 acknowledged that they have not addressed “the reorganization of the rural school and the utilization of agriculture in education,” but that they find this movement has the same “tendencies” of education reform as many of the featured schools. That they included a segregated industrial school, PS 26, also seems to lend support to accommodationism. Secondly, in his 1910 Address to the NAACP, Dewey contends that schools do not adequately integrate “literary and vocational types of

38 It is important to acknowledge that John Dewey did not visit most of the schools featured in this text.
education” as he believed they should. He mused that “that perhaps one of things our colored friends may do for us in the South will be to develop for us, for the first time in the history of the human race, a really perfect system of education” (#22389). Does this imply that Dewey supported accommodationist reforms of Booker T. Washington?

In both of these instances, Dewey praised industrial education/accommodationist programs in the American South. Given the time period during which Dewey was speaking, there can be little doubt that the education plan Dewey was referencing above relates to accommodationist schooling, such as endorsed in the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education. As Anderson (1988) explained, the Hampton-Tuskegee model of Industrial education was born and developed during the years of 1868-1915. While many in the North saw the Hampton model as a way to bring “racial peace, political stability, and material prosperity to the American south,” it was really part of a “Black Reconstruction” philosophy which stunted political power, limited economic opportunity, and maintained systems of racial hierarchy (Anderson, 1988, p.34, 36).

How do we understand this endorsement? First, we know that did not write much about Black schooling. Dewey may have simply been responding to the positive news reports about industrial education in the South. If this is true, it still exposes the problem that Dewey, a leading progressive spokesperson, would apply his progressive theory to a school without examining its curriculum or political purpose. Second, from Dewey’s descriptions of schools in *Schools of To-Morrow* (1915/2008), including Indianapolis PS 26, it is apparent that Dewey deeply respected hands-on curricula, character building, connections with community, manual work and industrial training, and projects by which students built/sustained their schools’ physical spaces. Each of these characteristics is
also present, to varying extents and for differing purposes, in the schools maintained by Washington and funded by those described as accommodationist. Without a clear analysis of power and politics, both could be considered progressive.

4.6.4 Significance

At the start of this chapter, I wrote that I intended to understand how Dewey’s views on race and schooling could help us understand the relationship between accommodationist and progressive movements. After studying Dewey’s words, actions, and inactions, I contend that Dewey would characterize many elements of accommodationist schooling as progressive. This does not mean that Dewey advocated for tracked vocational programs (which he did not) or education for racial subservience (which, again, he did not); but rather, Dewey’s implicit endorsement of accommodationist schooling is a result of a failure to conceptualize the manner in which political beliefs and social context influenced the implementation and implications of broad progressive ideals. My research suggests that given the broad conceptualizations of progressivism at the time, accommodationist schooling could have been considered by many to be part of the mainstream progressive movement.

When I suggest that we understand accommodationism as part of mainstream progressive movement, it does not mean that I believe we need to celebrate accommodationism. Rather, I believe that we need to understand accommodationism as progressive as to interrogate limits to the early progressive movement. There is great truth in West’s (2004) assertion that it is impossible to contemplate democracy without
contending with the manner in which white supremacy has “contributed greatly to the arrested development of American democracy” (p. 226). Yet, despite critiques of macro-economic systems of exploitation and later statements about the legacy of slavery in the US, most of Dewey’s writings about democracy, education, and reforms do not address systems of racism and white supremacy.

Dewey’s implicit support of accommodationist education illustrates a few problematic trends that have significance today. Many progressives focused too heavily on pedagogical reforms without theorizing the manner in which power and politics influenced the manner in which pedagogy was enacted. This relates to the trend of focusing only on opportunity, while ignoring outcome. An examination of various schools that employed industrial training, even within Dewey and Dewey’s (1915/2008) text, illustrates the very different outcomes for different groups of students. It is important to examine which students are given which opportunities in any reform initiative.

I would argue that exposing this weakness in Dewey’s work does not negate Dewey’s profound significance or contributions to the field of curriculum. Dewey was a brilliant theorist who, by envisioning and sharing with the world an idea of truly democratic, community based, life-affirming schooling, served to counter many of the worst reforms of his day. However, it does mean that when we discuss John Dewey today we should be mindful of the social context in which his work was developed and the limits to his work. Our questions, in building or supporting a progressive education movement today, should not be “What would John Dewey do?” but “How can we use
that which was best in Dewey’s philosophy to create change”? As well as: “What other
perspectives are important to consider in addressing this problem?”

In the *Social Frontier*, Dewey (1936) offered a commemoration of Horace Mann
in which he stated:

> If we are content to glorify [Mann’s] work without applying his passionate ardor
of thought and action to the problem to which he was devoted, in the forms that
problem has now assumed, we shall be traitors to his memory. Our
commemoration will be honest only as we employ it to rededicating ourselves to
the cause to which he sacrificially devoted his life (p. 42).

I would argue that we should honor Dewey’s advice and make certain that our
commemorations of Dewey includes challenges, expansions, and actions that continually
work to make relevant Dewey’s ideas in a new world order. In *Love, Justice and
Education* (2009), Schubert, through the voices of 426 Utopians, provides multiple
perspectives about the “contemporary meaning” of Dewey’s vision. Schubert (2009)
argued that “loving relationships that strive for social justice can overcome harmfulness
of an acquisitive society and provide the possibility of cultivating democratic and
dialogic experience” (p. 10). How can we develop such loving relationships today?
Would they be enough?

We must also ask questions that Dewey, given the social context of his day, may
have failed to ask. questions such as: (a) What are the limitations of having the space you
create and test new ideas based in White, affluent schools? (b) What knowledge is being
missed when we do not adequately study schools serving racially diverse students? (c)
How do progressive reform initiatives get enacted in different communities? (d) How
does varying cultural, political, and economic capital impact enacted reforms? (d) Who is
benefiting and who is being harmed by each reform? (e) Does the reform address opportunities or outcomes? (f) Who is being empowered to make choices about reform? And (g) whose interests are being served by these reforms?
5. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON (1856-1915)

Then in my mind’s eye I see the bronze statue of the college Founder, the cold Father symbol, his hands outstretched in the breathtaking gesture of lifting a veil that flutters in hard metallic folds about the face of a kneeling slave; and I am standing puzzled, unable to decide whether the veil is really being lifted, or lowered more firmly into place; whether I am witnessing a revelation or a more efficient blinding (Ellison, 1952/1980, p. 36).

5.1 Purpose and Process

Booker T. Washington is often characterized as the most vocal proponent of industrial education and accommodationist politics at the turn of the twentieth century. As a graduate of Hampton Institute, the principal of Tuskegee Institute, and the leader of the “Tuskegee Machine,” Washington preached the policies of accommodationism throughout the American South. Yet, while many argue that Washington was the quintessential accommodationist, others argue that Washington simply enacted the accommodationist program promoted by White philanthropists, and still others argue that he was actually the “father” of progressive education and a powerful pragmatic actor who worked to improve the lives of African Americans.

In this chapter, I explored Washington’s views on industrial education, progressive education, and accommodationism. I found that Washington was both an accommodationist and a progressive. I also found that by studying Washington we can see the manner in which the progressive education movement operated differently in different communities (largely dependent on the social capitol and power within those communities). Finally, I contend that mainstream conservative and even moderate
progressivism accepted many of the features of accommodationism for African Americans. To complete this chapter, I surveyed Washington’s published work and personal letters, though I will largely focus on a few important speeches/articles. I also did a preliminary search of the Washington papers compiled by the University of Illinois Press; however, while the papers were helpful in my initial investigation, the collection was removed to be reformatted during the time period I was doing my most extensive research and writing about Washington. Further research would require a careful study of Washington’s papers.

It is beyond the scope of this research to try to define Washington’s legacy in regards to the effect of Tuskegee on the education for African Americans in the South. There are countless books and articles detailing Washington’s work at Tuskegee. Yet, despite the large body of research dedicated to understanding the politics, education theory and legacy of Washington, there are very few explicit examinations of Washington’s theories and actions as relate to progressive education. Washington (and Armstrong and Jones) are often neglected\textsuperscript{39} in mainstream/Eurocentric texts regarding progressive education. By excluding Washington in the study of progressivism, I believe we do not have a clear concept of the very complicated and contested Progressive Movement.

In this chapter, I will argue that Washington was both an accommodationist and a progressive and that studying Washington can inform our understanding of the manner in which accommodationism was related to progressivism.

\textsuperscript{39} There are, of course, notable exceptions, for example Tyack (1974), Ravitch (2001), Curti (1959/1978).
5.2 Biographical Sketch

Booker T. Washington was an influential educator and a leading spokesman in the African American community from the 1880s until his death in 1915. While he disavowed politics, Washington was the “wizard” of an influential political machine and a leader and spokesperson for the accommodationist movement in education.

Washington was born into slavery on a farm in Virginia in 1856. According to his biographer, Louis Harlan (1983), after emancipation, Washington worked “in the salt furnaces and coal mines and as a houseboy” in West Virginia (p. vii). Washington first attended a local Freedman school and then made his way to Hampton Institute in 1872. At Hampton, Washington was greatly influenced by the school’s founder and principal, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, who stressed the values of “self reliance, hard work, and thrift” (Harlan, 1986, p. viii). After graduating from Hampton, Washington taught in West Virginia and, for a short time pursued academic and religious training. Washington then returned to Hampton to teach. In 1881, Washington was invited to become the principal of the Tuskegee Institute. Washington arrived to find not schoolhouse or curricula; however, through fundraising efforts, Washington modeled his school after Hampton and built the school into an empire. At Tuskegee, Washington married three times (each of his first wives passes away within a few years of marriage.) Washington had three biological children and one adopted child.

Washington, in addition to serving as an administrator at Tuskegee, was also recognized as a leading spokesperson for the African American community.\footnote{I write that he was considered a leading spokesperson, because while he was widely acknowledged as such from his supporters and critics alike, there is controversy as to how he became the spokesperson.}
Washington authored more than 10 books and wrote numerous articles. Washington was recognized as the first African American to dine at the White House and amongst the first African Americans to speak to audiences that included both African American and White citizens of the South. Washington may be best known for his 1895 Atlanta Exposition speech, which, according to Harlan (1983) “[c]atapulted Washington into national fame and recognition as a black spokesman” (p. vii). The speech was widely praised and a year after delivering this speech, Washington was awarded an honorary degree from Harvard (Washington, 1901/1986, p. 295-302).

Under Washington’s leadership, and in partnership with wealthy White philanthropists from the North, schools based upon the Hampton-Tuskegee model of accommodationist education expanded throughout the South. Through partnerships with local government agencies and philanthropic organizations, Washington was able to help secure many “outgrowths” of Tuskegee throughout the South, including Voorhees Industrial School, Mt. Meigs Institute, East Tennessee Normal and Industrial Institute, Topeka Educational and Industrial Institute, Allengreene Normal and Industrial Institute, Utica Normal and Industrial Institute, and Christiansburg Institute (Washington, 1904, p. 219, 222).

On November 14, 1915, Washington died in his home at Tuskegee and was buried “in the little cemetery on campus beside the chapel” (Harlan, 1983, p. 456). With his death, came the death of the Tuskegee “empire.”

DuBois (1903/1990) wrote that Washington was chosen from outside of the community and that his legitimacy was challenged by many leading intellectuals (p. 39).
5.3 Literature Review

In the quote that began this chapter\(^{41}\), Ellison (1952/1980) depicted a scene that beautifully captures the debate over the legacy of the “cold father” at an industrial school in the South. While not explicitly about Washington, many scholars have found great similarities between the school depicted in *Invisible Man* and Tuskegee Institute, a school that the author attended\(^{42}\). While there is no doubt that Washington was an influential educator and a leading African American spokesperson during his lifetime, there are vastly different interpretations of his education philosophy and his legacy.

Supporters of Washington point to his numerous accomplishments. Poet Langston Hughes (1941) applauded Washington’s pragmatism and success in a very difficult social context. Hughes (1941) wrote: “Sometimes he had/ Compromise in his talk – / For a man must crawl / Before he can walk – / And in Alabama in ’85/ A joker was lucky/ To be alive.” Many of Washington’s supporters, and even some of his critics, acknowledged his accomplishments in creating, funding, and expanding a large network of schools for African Americans in the Deep South during a time of violence and repression. Bill Lawson (2004) argued that Washington was a pragmatic actor who “worked for the betterment of black people in one of the worst periods of black existence since slavery” and that his focus was on creating concrete solutions to very real problems, “rather than stating and justifying moral ideals” (p. 140).

\(^{41}\) In framing their conversation about the role of philanthropists in Black education, Anderson and Moss (1999) use this quote from Ellison’s *Invisible Man* (p.1-2).

\(^{42}\) It is also important to note that Ellison wrote this book while he had a Rosenwald Fellowship. Julius Rosenwald, who is the focus of the next chapter, was a close partner of Washington and not only funded Tuskegee, but helped to fund over 5000 small industrial schools (largely modeled after Tuskegee) throughout the American South.
Supporters further asserted that Washington was well aware of the internal contradictions in his professed beliefs, but that, as a pragmatist, his primary objective was to create schools and economic opportunities. Moses (2004), for example, argued that Washington:

was aware of the contradictions and the implicit ironies in the oxymoronic position for separate-but-equal assimilationism, but he wasted little time explaining, to those who were sometimes deliberately obtuse, the obvious fact that militancy could accomplish nothing in the Alabama of 1900 (p. 150).

In a similar argument, Merle Curti (1978) stated that previous attempts at “aggressiveness and militancy had failed” and that the only way for African Americans to “achieve real progress” was to accommodate to the interests of those in power (p. 294). Other supporters of Washington identify his role in the founding of progressive education, which he employed at Tuskegee Institute (see Generals 2000; Gardner, 1975).

Despite such accolades, Washington’s critics argued that his accommodationist politics further subjugated African Americans and worked to weaken movements for equal rights. During Washington’s lifetime, W.E.B. DuBois was his most vocal opponent. In *Souls of Black Folk* (1903/1990), DuBois wrote a chapter entitled “Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others” (p. 36). While DuBois acknowledged the national recognition of Booker T. Washington as a spokesperson for African Americans, he argued that Washington was largely a leader appointed from outside of the African American community (p. 39). DuBois (1903/1990) summarized Washington’s plan as a “programme of industrial education, conciliation of the South, and submission and silence as to civil and political rights” (p. 36). While acknowledging the difficulty of Washington’s work in the South, DuBois (1903/1990) asserted that Washington’s plan
was based upon survival through submission, which required that African Americans temporarily suspend their struggle for political power, civil rights and higher education, and instead “concentrate[d] all their energies on industrial education, the accumulation of wealth, and the conciliation of the South” (p. 42-43). DuBois (1903/1990) argued that the result of Washington’s plan was not greater opportunity, but rather: “1. The disfranchisement of the Negro. 2. The legal creation of a distinct status of civil inferiority for the Negro. 3. The steady withdrawal of aid from institutions for the higher training of the Negro” (p. 43). While DuBois (1903/1990) was careful not to blame Washington’s teaching alone for such results, he did argue that “his propaganda has, without a shadow of doubt, helped their speedier accomplishment” (p. 43).

Contemporary scholar, James Anderson (1990), forcefully rejected the narrative that Washington, “against overwhelming odds . . . could build the most famous black institution of learning” and in so doing provided a “practical education that protected blacks from the worst tendencies of Southern racism” (p. 60-61). Instead, Anderson (1990) argued that the era of Washington’s leadership “was characterized by the worst treatment of black education by state and local officers since the end of slavery” (p. 61). Like DuBois, Anderson acknowledged that the worsening conditions in the South during Washington’s reign cannot be attributed to Washington’s theory alone. According to Anderson (1990), Washington argued that “despite political compromises, he had a favorable impact on the advancement of public education in black communities”; however, Anderson (1990) stated that conditions actually worsened during his leadership (p. 47). According to Anderson (1988), Washington’s plan for industrial education and economic advancement was not a “great compromise”, but rather a “logical extension of
an ideology that rejected black political power while recognizing that the South’s agricultural economy rested on the backs of black agricultural workers” (p. 44). Anderson (1988) argued that the legacy of country training schools, which largely followed the Hampton-Tuskegee model, was “not so much in what they prepared black students to become as in ways they shut off alternative development” (p. 147).

Washington’s biographer, Louis Harlan (1983) recognized the complex nature of Washington’s legacy. He argued that Washington was a masterful leader, but that during the period that was for Washington personally “the best of times was for most blacks the worst – the most discouraging period since the freeing of the slaves” (viii) and that “Washington, the era’s most prominent black man, found it impossible to accommodate to the system of white supremacy and at the same time to challenge or change it” (p. ix). Harlan (1983) argued that Washington did have many accomplishments, which greatly benefited African Americans; however, he critiqued Washington for failing to adequately address the failings of his accommodationist politics even when confronted with clear evidence that accommodationist was not working\(^{43}\). Harlan (1983) argued that Washington’s leadership was becoming outdated well before his death and that the founding of the NAACP “came to represent the future, and Washington was the past” (p. 360).

While there has been extensive scholarship analyzing Booker T. Washington’s role in politics and education, there are limited articles examining Washington within the

\(^{43}\) Harlan (1983) provided as evidence of the failures of accommodationism the deadly Atlanta Riots of 1906, Theodore Roosevelt’s “wholesale dismissal of three companies of black regular troops on weak evidence that some of them were involved in the Brownsville shoot-out with white citizens” and the 1911 New York incident when Booker T. Washington himself was assaulted by a White man and arrested by the police (p. 295 and 404).
context of the progressive education movement (see Generals, 2000). In this chapter, I have sought to understand the manner in which Washington’s accommodationism interacted with key progressive philosophical trends.

5.4 **Key Statements and Actions**

While scholars often characterize Washington as a pragmatic actor and not a theorist, his actions were based on his understandings of the world and key and definable ideas related to politics, economics, race and schooling. Washington wrote a number of books and speeches throughout his lifetime. I will briefly discuss six texts and speeches.

5.4.1 *Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia (1895)*

In 1895, Washington was invited to address the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta. This speech, which is often referred to as the Atlanta Compromise Speech, launched Washington into the national spotlight. Washington articulated a message of accommodationism and a focus on the importance of industrial education. He argued that interracial cooperation would lead to mutual progress and economic prosperity for both African American and White southerners.

Washington advised African Americans to “cast down your buckets” in the South and to work to cultivate relationships with “the people of all races” (p.219). Washington similarly advised White Southerners to “cast down your buckets” and befriend African Americans who had already proved loyalty to their White neighbors (p. 219-221).
Washington told White Southerners that when African Americans pursued “education of head, hand, and heart, you will find that they will buy your surplus land, make blossom the waste places in your fields, and run your factories” (p. 220-221). In his oft quoted phrase best illustrating his famed “compromise,” Washington claimed that “[i]n all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress” (p. 221-222).

5.4.2 The Future of the American Negro (1899/2008)

In his book, The Future of the American Negro (1899/2008), Washington discussing the increased population of African Americans in the United States and stated that one of the nation’s central challenges was to ensure peaceful and mutually beneficial interracial relations by supporting African Americans in becoming “self-supporting, intelligent, economical, and valuable citizens” (p.5). Washington’s solution involved the creation and expansion of industrial education, which he argued would lead to an expanded economic base. Washington asserted that schools must address the needs, desires, and realities of students, instead of focusing upon abstract intellectual or academic concepts (p. 18).

Washington (1899/2008) supported industrial schools that would prepare African American students to gain valuable skills and open small businesses. This, Washington believed, would lead to increased trade opportunities with White neighbors, increased wages, and private ownership of land (Chapter 4). Property accumulation and industrial
skills, Washington argued, were imperative to helping African Americans earn “recognition” and gain increased political standing in the wider community.

5.4.3 *Education will Solve the Race Problem: A Reply (1900/2009)*

In a response to an article entitled “Will Education Solve the Race Problem”\(^\text{44}\) by Professor John Roach Straton (1900) of Macon, Georgia, Washington disagreed with Straton and concluded that education would help solve the race problem in the South (p. 221). Washington stressed that education for African Americans must include both home and school-based “training in industry and in habits of thrift, as well as mental, moral, and religious discipline” (p. 221). Additionally, Washington argued that education must be expanded to help White citizens reduce racial prejudice (p. 221). In this article, Washington highlighted the many gains already made by African Americans and asked the reader for patience and acceptance of gradual change. Washington also rejected Straton’s comments that emancipation had led to an increase of criminality amongst African Americans and argued that industrial schooling actually led to lower rates of crime (p. 229-230). Washington argued that the solution to the “problem before our county” is “a judicious system of industrial, mental, and religious training” (p.232) and called for an expansion of schooling opportunities for African Americans.

\(^\text{44}\) Straton (1900) argued that education will not solve the “race problem” in the United States because African Americans were not as “civilized” as their white counterparts and needed time to develop. Straton argued that education or intervention from outside will not only prove useless, but may also prove harmful. Straton argued the “White Man’s Burden” is actually the “Black Man’s Death” (p. 797) and he rejected any intervention, including industrial education.
5.4.4 *Up From Slavery (1901/1986)*

Referred to as “a Black Horatio Alger tale,” Washington’s famed autobiography was a rags-to-riches story of self-help and progress (Gardner, 1975, p. 506). Washington wrote *Up From Slavery (1901/1986)* at the height of his power (Harlan, 1986). This autobiographical text first published as a series of articles in *Outlook* (Harlan, 1986, p. vii), detailed Washington’s rise to power, core beliefs about industrial education, and faith in the power of education to help improve conditions for both African Americans and Whites in the American South. The book also made an impact internationally, with translated editions in numerous languages, including: “German, French, Spanish, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, and Russian, ... Arabic, Zulu, Hindi, Malayalam, Chinese, and Japanese” (Harlan, 1986, p. xxxvii).

Within his autobiography, Washington recounted his journey to and experiences at Hampton Institute, where he first met and was greatly influenced by General Armstrong (p. 54). It was at Hampton that Washington first began to believe that the purpose of education was to inspire the student to “love labour” (p. 73-74). Washington argued that schools must prepare students for opportunities that were currently available to them. As such, the Tuskegee curriculum was crafted only after Washington had studied the needs of the surrounding community (p. 148). Washington argued Tuskegee had great influence on the community and the country through the influence of its graduates and participants in its extension programs.
5.4.5 Working With The Hands, Sequel to Up From Slavery (1904)

In the sequel from *Up from Slavery, Working with the Hands*, Washington emphasized the importance of industrial training. In his introduction to this text, Washington introduced the two key “facts.” First, Washington asserted that: “Mere hand training, without thorough moral, religious, and mental education, counts for very little. The hands, the head, and the heart together should be so correlated that one may be made to help the others” 45 (p. 2) Second, Washington argued that while industrial schools often produced income generating products and services, “[t]he effort to make an industry profitable should not be the aim of first importance. The teaching should be most emphasised [sic]” (p. 2 -3).

Throughout this book, Washington stressed many characteristics of progressive education, including: (a) training of both the mind and body, (b) individualizing student learning goals, (c) crafting curriculum to respond to students’ needs and interests, (d) creating an integrated or correlated curriculum, (e) making the school a center for the entire community; and (f) working in nature/the outdoors.

5.4.6 Industrial Education and the Public School (1913)

In an article addressing “The Negro’s Progress in [the] Fifty Years” since emancipation, Washington highlighted the importance of industrial education. Washington (1913) argued that following the Civil War, freedmen were left with

45 Subject correlation and integration were key progressive concepts implemented at Tuskegee at the same time as it was being popularized in Northern progressive schools.
“friends” in both the North and South, but that the “the two sections of the country held diametrically opposite notions as to the best way to proceed” (p. 219). Washington recounted the history of schooling in the South and wrote that the “most important thing which emancipation did for the Negro and the South was to bring into existence a public school system” (p. 219-220). Washington acknowledged the role of both the Freedmen Bureau Schools and the “little army of Yankee school ma’ms” who came south following the Civil War and applauded the American Missionary Association for creating the Hampton Institute in 1861 (p. 220). Washington argued that despite such efforts, when Tuskegee was founded in 1881, conditions were not much better than they had been in the decade before (p. 221). Without publically provided schools, the majority of schools were paid for by philanthropists and Washington credited such philanthropists with funding industrial schools throughout the South (p. 224).

Washington asserted that schools must make education relevant and teach that “the way to build up a race is to begin at the bottom and not at the top, to lift the man furthest down, and thus raise the whole structure of society above him” (p. 227). To increase access to public schools for African American students, Washington argued that it was necessary to convince White Southerners that “Negro education was of some real value, not only to the Negro himself, but also to the community” (p. 227). While Washington acknowledged that when Tuskegee was first opened, most parents were not supportive of industrial education, he asserted that it has gained acceptance and now “almost every Negro school teaches some sort of industry” (p. 228). Washington argued that universal schooling was still not available to African Americans, but that through the good work of industrial schools, public sentiment was beginning to change.
5.5 Findings: Washington’s Views on Race, Schooling, and Social Change

To understand Washington's education philosophy, it is important to look at his writings and ideas about the role of education in creating social change. Washington was attracted to education not simply as a vocation, but rather as the way to best address race relations in the United States and to improve conditions for African Americans. In his autobiography, *Up From Slavery* (1901/1986), Washington recounted that he was tempted to enter political life, but believed he could do more by “assisting in the laying of the foundation of the race though a generous education of the hand, head, and heart” (p. 85).

Washington often spoke about the benefits of industrial education in solving the race problem in the United States. As such, it is important to understand how he conceptualized this problem. Lawson (2006) argued that as a “pragmatist in the John Dewey sense of pragmatism,” the key questions that Washington’s work addressed were: “How do you resolve or improve race relations between black and white people in the South, given the history of race and racism in the United States at that particular point in history?” (p. 9). His pragmatic solutions to such questions involved appealing to the self-interest of those in power, stressing interracial cooperation, accepting gradual or incremental change, acquiescing to notions of White superiority, and stressing the need for economic, as opposed to political, rights.
5.5.1 Appeal to Self Interest

In attempting to secure funding for public education, Washington appealed to the self interest of White Southerners and policy makers. In 1899, he argued “when the South is ignorant, the North is ignorant; when the South is poor, the North is poor; when the South commits crime, the nation commits crime” (Washington, 1899/2008, p.17). As such, creating increased opportunities for African Americans and Southerners, Washington asserted, should be a national priority. Washington further tried to appeal to the interest of Southerners by arguing that education for African Americans would create an informed citizenry, lower crime, and increase the prosperity of the South. In fact, Washington concluded that: “manual training is almost as good a preventive for criminality as vaccination is for smallpox” (Washington, 1900/2009, p. 230).

Washington also argued that industrial education was crucial for economic development in the South. Washington asserted that, unlike in Northern urban areas, there was very little immigration to the South; consequently, the South required the “black man to do for it what the foreigner is doing for the Great West” (Washington, 1904, p. 27). Washington also touted the fact that African Americans were rarely unionized, which provided economic benefit to employers.

5.5.2 Relationships with Philanthropists and Political Leaders

For Washington, personal relationships were crucial, especially relationships with those in power. Of the “White Architects” detailed in Watkins (2001) book White Architects of Black Education, Washington had relationships (either directly or
indirectly) with each of them. Watkins (2001) wrote that Washington was a “[w]ell known Black educator [who] worked in league with the white architects” (p.2-3). Some were mentors, others collaborators, others supporters, and many others were funders of Washington’s work. In addition to these men, Washington worked closely with Julius Rosenwald, a Chicago philanthropist who helped fund the creation of Rosenwald schools throughout the rural South.

The exact nature of Washington’s relationship with his wealthy donors is contested. Harlan (1983) argued that Washington developed a relationship with wealthy philanthropists because they shared values and that Washington and his funders respected each other deeply (p. 129). Moses (2004) characterized these relationships as pragmatic, asserting that Washington cultivated relationships with conservative progressives and funders, rather than more liberal progressives, because “the progressivism of Andrew Carnegie had more to offer him than that of Theodore Roosevelt, especially after Roosevelt left office” (p. 154). Yet, both of these interpretations are different from that offered by Watkins (2001), who argued that the accommodationist curriculum was planned and developed by the very “White architects” with whom Washington was working.

Regardless of the exact nature of this relationship, the role of philanthropists in furthering the Hampton-Tuskegee model should not be minimized. As Anderson (1988) argued, while the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education had widespread support amongst White political, education, and business leaders, many African American intellectuals and educators rejected the model. However, it became an almost universally implemented model in the South largely because it was the predominant form of
education being funded by wealthy philanthropists. It must be noted that the reason philanthropists had so much power in the South was because the state was failing to fund public education for African American students.

5.5.3 Gradualism

Like many moderate progressives of this era, Washington rejected notions of genetic inferiority, but did believe that African Americans were, because of slavery, generations “behind” their White counterparts. Washington (1899/2008) stated that:

We must admit the stern fact that at present the Negro, through no choice of his own, is living among another race which is far ahead of him in education, property, experience, and favourable condition; further, that the Negro's present condition makes him dependent upon the white people for most of the things necessary to sustain life, as well as for his common school education (p. 220).

Washington, like other accommodationist and progressive leaders of his day, believed that progress would come slowly, through a series of smaller changes over multiple generations. This sense of gradual progress toward civilization, often referenced by progressive theorists, posited that the best progress happened “one step at a time through all the constructive grades of industrial, mental, moral and social development which all races have had to follow that have become independent and strong” (Washington, 1904, p. 245). As such, small, Washington (1904) asserted that incremental changes were necessary not just because of pragmatic considerations, but because it was important for African Americans to move slowly through each stage of development.
Within this narrative of gradualism, Washington argued that there has been consistent progress and that African Americans have “at every stage, shown a tendency to grow into harmony with the best type of American civilization” (Washington, 1900/2009, p. 222). In The Future of the American Negro, Washington (1899/2008) even posited that “slavery, while clearly criminal and dehumanizing, also provided training and education” and that “every large slave plantation in the South was, in a limited sense, an industrial school” (p. 54). Of course, neglected in Washington’s story of progress was the immense and rich history of struggle, protest, and rebellion – without which emancipation may not have been possible.

It is important to note that while gradualism was a key component to accommodationist philosophy, it was not unique to accommodationism. In fact, Tyack and Cuban (1995) described “the tension between Americans’ intense faith in education – almost a secular religion – and the gradualness of change in educational practices” (p. 1). They argued that our “utopian tradition of social reform through schooling has often diverted attention from more costly, politically controversial, and difficult societal reforms” because it proved much less threatening. For example, Tyack and Cuban (1995) explain that it is easier “to provide vocational education than to remedy inequities in employment and gross disparities in wealth and income” (Tyack and Cuban, 1995, p. 3-4). This is, of course, similar to Watkins’s (2001) argument that education reform allows “safe reforms” that produced gradual inclusion of African Americans in the new industrial order largely through education (p. 15). Within this context, Washington’s deep belief in education to solve the nation’s problems is very much within mainstream thought. Given the need for gradual change, Washington argued that the only solution is
industrial education, social segregation, and the “compromise” to suspend active campaigns for political rights while focusing on education and economic development.

5.5.4 Political Rights versus Political Machine

Understanding the role of political work within Washington’s plan is complicated because of the disconnect between his public statements and his private actions. Publically, Washington often rejected political agitation, but privately Washington ran a political machine. This does not mean he never offered public challenges to systemic racism. For example, three years after the Atlanta Exposition Speech, Washington spoke at the Chicago Peace Jubilee and stated “that a race willing to die for its country should have the highest opportunity to live for its country” (Harlan, 1986, p. xiii). Washington also challenged laws that restricted voting rights based upon race and publically called for more equitable distribution of funds.

Yet, despite these occasional public challenges to racism, most of Washington’s political maneuvers were covert. Anderson (1990) noted that “in order to protect . . . the advancement of education in black communities, he found himself needing the very political involvement he had once discharged” (p. 59). Thus, while not seeking office himself, Washington’s Tuskegee Machine utilized federal connections to secure jobs for friends and associates. Behind the scenes, Washington funded legal challenges to segregation (Harlan, 1986, p. xvii). Rabaka (2005) argued that despite his anti-political stance, Washington advised numerous US presidents, advocated for “civil rights and social justice” (p. 2).
In 1909, however, DuBois sharply criticized Washington’s secretive political actions. In his speech, entitled *Politics and Industry* (1909), DuBois asserted that both economic and political rights must be demanded publicly. He argued that those who “favor[ed] influence and diplomacy” actually had “an organized political machine which dictates the distribution of offices among black men and sometimes among Southern whites” (p. 81). DuBois (1909) asserted that “this kind of political development by secrecy and machine methods is both dangerous and unwholesome and is not leading toward real democracy” (p. 81).

### 5.5.5 Change within Existing Social and Economic Structure

Washington believed that progress of African Americans would not come in the form of political gains, but rather through a combination of hard work, business success, and property accumulation within the existing economic structures. In numerous speeches, Washington discussed the advantages of developing an economic base. Washington argued that Jewish Americans had through their “business and industrial sense” overcome oppression and gained recognition in the US (Washington, 1899/2008, Chapter p. 66). Conversely, Washington argued that places like “Hayti, Santo Domingo, and Liberia” (sic) all have natural resources, but the people were never trained to take advantage of their resources in part because they have not had appropriate education (Washington, 1899/2008, p. 70-71). Industrial education, which leads to jobs, business ownership, and property accumulation, will be of the greatest benefit, according to Washington. Washington argued that once African Americans had enough money and
buying power, segregation would naturally end because, for example, African Americans would not pay money to sit in a Jim Crow car. If the business owners wanted money, they would have to desegregate. Further, Washington believed that once African Americans produced products and services that White people wanted, the “race question will disappear” (Washington, 1899/2008, p. 85).

Washington believed that by creating independent wealth, expertise, and small businesses experience, African Americans would gain respect, recognition, and political rights. Washington (1901/1986) provided the example of brick making at Tuskegee. When Tuskegee students successfully learned to produce bricks as a business venture, they became greatly skilled and sold bricks to the community (p. 153). The brick making experience helped students learn a new skill, created as a source of revenue for the school and encouraged the belief amongst White neighbors that “in educating our students we were adding something to the wealth and comfort of the community” (p. 153).

Washington, who himself was an employer of non-union labor at Tuskegee, prided himself in his business sensibility. He stated that at Tuskegee he strove: “to carry out, in our financial and other operations, such business methods as would be approved of by any New York banking house” (Washington, 1901/1986, p. 192). It is important to note that Washington’s belief in capitalism came in part from Washington’s explicit rejection of socialism. According to Curti (1978), Washington appreciated “laissez-faire theory that the best government was that which governed least” and rejected “reform by revolution” (Curti, 1959/1978, p. 302). While in Europe, Washington rejected the power of unions, socialism, and political movements to create change. Interestingly, in comparing the United States and England, Washington recounted that that he was
impressed by the desire of the servant class in England to do their jobs very well, as opposed to becoming focused on social mobility. Washington (1901/1986) wrote that while he is not certain which system he favored, he noticed that the English servant “expects, as a rule, to be nothing but a servant, and so he perfects himself in the art to a degree that no class of servants in America has yet reached” (p. 286).

While Washington did not publically endorse this system, much of the work at Tuskegee trained students to fulfill socially acceptable vocations, including industrial labor and domestic training. This fit in many ways with Washington’s theory of gradual, incremental change that would take place over a number of generations.

5.5.6 Philosophy of Education

Washington’s philosophy of education was fundamentally tied to his theory of change and was, according to Rabaka (2005) “essentially an extension of his political and economic thought” (p. 2). Washington’s philosophy of education was greatly influenced by Hampton Institute’s General Samuel Armstrong. Washington applied the lessons learned at Hampton to create a philosophy of education based in the belief that practical, utilitarian, industrial education would be the best way to improve race relations and solve the most pressing problems of the day.

Washington argued that education must combine the practical and the theoretical and prepare students to find material success in the world as it already existed.

As such, Washington (1904), like most other radical, moderate, and conservative progressives, rejected schooling that focused exclusively on classical or liberal arts
education. Mirroring a progressive sentiment, Washington critiqued traditional curriculum, which had been created “without paying attention to the actual life and needs of those living in the shadow of the institution and for whom its educational machinery must labour” (p. 15). Washington (1904) argued that classical education neither provided material success nor educated students to apply their academic learning to practical matters in their own homes. For example, in his survey of Alabama, Washington described students who studied art in school, but did not apply their knowledge to beautify their homes (Washington, 1904, p. 13). Washington also observed students who could do complicated math problems, but who were not applying mathematic skills to the family work (Washington, 1904, p. 13). Instead of meeting practical needs and responding to current conditions, Washington (1899/2008) argued that classical education increased the student’s “estimate of his importance in the world” as well as his material desires, but did not provide the student with the skills necessary to gain the resources to provide for his new desires (p. 68-69).

This critique was not, however, limited to Washington. In fact, Horace Mann Bond (1935) called upon early curriculum reformers to have an “appreciat[ion of] the social forces which have resulted in the activities now open to study”\(^\text{46}\). Washington (1904) agreed, stating that “[m]uch that the Negro has studied presupposes conditions that do not, for him, exist” (p. 136-137). Throughout his works and speeches, Washington recounted many stories of students “harmed” by a classical curriculum which neglected to consider existing social and political realities and does not prepare students to improve their own lives, the lives of their families, or the lives of their communities.

\(^{46}\)Yet, for Horace Mann Bond (1935), this does not mean an acceptance of the existing status quo (p. 168).
Washington often summarized his education philosophy as an education of the “hand, head, and heart” (Washington, 1901/1986, p. 85). It is interesting to note that “hand” is placed first in this education philosophy, as it was industrial and manual training that were the most heavily emphasized curriculum at Tuskegee. Washington believed that industrial education both prepared students for specific occupations available to them but also taught the value of hard work and built character. In fact, Washington believed that character building and morality training came best through teaching practical work.

Washington (1904) recounted that when students first came to Tuskegee, many were resistant to physical labor and did not want to work on the farm (p. 39-40). But, Washington (1904) asserted that through their work at Tuskegee, students began to value working on the farm and, in so doing, were able to expand their knowledge of farming and agriculture (p. 41). Through work, students both provided economic benefit for the students and staff at the school, but that they were also able to overcome the idea that any work with hands was “disgraceful” (Washington, 1904, p. 39). For women, Washington (1904) emphasized the need to maintain clean, beautiful homes, but homes that were “within reach of any Alabama farmer who is able to make both ends meet” (p. 101).

The curriculum, for Washington, was immediately tied to existing social conditions. As such, when Washington first established Tuskegee, he did not import a pre-made curriculum\footnote{It is, however, important to note that he also was strongly influenced by the curricular and pedagogical principles learned at Hampton Institute and he crafted Tuskegee’s curriculum.}. Washington (1899/2008) argued that “a careful, systematic study of the condition and needs of the South” was completed so that the staff could “bend our
efforts in the direction of meeting these needs” (p. 91). When Washington (1904) reflected upon the industries currently open to African Americans, he found that “[t]he answers were not always to my liking, but this was not the point at issue. I had to meet a condition, not a theory” (p. 31). Washington (1901/1986) asserted that when crafting curriculum, considerations included:

First, that the student shall be so educated that he shall be enabled to meet conditions as they exist now, in the part of the South where he lives – in a word, to be able to do the thing which the world wants done. Second, that every student who graduates from the school shall have enough skill, coupled with intelligence and moral character, to enable him to make a living for himself and others. Third, to send every graduate out feeling and knowing that labour is dignified and beautiful – to make each one love labour instead of trying to escape it (p. 312).

Thus, Washington created the curriculum by asking what students will do upon leaving school, which is aligned with conservative progressives who focused on ways to make schools more efficient and students better prepared to serve society as it currently existed. While this is consistent with Washington’s theory of change based upon gradual improvements in economic success; Washington does not clearly discuss how white supremacy, racism, and poverty limit what African Americans can do professionally. In preparing to be “able to do the thing which the world wants done,” Washington never explicitly discussed that which must be given up to fit into a social order that is shaped in part by systemic racism. Washington (1899/2008) asserted that the staff at Tuskegee taught both practical and academic content that had practical value that would allow the student to improve his/her life and his/her community (p. 113-114). Washington argued
that unlike graduates who studied liberal arts curriculum\textsuperscript{48}, the graduates of industrial school were helping themselves, their communities, and the entire South.

Yet, many of Washington’s critics challenged this argument. Anderson (1988) asserted that Hampton (and Tuskegee) was actually a normal school, preparing future teachers. As such, Anderson (1988) warns that Hampton (and Tuskegee) should not be considered part “of the era’s general trend toward technical, trade, and manual education” (p. 35). Rather, they were designed to teach future educators to embrace what Anderson (1988) described as Black Reconstruction philosophy that advocated an “effective removal of black voters and politicians from southern political life, the relegation of black workers to the lowest form of labor in the southern economy, and the establishment of a general southern racial hierarchy” (p. 36). Critics also point out that while Washington’s philosophy of education stressed character building, character was defined in part in accepting injustice and gradual change. In his Atlanta Exposition Speech in 1895, Washington wrote, “there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin and not at the top” (p. 220). The focus on gradualism, patience, and acceptance, as opposed to opposition, activism, and collective action reflects a particular, conservative, model of character building.

\textsuperscript{48} This does not, however, mean that Washington argued that African Americans should not attend institutes of higher learning. Washington, questioned by William H. Baldwin about controversy surrounding his daughter Portia’s enrollment in a liberal arts school in the North, wrote “I have never attempted to set any limit upon the development of our race and shall never attempt to do so.” He argued that while foundations and fundamentals are essential, so is generational growth and progress (Harlan, 1983, p. 111).
5.5.7 Pedagogy of Learning by Doing

Numerous scholars document the manner in which the pedagogical reforms at Tuskegee were progressive. The foci on learning by doing, studying the concrete and spending time in nature were all hallmarks of the moderate progressive movement advocated by leading progressives such as John Dewey. Also, similar to other progressive movements, Washington spoke regularly about the manner in which he correlated curriculum and embraced a curriculum, which required students to “learn by doing.” Washington (1904) recounted watching a teacher try to teach children words such as “lake” and “peninsula” in a classroom instead of taking them to an actual brook near the school to experience that which they were studying (p. 159). Washington even argued that (1904) it was:

almost a sin to take a number of children whose homes are on farms, and whose parents earn their living by farming, and cage them up, as if they were so many wild beasts, for six or seven hours during the day, in a close (sic) room where the air is often impure (p. 158).

Washington also structured the curriculum to utilize lessons from both practical and theoretical study to solve real world problems. Yet, Curti (1978) reminded readers that this was not simply a pedagogical consideration, but also a practical need:

If there were to be buildings, students must construct them. If there was to be food, they must produce it, for few could pay for its purchase. If it was to be prepared, they must cook it. So students were taught arithmetic by figuring the cost of constructing and painting a building, by measuring an acre of land, by estimating the cost of producing and preparing a pound of pork. When the school, to meet its own and the community’s needs, developed the industry of brick-making, an opportunity was provided for studying the history of the practical arts; and all these matters formed the basis of instruction in English composition” (p. 292).
At Tuskegee, Washington (1904) stressed that academic subjects would be taught in relation to real work (p. 71). Students would study theories and then directly apply them to the work, including brickwork, foundry, electrical engineering, building, mechanical engineering, welding, architecture, blacksmith, repair work, carriage building, tailor, shoe shop, cooking, cleaning, furniture, etc. (Washington, 1904, p. 75-80). Yet, while Washington talked about the correlation between the academic and practical, many critiques of Tuskegee included that the academic department seemed secondary to the industrial education (Harlan 1983, p. 149). Even supporters, like Charles Eliot, questioned the effectiveness of the academic training. In a letter dated September 7, 1906, Eliot cautioned Washington that there may be too much emphasis on manual training at the expense of literacy. Also, given that Tuskegee was largely a school designed to train teachers, it certainly de-emphasized academic preparedness to educators.

### 5.5.8 School Connected to Community

Booker T. Washington insisted that education must both prepare the student to be successful and contribute to the good of the community. In fact, many of the “projects” that students completed at Tuskegee not only served to teach students, but also provided material value to the surrounding communities (Washington, 1904, p. 37). However, it was not simply the products that connected Tuskegee to the community. From annual conferences for farmers, to regular “mother’s union” meetings, to the manner in which Tuskegee’s Experimental Farm helped farmers increase productivity, Tuskegee was a
social center (Washington, 1904, p. 135 and 119). Yet, this was a very specific form of community building, one which accepted existing social order, gradual change, and accommodationist policies.

### 5.6 Conclusions and Significance

By examining some of Washington’s writings and speeches, as well as a number of secondary sources analyzing Washington’s life and works, I argue that Washington was both an exemplar of accommodationism, as well as a pioneer of pedagogical tools utilized by moderate progressives within the mainstream progressive education movement. By understanding the “embodied contradictions” of Washington, some of the contradictions and limitations of the progressive education movement emerge.

#### 5.6.1 Understanding Booker T. Washington within His Social Context

It is essential to view Washington’s pedagogical and curricular efforts within appropriate historical context. Washington was born into slavery. After emancipation, Washington attended a small school in West Virginia, before traveling to Hampton University, because it served as one of the few educational opportunities available to him in the South. He began teaching career in the West Virginia, where racial violence was a constant threat.

When Washington arrived at Tuskegee, in the Alabama Black Belt, there were few resources and no real schoolhouse in which to begin his school (Washington,
1901/1986, p. 108). In the community surrounding Tuskegee, Washington noted that most African Americans lived in small cabins, grew cotton, and had poor diets. He observed that while homes often contain what he describes as expensive and unnecessary items, many basic necessities were missing (Washington, 1901/1986, p. 113.). When Tuskegee founded 1881, “only about one-third of Negro children were enrollee in the schools and not more than 28 per cent were in actual attendance” (Washington, 1913, p. 221).

Washington’s famed/infamous Atlanta Exposition Speech (1895) advocating social segregation was given the year before the historic Supreme Court decision in the Plessey v. Ferguson Case (1896), which legalized Jim Crow and segregation in all areas of social life. There was lack of government money for public schools for African Americans, and foundations and funders were excited about the Hampton model of education. Washington offered Tuskegee as a solution, both to create more education opportunities for African Americans and to increase the “usefulness” of schooling through a program of industrial education. Tuskegee was offered within a climate, according to Harlan (1983), where:

“[e]ven the most sympathetic white southerners believed in a hierarchical biracialism, a social structure that not only fitted the status quo but had the stamp of approval of current social science, and these men found in Washington’s pragmatic accommodation and faith in evolutionary progress the only practical solution” (p. 258).

However, it is also important to acknowledge that even within such repressive social conditions, accommodationism was not inevitable and that the popularity of accommodationism, largely endorsed by wealthy philanthropists, may have weakened
other movements in education and politics. In the era following emancipation, the Freedmen, supported by Northern missionary societies like the American Missionary Society (AMA), instituted schools that taught liberal arts curriculum. It was also through early Freedmen efforts, that legislative and educational victories were won. However, classical liberal arts schools were underfunded and beginning in Hampton-Tuskegee model became dominant. Anderson (1990) noted:

The Age of Booker T. Washington was characterized by the worst treatment of black public education by state and local officers since the end of slavery. Indeed, Washington’s generation was sandwiched between two important eras of progress in Southern black public education, the 2 decades following radical Reconstruction and the 2 decades following Washington’s death. Both progressive eras were sustained by grassroots movements in black communities designed to challenge rather than cooperative with Southern white authorities (p. 61).

5.6.2. Booker T. Washington and Accommodationist Education

Booker T. Washington was clearly an accommodationist. In fact, Rabaka (2005), in the Encyclopedia of Black Studies, argued that Washington’s:

philosophy of accommodationism is best characterized by its emphasis on African American vocational training and industrial education, procapitalist and antiunionist stances, public acceptance of the dialectic of white supremacy and black inferiority, black collaboration with influential and wealthy whites so as to paternally critique and correct ‘backward’ and ‘childlike’ blacks, and euphemization of the importance of electoral politics and the struggle for civil rights and social justice (p. 1).

Despite largely operating as a teacher training institution, the curriculum of Tuskegee stressed physical and manual labor. Students literally built the school (with bricks they had produced). Washington argued that such work, while necessary given the
financial constraints of Tuskegee, was also essential as part of the school’s desire to build the character of students. Washington often discussed the need to teach patience, thrift, and industry. Progress, for Washington, would only come through economic advancement within the existing economic structure. In fact, Washington believed that the only solution was to make African Americans both self-sufficient and indispensible to their White neighbors. Washington argued that African Americans must remain in the South, train in industry, and remain competitive in part by existing as a non-unionized labor force.

5.6.3 Booker T. Washington and Progressive Education

While Washington is a representative of accommodationist philosophy, I also contend that he was within the mainstream progressive education movement. As discussed in earlier chapters, Washington received widespread support from both conservative and moderate progressives of his day. In fact, Ravitch (2001) argued:

Tuskegee emphasized industrial education, teacher training, and character building; its students learned certain skilled trades, farming, and homemaking skills, as well as personal hygiene and manner. Its curriculum was in the mainstream of progressive education, providing the type of practical education allegedly suited to students’ needs and the needs of their communities (p. 39).

In trying to assess Washington’s philosophy within a context of progressive education, it is important to reassert that the early progressive movement was diverse and contradictory and included almost all reform movements that rejected classical/liberal arts training. In this dissertation, I defined progressive largely If we look at Cremin’s broad definition, we can see that Washington advocated for many of the same things,
especially the focus on “health, vocation, and the quality of family and community life.”

In fact, Washington generated curriculum by examining the particular needs and opportunities of children in his community and did see schools as a way to improve conditions for African American students (though such improvement came from gradually entering the existing social order, not challenging it.) Washington did not stress the arts, but was a proponent of the sciences and believed that by integrating the sciences with industrial training, students could surpass the economic success of their parents, while helping to improve the material conditions for their families and communities.

Yet, when we examine Washington in comparison not to the broad progressive movement, but to a more narrowly defined conservative progressive movement, the parallels become even stronger. In describing the rise of the social efficiency movement, which I have been describing as conservative progressivism, Kliebard (1995) argued that as the nation responded to increasing industrialism and the creation of a new social, order, conservative progressives “held out the promise of social stability in the face of cries for massive social change” through scientifically supported reforms (p. 77). This is similar to the goal of accommodationism, which dictated gradual reforms within industrial education with the goal of assisting African Americans to join the new industrial order, without challenging existing racial dynamics in the South (Watkins, 2001, p. 23).

Also, the conservative progressives sought to connect curriculum directly to “adult activities that one would later be called upon to perform” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 77). This, too, was advocated by Washington, who crafted curricular goals after surveying jobs available to Tuskegee graduates. In fact, years before conservative progressives
began writing about activity analysis, Washington was creating curriculum to teach
students the activities that they could successfully complete upon graduation from
Tuskegee. Bond (1966) wrote that “[o]ne of the best examples of the ‘activity curriculum’
ever know was inaugurated at Tuskegee Institute by Washington several decades before
the name became current in educational literature” (p. 10).

After surveying surrounding areas and determining existing opportunities,
Washington designed the curriculum to prepare students for existing opportunities. This,
too, was part of conservative progressivism. In fact, Kliebard (1995) noted that
curriculum making was “tied, first of all, to the social status quo, which the activities that
people already were engaging in serving as the norm for what people ought to do” (p. 103).
However, within the context of the highly segregated South, activities were
analyzed as much for their political viability and adherence to existing racial norms as for
an assessment of the capabilities of the students.

Finally, conservative progressives saw schools as central sites of social control
that could create efficient students who would serve some social purpose. For
conservative progressives, there was great emphasis on creating efficient schools with
curricula that “prepared individuals specifically and directly for the role they would play
as adult members of the social order” (Kliebard, 1995, p. 77-78). In fact, Kliebard (1995)
recounted conservative progressive John Franklin Bobbitt’s insistence that schools must
“work up raw material” (students) according to each students aptitude and capabilities
“[w]ithin the framework of the new theory, ‘education according to need’ was simply
another way of saying, education according to predicted social and vocational role” (p.
This is clearly aligned with accommodationist insistence that industrial, rather than classical, education was best suited to the needs of African Americans, as well as, the accommodationist focus on “character building” through manual labor and industrial training. Within this context, it is also clear that Washington would have been very much aligned with conservative progressivism.

Yet, it is also important to note that Washington was also praised by moderate progressives. In fact, many moderate progressives actively supported Washington. As noted earlier, G. Stanley Hall (1905), praised Washington as a visionary who helped to popularize industrial education, even though it was not immediately popular with Black communities (p. 18). Yet, beyond the support of moderate progressives such as Hall, I would argue that there were many connections between Washington and the moderate progressive movement.

Washington is often associated with Dewey. While there is not documented relationship between Washington and Dewey, numerous scholars argue that there are similarities between these two men (Moses 2004; Wish 1964; Generals 2008). In the introduction to his article praising Booker T. Washington, Donald Generals (2008) stated that Washington’s “educational practices and stated philosophy were fully consistent with the broad movement of progressive education” (p. 215). Further, Generals (2008) found that Washington and Dewey, both of whom were influenced by Pestalozzi, shared many philosophical and pedagogical beliefs, including: the centrality of lived experience to the curriculum, the importance of community, and the need for correlation in the curriculum (p. 216). Generals (2009) asserted that curriculum at Hampton was centered on “real life problems” and that “the ‘project method’ was a way of life at Tuskegee” decades before
Kilpatrick introduced his “project method” (pp. 216-217). Curti (1978) made the same claim, asserting that Washington’s work at Hampton (Tuskegee’s predecessor) “anticipat[ed] the project method which Dewey popularized many years later” (p. 292). Harlan (1983), argued that Washington’s distaste for abstractions and the disconnect between the academic and the practical, was possibly “following the vogue of Deweyite progressive educational theories, but it is more probable that he was simply following his own preference for the unpretentious and the down-to-earth” (151). Similarly, Wish (1964) characterized Washington’s focus on hands-on instruction as “in anticipation of Dewey’s “learning by doing” by connecting curriculum with the “familiar experiences and skills of the farms and the Negro community” (p. 187). Moses (2004) identified numerous elements of Washington’s philosophy that “resembled the education philosophy of Dewey in some practical aspects” (Moses, 2004, p. 156).

While this can be read as a misinterpretation of Dewey (or Washington) and while Dewey never wrote explicitly about industrial education in the South, he too saw some similarities in the work being done at Tuskegee and his own progressive philosophy. As discussed in Chapter 4, entitled John Dewey, Dewey once stated when allowing his “imagination to wonder,” he thinks that schools serving African American children in the South are successfully incorporating theoretical and practical works (Dewey, 1910, 22389).

Finally, if we compare Washington’s stated education philosophy with the characterization of progressive tendencies listed by Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008), it is clear that there are many similarities. As seen in Chapter three of this dissertation, Dewey and Dewey (1915/2008) list the following progressive traits: (a) a focus on students’
physical well being, (b) a pedagogy that emphasized “learning by doing,” (c) the promotion of students’ intrinsic desires to learn and to work, (d) the use of authentic assessments, (e) purposeful connections between home, community, and school; and (f) emphasis on democratic living (p. 165-174). It is clear that Washington and other accommodationist educators would have believed that the curriculum, which emphasized physical wellness, moral and character development, as well as, academic learning in connection with practical skills, would have met most of the criteria listed by Dewey and Dewey. Of course, accommodationist schools promoted acceptance of injustice and a minimization of voting rights – thus violating one of the most important tenets of moderate progressivism: democratic living.

5.6.4 Significance

In this chapter, I sought to understand how the quintessential accommodationist, Booker T. Washington, viewed and enacted progressive education reforms. My purpose in this chapter was neither to reform the image of Washington nor to attempt to offer a definitive view on his legacy, but rather to examine the relationship between accommodationism and progressive reforms. After studying Washington’s works and words, I content while Washington clearly represented accommodationism, he also would have been part of the mainstream progressive movement.

It is important to note Washington (and his mentor Samuel Armstrong) did actually pioneer many progressive pedagogical tools – activity analysis, learning by doing, project method—and did create schools that created strong connections to the
community. Yet, the very fact that similar pedagogical tools could be employed by conservative progressives, moderate progressives, and even accommodationists, suggests the limits to a focus only on pedagogy. Progressive education cannot be concerned only with the pedagogical tools that educators embrace and utilize. The curriculum represented by Hampton and Tuskegee, stressed subservience and as such, de-emphasized the full humanity of students. However progressive the delivery of this curriculum, it is clearly a conservative and even oppressive curriculum.

If one looks at the definition of “accommodationism” and compares it with the aims of conservative progressivism, there are a number of significant overlaps. For example, in the year following Washington’s death, the National Education Association’s *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education Report* (1918) was released, marking a distinct departure from a focus on academics to a broader concern for the whole child. Yet, the focus on vocation, ethics, home membership, and even citizenship all relate to the Hampton-Tuskegee model.

Yet, it also informs us as to the limit of progressive education reforms, which again are largely pedagogical, to equalize opportunities when systemic racism prohibits provisions of equal services or opportunities. The progressive movement operated differently in different communities. This becomes even more apparent when examined within Black communities in the South in the decades following emancipation and Reconstruction. Historian William Reese (2001) illustrated the manner in which progressive educators and proponents of ‘new education’ influenced by Pestalozzi and Froebel, who believed that “young children . . . learned best not through books but through sensory experience and contact with real objects,” had different political lenses
by which they viewed their work (p. 16). Reece (2001) asserted that in the South the

Progressive Movement had particular political aims, specifically:

following Reconstruction, white racists cited Pestalozzi approvingly, saying
schools which emphasized books had no place in the education of African
Americans. The ex-slaves were lazy, said many white educators, and extensive
book-knowledge for the masses (as Booker T. Washington and others agreed) was
a luxury society could ill afford (p. 16-17).

In this way, progressive education was a way to provide “manual training for the working
class children” and to lower crime (Reese, 2001, p. 17). In other words, progressive
education in the South, particularly for African American children, was actually
accommodationist in nature.

In the chapter on Dewey, I critiqued him for not adequately acknowledging the
role of race and class in his discussion of pedagogical reform. His focus on the “child”
actually universalized in many ways the White child’s experiences, while neglecting to
fully contemplate the manner in which race, economic status, and community would
impact the manner in which progressive reforms were enacted. Washington did almost
the opposite. His reforms, like many conservative progressive reforms, were based
largely on the study of social conditions and the provision of education that would best fit
students into the existing social order; however, given the extreme racism, white
supremacy, and oppression of his day, to fit into the social order, one would need to
accept a subservient position. The fact that such reforms can be considered progressive
raise fundamental questions that we still need to contend with today: (a) What is
considered progressive in education? (b) What should be considered progressive? (c) Is a
progressive pedagogy enough to make a reform progressive (especially when progressive
pedagogues are implementing corporate curricula)? (d) Who should decide the direction of curriculum and pedagogy? (e) And what are the benefits and dangers of philanthropic donations for basic education?
6. JULIUS ROENWALD (1862-1932)

6.1 Purpose and Process

Julius Rosenwald, the former president of Sears Roebuck and Company and founder of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, was a philanthropist who contributed tens of millions of dollars to various philanthropic causes. In this chapter, I will explore the works and words of Julius Rosenwald, who was considered the most progressive philanthropist focused upon African American education during the early 1900s. Based upon my findings, I will argue that Rosenwald was a supporter of both the larger progressive movement and of accommodationist schooling in the South.

In writing this chapter, I have surveyed secondary sources, explored published articles, and reviewed archival data from the Julius Rosenwald Papers (JRP) at the Special Collections Research Center at the University of Chicago Library. I have read his speeches and letters, as well as media interviews and news stories; however, I focus on a few key speeches and articles.

While determining Rosenwald’s impact on Black education and hypothesizing what alternative forms of education would have arisen without the contributions/direction of Rosenwald is beyond the scope of this study, I will argue that Rosenwald represented both accommodationism and progressivism in a manner which helps illuminate some of the contradictions within the Progressive Movement.
6.2 Biographical Sketch

Born in 1862 in Springfield, Illinois into a middle class family of merchants, Rosenwald left school after two years of high school to work as an apprentice with his uncle (Embree and Waxman, 1948, p 218). In his early years in business, Rosenwald was a “young man on the make [who] did not stop to examine the society around him” (Ascoli, 2006, p. 7). Yet, in his later years, Rosenwald became extremely involved in political, educational, and civic causes.

In 1890, Rosenwald married Augusta (Gussie) Nusbaum, with whom he had five children. Rosenwald raised his family in Chicago and he sent his oldest children to the University of Chicago Lab School, still under the direction of John and Alice Dewey (Ascoli, 2006, p.55). After the death of Gussie, Rosenwald married his son’s mother-in-law, Addie Goodkind, with whom he lived until his death in 1932.

By 1895, Rosenwald was a partner at Sears, Roebuck and Company, and a year later he was promoted to vice-president (Sears Archives, 2012). Rosenwald served as the president of Sears, Roebuck & Co. from 1908-1924. Upon his retirement, he served as the Chairman of the company from 1924 until his death in 1932 (Sears Archives, 2012). Yet, beyond his business successes, Rosenwald was known for his philanthropic activities. Rosenwald was a conservative progressive who gave to a wide range of causes. According to the brief biography included in the introduction to the Rosenwald Papers at the University of Chicago’s Special Collection Research Center, Rosenwald’s philosophy of philanthropy was to “try and cure the things that seem wrong” (JRP, Introduction). To mark his own 50th birthday on August 12, 1912, Rosenwald gave over $680,000 to
various causes. The two largest donations were given to the Associated Jewish Charities, of which Rosenwald was the Board President, and the University of Chicago. However, Rosenwald also contributed $25,000 donation to Booker T. Washington for the creation of small, industrial schools in the South (Ascoli, 2006, p. 123-130). This marked the start of the Rosenwald Schools project.

According to Embree and Waxman (1948), by the end of his life, Rosenwald’s total philanthropic contributions totaled between 60 and 70 million dollars, which included (a) $20,000,000 to the Rosenwald Foundation, (b) $4,000,000 to “Negro education and welfare,” (c) $5,000,000 to Jewish farm colonization, (d) $2,000,000 for “war work and war relief”; (e) $3,000,000 to general education and research, (f) $3,000,000 to hospitals and health agencies, (g) $5,000,000 to “arts and crafts and industrial museums,” (h) $5,000,000 to “Jewish charities ad institutions,” and (h) $11,000,000 to the Rosenwald Family Association (p. 220).

Rosenwald was involved in numerous civic causes, in both Chicago and nationally. In addition to millions given away personally, Rosenwald was on the Board of a great number of foundations and founded the Rosenwald Fund (also known as the Rosenwald Foundation) in 1917 for the “the well-being of mankind” (Ascoli, 2006, p. 218). While the mission was broad, Embree (1936) reported that the Fund largely focused on projects “to better the condition of Negroes, especially through education, and to improve race relations” (p. 12). The Fund, according to Embree (1936) had two distinctive eras. During the first era, which lasted from 1917-1927, Julius Rosenwald was the primary administrator of the Fund, which focused primarily on constructing new Rosenwald Schools (p.1). However, the Fund was reorganized in 1928 and the Board of
Trustees, with a full time staff, became the primary administrators of the Fund. Alfred Perkins (2003) characterized the reorganization of the Fund as a shift of resources “from constructing buildings to preparing people,” largely through Rosenwald Fellowship Program.

The Rosenwald Fellowship’s official purpose was to “enable recipients to develop their talents to the full, while earning valuable professional credential” (Perkins, 2003, p. 345). However, Perkins (2003) argued that “[u]nderlying this purpose . . . was the Fund’s conviction that the emergence of African Americans with distinguished careers and impressive accomplishments would give the lie to the notion of racial inferiority” (p. 345). By supporting the achievement of African American scholars and artists, the Fund exposed the “the barriers of institutionalized racism, social isolation, educational deprivation, and lack of economic opportunities” that stunted progress of African Americans (Perkins, 2003, p. 345). In the eight years (1928-1936) this program existed, more than 350 students and 18 “special groups of students” were provided with fellowships, attended universities, and used their scholarship to improve race relations (Embree, 1936, p. 33).

In addition to founding the Rosenwald Fund, Rosenwald also helped to create two additional foundations. In 1918, Rosenwald established the Sears, Roebuck Foundation, which was one of the first and one of the largest corporate foundations (Ascoli, 2006, p. 218). Rosenwald also contributed $11,000,000 to the Rosenwald Family Association, which upon Rosenwald’s death paid his outstanding philanthropic obligations and contributed funds to charities of the family’s choosing. This Association also used funds
to rescue nearly one hundred Rosenwald and Nusbaum family members from Nazi Germany just before and during World War II) (Ascoli, 2006, p. 389-390).

### 6.3 Literature Review

Numerous scholars have examined the impact of Rosenwald and the Rosenwald Foundation on the development of Black schooling in the American South. Advocates cite the positive and even transformative impact that the Rosenwald Schools and, later, the Rosenwald Fellowships had on Black communities in the South and throughout the country. Edelman (2010) argued that even though Rosenwald (and Washington) are criticized “for accommodating the segregated status quo,” Rosenwald improved the lives of “a generation of Black children” by creating the only schools that existed in many rural areas (p. 2). Others credit the Rosenwald fellowships for supporting the scholarship of numerous African Americans (Perkins, 2003, p. 352). Carter G. Woodson (1949) argued that Rosenwald “was one of the great friends of humanity who tried to uplift all men” (p. 223). DuBois, who had received a Rosenwald Fellowship in 1931, wrote an obituary in the *Crisis* that praised Rosenwald as “a great man” and a “subtle stinging critic of our racial democracy” (DuBois as quoted in Ascoli, 2006, p. 385).

Yet, while supporters of Rosenwald argued that he was a generous philanthropist who advocated for more just social relations (and increased public funding of education for African Americans in the South), critics characterized Rosenwald as a man who maintained the status quo of segregation and primarily supported schools with accommodationist curriculum. Critics contend that while the Rosenwald Fund claimed
that curriculum was decided locally, requirements about the specificity of the site, the partnership with Washington and Tuskegee, and the selection of school did largely influence, if not determine the curriculum. Critics of Rosenwald often object to the role that he and other philanthropists played in crafting policies in the South. Staff at the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (1999) wrote that Rosenwald was amongst a group of northern philanthropists that supported accommodationist education and the “teaching of political disenfranchisement, civic inequality, and training black youth for certain prescribed positions”\(^{49}\) (p. 52). Similarly, a common critique of the “County Training Schools” was that they were “the most important mechanism whereby Northern philanthropic reformers translated their sociopolitical ideas into educational programs” (Anderson, 1978, p. 384).

Despite recent scholarship on Julius Rosenwald, there is not existing literature examining Rosenwald’s perspective on progressive education or his educational philosophy. While identified as a progressive funder, there has been little information about what Rosenwald relationship with progressivism in education. In this chapter, I rely heavily on Rosenwald’s own words, as well as on secondary sources, to understand Rosenwald’s views regarding progressive education.

### 6.4 Key Statements and Actions

Rosenwald was a businessman and philanthropist. While he did publish a few articles, they focused largely on his philosophy of giving and not necessarily on the

\(^{49}\) Yet despite these critiques, the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (1999) argued “Rosenwald’s philanthropic efforts must still be applauded” (p. 52).
causes to which he gave. Rosenwald gave numerous speeches throughout his career, although he often began them apologizing for his lack of public speaking talent. Thus, unlike the other two men featured in this dissertation, there are few published documents to consider. I will discuss a few pieces that serve to illustrate Rosenwald’s understanding of prejudice and his solution to what he describes one of the key problems of his time: namely, relations between African American and White Americans.

6.4.1 Prejudice: Dedication of the Chicago Y.M.C.A. for Colored Men (1913)

In a speech entitled, Prejudice: Dedication of the Chicago Y.M.C.A. for Colored Men on 6/15/13, Rosenwald defined prejudice as “an unreasonable bias of one individual, or one class of individuals, against another” (1913a, p. 1, JRP34.5). Yet, in commenting upon the dictionary definition of the word, Rosenwald argued that prejudice also relates to the “harm caused by prejudgment” (p.1). Such harm, Rosenwald asserted, impacted both individuals that were discriminated against and individuals who held prejudices against others (p.1).

Rosenwald asserted that prejudice was a “horrible thing” that was difficult to change. Yet, while acknowledging that prejudice was illogical, Rosenwald asserted, “it must and it will yield to pressure brought by gradually strengthening the object against which it is directed; in your case, for instance, the negro people” (p. 2). Through the work of social service agencies, schools, community organizations, medical facilities, and

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50 There are numerous versions of this speech included in the Julius Rosenwald Papers. The speeches are not dated or numbered, but this typed version of the speech seems to be one of the later drafts. It is also very similar to a printed version of the speech, which appeared in “The Official Bulletin” p 16-17 in July 1913 (Rosenwald, 1913b, JRP, SB1, p. 13).
religious organizations, Rosenwald argued the “negro people” in Chicago have gained strength and as such weakened prejudice (p. 2-3).

Rosenwald believed that funding Y.M.C.A.s for African American men would also strengthen Black communities (p. 4). Rosenwald exclaimed that the new Y.M.C.A. building would give African American men “ample means for improvement of mind and body and for resistance against evils which surround you” (p. 4). Rosenwald further asserted that the Y.M.C.A. is unique because it “has given, and will give, the negro an opportunity, not to be worked for but to be worked with” (p. 4). Rosenwald stated that the work funding and operating the Y.M.C.A. provides an opportunity to “make good . . . grow strong . . . [and] . . . dissipate prejudice!” (p. 5).

Rosenwald expressed great gratification that three cities have already qualified for Rosenwald grants, while many more had begun the process of qualifying for the funds. Rosenwald expressed particular pride in the cooperation between Whites and Black Americans, whom he reported continue to work together “in a spirit of zeal, devotion, and sacrifice that has laid the foundation for a better understanding of each other, promising much for the future” (p. 6). Paraphrasing Lincoln, Rosenwald implored those in the audience dedicate themselves “to the great task before us of removing prejudice against negroes, of bringing about a universal acceptance that the man and not the color counts” (p. 7).

Rosenwald, speaking directly to the African Americans in the audience, asserted that “every colored man must realize his responsibility for every other colored man” and

51 Rosenwald pledged $25,000 toward the construction of a Y.M.C.A. for African Americans in any city that could raise the remaining $75,000 for the project.
that the actions of each individual will reflect upon the whole race (p. 7). Rosenwald claimed that the way forward is not “by brooding over prejudice, nor by declaiming about it, but by living up to the full standard of American citizenship” and gaining economic power (p. 8-9). Rosenwald assured those in the audience that justice would become a reality because it “is the basis of social order.” However, he cautioned that African Americans must be patient (p.10). Rosenwald asserted that “in the evolution of a race time counted by generation is necessary” and each race has had difficulties and discouragements (p. 11). Rosenwald ended his speech by assuring the audience that justice was inevitable (p. 12) and that the “best white people” support the cause of equal rights for African Americans (p. 13-14).

6.4.2 Untitled Speech Given (1911)52

Largely referencing a pamphlet entitled the Curse of Race Prejudice53; Rosenwald (1911a) praised the American Missionary Association’s (AMA) work combating prejudice (p. 2). Rosenwald stated that from the “founding of Hampton Institute and continuing up to the present day” the AMA worked to combat prejudice (p.2, JRP.34.5). Rosenwald then shared that he found parallels between Jewish Americans and African Americans. He stated that “as a Jew, I would naturally have greater sympathy for a

52 This speech appeared in the Rosenwald Collections at the University of Chicago Special Collections as a typed speech with many handwritten notes and corrections. There was no source material on the document. However, the speech was referenced in the Chicago Record Herald and identified as a “Speech to American Missionary Association” as identified in Deutsch (2011).
53 James F. Morton, Jr. (nd.) wrote “Curse of Race Prejudice” as a pamphlet based upon a lecture he gave that aimed “to voice an earnest protest against the anti-Semitic outrages in Russia, and to point out the fact that these horrors, which have caused the whole civilized world to stand aghast, are but the logical result of the cultivation of racial antipathies” (p. 3).
persecuted race, and this is probably what has brought to my mind the injustice to and the helplessness of the Colored man, especially in a large city” (p. 3).

Rosenwald discussed the long history of racial prejudice throughout the world and argued that prejudice is “a prime factor in the decay of nations” (p. 3). Rosenwald warned that America should learn from the example of Russia, where Jews are mistreated (p. 3).

In discussing the mistreatment of Jews in Russia, Rosenwald observed that:

> We Anglo-Saxons of course cry out against this as a barbarous outrage, and comment superiorly on the lowness of Russian civilization, and straightway turn round and exhibit the same qualities in our treatment of the Negro, which today is little less barbarous than is the treatment of the Jew in Russia (p. 3-4).

Rosenwald (1911a) argued that “race hatred” leads to dehumanization and violence (p. 5) and contrasted the high murder rate (and lower “execution” rate) in Chicago in comparison to London (p. 5-6). Rosenwald also pointed to the “ridiculousness” of prejudice. Rosenwald argued that while White diners accept the presence of African Americans wait staff, he believed protests would erupt if “a refined and gentlemanly Negro” attempted to dine in the restaurant (p. 6). Yet, Rosenwald found great hope in the fact that Theodore Roosevelt invited Washington to dine at the White House and indicated that the impact was significant and had the potential to impact race relations throughout the country (p. 6). Rosenwald warned that prejudice would divide and destroy our nation (p. 7-8). As such, there is no “greater service to mankind” than trying to overcome race prejudice. Rosenwald ended this speech with an appeal:

> As an American and as a Jew, I appeal to all high-minded men and women to join in a relentless crusade against race prejudice, indulgence in which will result in the blotting out of the highest ideals of our proud nation (p. 8).
6.4.3 *Reconstruction and the Negro (1919a)*\(^5^4\)

In this article, reprinted in 1919, Rosenwald argued that with the US in a new leadership role following the first World War, it was imperative that every American, including African Americans, “be given the opportunity to utilize whatever ability he has in the struggle for the maintenance of world leadership which we now face” (p.1, JRP.34.7). Rosenwald asserted that when the country fails to provide opportunities for African Americans, that it “decrease[s] our efficiency proportionately” and that the whole country suffered (p. 1). Rosenwald reminded the audience that African Americans helped greatly during the war; both in combat and on the home front and that it is the responsibility of the country to provide African Americans “a square deal by at least giving them a fair opportunity to earn a livelihood in accordance with their ability” (p. 2).

Rosenwald pointed out America’s double standard – while demanding African Americans to serve as “honest, self-respecting citizens,” the country failed to provide equal opportunities (p. 2). In asserting that immigrants often have more opportunities than African Americans, Rosenwald called for the inclusion of African Americans in places of employment and in labor unions (p.3). Rosenwald, paraphrasing Washington, reminded White Americans that “it was impossible to hold a man in the gutter without staying there with him, because ‘if you get up, he will get up’” (p. 2).

Rosenwald warned that change will take time and urged African Americans to “improve [their] chance[s] of securing greater rights and opportunities” by “mak[ing] the

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\(^5^4\) This speech was printed as: Rosenwald, J. (1919b) Chapter XXX: Reconstruction of the Negro. In Sweeney, W. A. (Ed.) *History of the American Negro in the Great World War: His splendid record in the battle zones of Europe*. Retrieved from Project Gutenberg EBook number 16598 at [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16598/16598-h/16598-h.htm#CHAPTERXXX](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16598/16598-h/16598-h.htm#CHAPTERXXX)
most of the limited opportunities” currently available (p. 3). While asserting that jobs should be based on ability, Rosenwald argued that despite prejudice, “nothing can prevent a colored person from practicing industry, honesty, saving and decency” (p. 3). Rosenwald commented that African Americans, who served honorably during wartime, must “now be rewarded with an equal chance with the white man to climb as high in the industrial and professional world as their individual capacity warrants” (p. 4).

6.4.4 Speech at Tuskegee Institute (1921a)

Rosenwald (1921a) delivered a speech at the Tuskegee Institute on April 10, 1921, that was published in the Tuskegee Student newspaper. Rosenwald began his speech by reflecting upon how inspired he was by the work taking place at Tuskegee, and specifically by the work of the Commission in Inter-racial Cooperation as presented by Dr. Alexander and Dr. King during the visit (p. 1, JRP.SB14.p119).

Rosenwald then spoke about the goals of his philanthropic efforts. Regarding his donations to Y.M.C.A.s serving African Americans, Rosenwald stated:

the consideration upon which I made the offer was that the White people and the Colored people join together to establish these institutions. The White people must cooperate with the Colored people in raising money with the hope that it would culminate in a relationship such as is now being furthered though the Inter-racial Commission. (p. 1)

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55 This speech was also reprinted in the Julius Rosenwald Papers subject files with notes from the editors of the collection (Julius Rosenwald Papers, Box 54, Folder 4).
56 The Inter-racial Commission was an organization most active between the two World Wars that was active in anti-lynching campaigns.
Rosenwald explained that his gift was contingent on an agreement with the national Y.M.C.A. that they would “accept these organizations for Negroes on the same basis that they accept White branch institutions” (p. 1). Rosenwald, prompted by the success of the Y.M.C.A. campaigns, explained that he “was willing to join Dr. Washington in a campaign for better rural schools” (p. 1). Yet, like the Y.M.C.A. project, Rosenwald’s gift was contingent on the mutual interest, cooperation, and donations from both White and African American members of the community in which the schools would operate. Rosenwald again paraphrased Washington and expressed his agreement with Washington’s oft-quoted statement that “You cannot keep a man in the gutter unless you stay there yourself, because if you get up he’ll get up,” and concludes that the Commission in Inter-racial Commission would “surely result in both getting up” (p. 2).

6.4.5 Actions and Activism

Yet, more that examining Rosenwald’s words, it is imperative to examine his actions. Rosenwald gave to a range of campaigns that served the African American community. In addition to his work in education, Rosenwald also contributed to busing programs for rural area, libraries, Black hospitals, and medical schools (Ascoli, 2006, p. 398). Rosenwald also supported the NAACP, Urban League, and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH\textsuperscript{57}).

Yet, Rosenwald’s earliest involvement funding issues impacting African Americans was with the Y.M.C.A. Rosenwald agreed to contribute $25,000 to the

\textsuperscript{57} and continued to support Woodson even after Hart many white supporters stopped supporting Woodson (Hine, 1986, p. 415).
establishment of a Black Y.M.C.A. in any major city that was able to raise the additional $75,000 dollars needed for the project (Ascoli, 2006, p. 80-81). As evidenced by his speech at Tuskegee (1921a) referenced above, it was through his work with the Y.M.C.A. that Rosenwald first became involved with Booker T. Washington. At Washington’s request for a suggestion of a “white Chicagoan for the Tuskegee Board,” Wilbur Messer, who worked for the Y.M.C.A, recommended Rosenwald (Ascoli, 2006, p. 87). Then, Rosenwald, at Messer’s request, held a luncheon in honor of Washington on May 18, 1911. During the luncheon, Rosenwald (1911b) praised Washington and concluded, “Happy the race which follows his sane, wise, earnest leadership; Happy the nation which, in the words of the late Justice Brewer, knows and honors a Washington, whether he be George or Booker!” (p. 5, JRP.SB14.p36).

Rosenwald and Washington developed a close working relationship. Rosenwald joined Tuskegee’s Board in 1912 and remained a board member until his death. As reported by Christian Science Monitor reporter, Willis J. Abbott (1927), Rosenwald praised Washington for encouraging African Americans to recognize the:

necessity of winning their own economic independence. He stood strongly for education, but he wanted the book always to be accompanied by the tool. He did not underestimate the need for the intellectual development of his race, but he felt it was even more important that it should demonstrate its ability to win financial independence, and conduct its business affairs without the direction of white superiors (JRP.SB15.p25-26).

Until five years after Washington’s death, the Rosenwald School project was managed by staff at the Tuskegee Institute. On December 12, 1915 at a Memorial service at Tuskegee University, Rosenwald lamented the loss of Washington and stated that the
nation would surely suffer from his death. Rosenwald reflected that “[w]ith ten millions of black people who must learn to adjust themselves to ninety millions of white people, and vice versa, I believe there is nothing we need more than how to bring about this greatly desired result” (Rosenwald, 1915, JRP.34.7). After Washington’s death, Rosenwald continued to work with Tuskegee, although he was not always pleased with changes implemented by subsequent administrations.

Yet, the most significant result of the collaboration between Washington and Rosenwald was the creation of the Rosenwald Schools. The Rosenwald schools, which according to James Anderson (1988) became a symbol of the second crusade for common schooling in the South, addressed a very real problem. In the early 1900s, long after common school were established in the North, many African American children were still not in school. The lack of available public schools, insufficient transportation, and the reality that many African American children worked in the fields of White planters, who were not likely to allow time off, contributed to this problem (Anderson, 1988, p. 149). Rosenwald worked with African American communities and local governments to build schools throughout the South. Rosenwald insisted that the communities in which the schools were being built would contribute to the funding of the schools. Rosenwald required matching funds from communities because he believed that charity would “fail in the very first purpose- which is to inculcate habits of self-help and self-reliance in the Negro,” while also abdicating White communities of their responsibility to provide quality education for all students (Rosenwald as quoted in Abbot, 1927, JRP.SB15.p26).

Between 1913 and 1932, Rosenwald contributed more than $4,000,000 to the creation of Rosenwald schools. More than 5,000 buildings (schools, shops, homes) were
constructed across 15 states. Yet, because Rosenwald insisted upon matching funds from local communities and governments, the funds contributed to the Rosenwald Schools totaled $28,408,520 (Embree, 1936, p 14). In addition to the schools, Rosenwald and the Fund also contributed $800,000 to “related services, such as school libraries, transportation to consolidated schools, extension of school terms, and repairs and beautification of existing schools’ (Embree, 1936, p 14). In addition to helping to fund more than 5,000 Rosenwald schools, Rosenwald provided funding to a number of smaller industrial schools, such as the South Carolina Penn Normal Institute and Agricultural School on St. Helena Island and the Snow Hill Normal and Industrial School. He also helped lead fundraising efforts for the Hampton-Tuskegee fund in Chicago. It is important to note that Rosenwald funded a variety of other education projects for African Americans, including contributions for African American education at Howard University Medical School, Meharry Medical College, and Harvard University. The Rosenwald Fellowship project, as previously discussed, provided fellowships for many successful scholars, including: John Hope Franklin, Jacob Lawrence, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, WEB DuBois, and Ralph Ellison (Ascoli, 2006, p. 399).

6.5 Findings: Rosenwald’s Views on Race, Schooling, Accommodationism, and Progressivism

Rosenwald gave widely to organizations working to improve conditions for African Americans. He investigated each project carefully and gave only to those that he

58 See: JRP, Box 53, Folder 2; JRP, Box 53, Folder 4 and SB14, p 32; JRP, Box 53, Folder 6
believed would improve race relations in the United States. However, it is imperative to understand his philosophy of giving and theory of change.

6.5.1 Theory of Giving

In “Principles of Public Giving,” an article Rosenwald authored that appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in May 1929, Rosenwald questioned the value of philanthropic gifts given in the form of endowments and perpetuities. Rosenwald argued that endowments, given to be used for specific projects, were inflexible and could easily become outdated and useless (p.3-4, Rosenwald, 1929, JRP.31.4). Rosenwald (1929) also opposed perpetuities, which often stipulated that the institution to which the funds were given could only use the interest payments and not the principle. Rosenwald believed that perpetuities illustrated a distrust of the trustees managing the fund and tied up money that was often needed to continue institutional work (p.9). Rosenwald (1929) believed that each generation should solve its own problems (p.10, JRP.31.4). As such, Rosenwald (1929) used his money to address the problems of his day (p.10, JRP.31.4).

In explaining his desire to contribute money, Rosenwald clearly has a sense of noblesse oblige, which McCarthy (1982) defined as including both a sense of the “duties of the rich to the society which has enriched them” and a commitment to civic stewardship, and “the notion that successful citizens owe a dual obligation of time and money to the communities in which they have prospered” (p. ix). McCarthy (1982) argued that noblesse oblige interpreted into modern sensibilities often served to “graft people’s loyalties to their adopted cities, rekindling their commitment to the community
ideal, and encouraging them to assume responsibility of the provision of essential social and cultural institution” (p. ix). Clearly, Rosenwald felt an obligation to use his money to benefit society and had a particular commitment to improving civil life in Chicago. Embree and Waxman (1948) argued that “[a] strong sense of community responsibility led [Rosenwald] to become active in every important civic effort in his adopted city” and cited his service on numerous organizations including the Bureau of Public Efficiency, the Chicago Vice Commission, the Chicago Industrial Commission, the Commission on Race Relations, and the Art Institute (p 223). Amongst his many projects, Rosenwald also worked with others to bring the Museum of Science and Industry to Chicago. Rosenwald was also involved in numerous national civic causes. During World War I, Rosenwald was an official member of Wilson’s “advisory committee of the Council of National Defense” (JRP.SB10.p168). He was one of four Chicagoans to be part of a 100-person committee to “survey the problem of the American Indian” (Chicagoans to Help, JRP.SB10.p169) and one of four northerners suggested by President Harding to sit on the proposed national “Race Commission” (A Race Commission, JRP.SB14.p26).

Rosenwald’s philanthropic commitments were also influenced by his rabbi, Emil Hirsch, who Ascoli (2006) characterized as an “unreconstructed progressive” who believed that “[c]harity is not a voluntary concession on the part of the well-situated. It is a right to which the less fortunate are entitled in justice” (p. 54).

Rosenwald’s funded projects that seemed to largely have three characteristics: First, they were practical in that they helped serve an immediate need. Second, Rosenwald almost always required, as a condition of his giving, that funds be raised by the communities that would benefit from the service. This had two purposes: (a) it
fostered “self-help” and (b) it required interracial cooperation, which Rosenwald believed would help eliminate prejudice. Finally, the projects were almost designed to move the state (or at least a national institution like the Y.M.C.A.) to provide more equitable services for African Americans.

6.5.2 Focus on African American Education

Rosenwald contributed to numerous causes, yet he directed much of his attention to issues impacting Jewish communities in the US and internationally and on campaigns and projects that he believed would improve conditions for African Americans, largely through education. Yet, he did not become involved through his early interactions with race and racism in Illinois. In fact, Ascoli (2006) recounted that “[t]he Rosenwalds were typical of the vast majority of white Chicagoans of that era for whom consciousness of racial issues was nonexistent,” and commended that there was no mention in Rosenwald’s early writings about the 1908 Race Riots that took place in Springfield, Illinois, the city of Rosenwald’s birth (p. 78).

Rosenwald recounted the impact of William Baldwin on stirring his interest. In a letter written on August 20, 1912 to Mrs. Baldwin, Jr, Rosenwald stated that it was the story of Baldwin that inspired his interest in Tuskegee (Rosenwald, 1912, JRP.SB5.p 105). In a speech designed to honor Washington, Rosenwald (1911b) repeated this idea. He stated that his Jewish heritage had led him to be sympathetic to discrimination experienced by African Americans; however, his “sympathies . . . remained more or less dormant until the book ‘An American Citizen’- the life of William Henry Baldwin,
Junior, came to [his] notice” (Rosenwald, 1911b, p.1, JRP.SB14.p36). Specifically, Rosenwald responded to Baldwin’s assertion that the only “solution” to the race problem was for the two races to live “together with decency and forbearance” (Rosenwald, 1911b, p.2-3, JRP.SB14.p36). Given a specific objective, Rosenwald was inspired to offer a pragmatic response.

In describing his funding the Rosenwald schools, Rosenwald told a Christian Science Monitor reporter that:

I am not a politician and the politics of the Negro question does not interest me. Neither do I profess to be a trained sociologist. But it does not need special training nor peculiar political sagacity to discern the fact that a very real problem exists in this great mass of uneducated Negroes, barely above the peon class and for whose training no adequate provisions has been made by the communities in which they live (Rosenwald as quoted in Abbot, 1927, JRP.SB15.p25-26).

Rosenwald, and those studying him, offered a number of reasons as to his involvement with African American causes. First, Rosenwald often talked about the parallels between the oppression of Jewish people and the oppression of African Americans. Rosenwald (1911a) commented that both African Americans and Jews have experienced prejudice (p. 3, JRP.34.5). Abbot (1927) hypothesized that Rosenwald may have seen parallels between “the state of the Negro field workers something of that downtrodden condition which has been the lot of the Jewish masses in most parts of the world” (JRP.SB15.p25-26). Yet, Embree and Waxman (1948) argue that while part of his interest in African Americans may have been his Jewish identity, that Rosenwald was “interested in American Negroes because he was an American who cherished the ideals
of democracy and who did not see how America could go forward if any large segment of its people were left behind” (p. 227).

Thus, Rosenwald was motivated by patriotism. Rosenwald warned of the manner in which prejudice could destroy nations. He was motivated to find peaceful solutions to address unrest; however, it must be noted that like many progressives, his focus on creating solutions that would cause minimal conflict, meant gradual, incremental change, without protest or political change.

A third reason Rosenwald offered for his involvement in causes that influenced African Americans was pragmatism. When Rosenwald founded the Rosenwald Fund in 1917, the charter simply read: “the well-being of mankind.” However, as a pragmatist, Rosenwald often wanted to find ways to make certain that his donations would not only improve material conditions, but to challenge institutions. He focused on African American causes in part because he believed that working to eliminate prejudice was a great national service, but also because he saw a great need and the potential for real change. When writing a personal letter to Mrs. W.J. Hoggson, a woman requesting funds for a project in 1914, Rosenwald wrote that while her project “is a most worthy one,” he would not fund it because:

while I am interested in Southern schools, [his] activity [was] confined almost entirely to work for the colored people, -not because the Whites are not equally as deserving, but they already get so much larger share of the money that is expended for school purposes in proportion to the population, and in addition have many other advantages which Blacks do not have” (JRP.30.15).
In this way, Rosenwald used his money strategically and gave to a few central projects as to maximize his impact.

6.5.3 Acceptance of Segregation

It is clear that Rosenwald lent at least implicit support to segregated schools, recreational facilities, and housing. Rosenwald embraced the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education and supported the creation of segregated schools in the South. In the North, Rosenwald supported the creation of segregated Y.M.C.A. buildings, including one in his hometown of Chicago. While there were many accolades, there were also critiques about the construction of segregated Y.M.C.A.s. Rosenwald faced similar critiques when building the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments, which provided high quality apartments for African Americans in Chicago. While many applauded the development of housing, there were protests during the building of the Michigan Boulevard apartments both because the housing maintained segregation and because there were so few African American workers (Ascoli, 2006, p. 350). While Ascoli attributed Rosenwald’s creation of segregated schools and housing to Rosenwald’s sense of pragmatism and urgency (combined with a social context that would not permit integration), it must be noted that Rosenwald rarely challenged segregation (Ascoli, 2006, p. 351). In an article by Carl Sandburg (1919) subtitled “Julius Rosenwald tells why colored people should not be kept in slums,” Rosenwald is quoted stating that African Americans came to Chicago because “they were needed for industrial services” and must not be kept in “slums,” which negatively impact the whole city by creating health problems and increased crime.
Yet, Rosenwald was not calling for integration, just better living conditions. In fact, Rosenwald is quoted as stating: “I know from experience that the Negros are not anxious to invade white residence districts any more than white people are willing that they should come” (Rosenwald as quoted in Sandburg, 1919, JRP.SB14, p. 168).

Yet, while Rosenwald was sometimes criticized for accepting segregation, some scholars argue that the Rosenwald Fund and other organizations of which Rosenwald was part did challenge segregation. Nielsen (1996) pointed to Rosenwald’s involvement in such organizations as the “Commission of Interracial Cooperation” as evidence that he “began to address basic issues of racial justice and the problem of segregation itself” (p. 46). It is also important to note that the Rosenwald Foundation worked to increase the opportunity of African American faculty to work in predominately White colleges and universities. Also, Perkins (2003) argued that the Rosenwald Fellows such as, Kenneth B. and Mamie Phipps Clark, Horace Mann Bond, C. Vann Woodward, John Hope Franklin, Rayford Logan, Charles H. Thompson, and Allison Davis, were instrumental in the Brown v. Board of Education case that marked the official end to “separate but equal” (p. 354). Perkins (2003) concluded that “The Rosenwald Fund contributed greatly, albeit indirectly, to the elimination of legally enforced school segregation” (p.354).

6.5.4 Self-Interest and Cooperation

Rosenwald believed that racism and prejudice hurt everyone, and consequently, any efforts to remediate prejudice and improve race relations, would benefit the entire country. Rosenwald (1911a) stated that:
pace prejudice is merely destructive; it offers nothing but a hopeless warfare and a blank pessimism. A nation divided against itself cannot stand; two nations cannot live side by side at daggers point with one another, and maintain a healthy state of progress in either. Perpetual feud destroys what is best and most hopeful in both (p 7-8, JRP.34.5).

Rosenwald argued multiple times that it is imperative for the country that African Americans have full economic and political rights. In fact, the very premise of his speech Reconstruction and the Negro published shortly after WWI, was that as America assumed a position of global leadership, all citizens must contribute to national growth; consequently, denying African Americans the full right to contribute to national growth would hurt the entire country (p.1, Rosenwald, 1919, JRP.34.7).

Rosenwald thought the best way to combat prejudice was to focus on inter-racial cooperation. In fact, in both his work to fund Y.M.C.A. buildings for African American men and the Rosenwald Schools Project, Rosenwald required that both White and African American members of the community work together to fund and implement the project. In his dedication to the Chicago Y.M.C.A, Rosenwald (1913a) asserted that the way to eliminate prejudice was to increase opportunities for interracial cooperation.

In praising Rosenwald’s Y.M.C.A. project, Washington (1914) argued it was “one of the wisest and best-paying philanthropic investments of which I have any knowledge” because it not only provided much needed housing/recreation, but also worked to:

convince the white people of this country that in the long run schools are cheaper than policemen; that there is more wisdom in keeping a man out of the ditch than

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59 From: “A Remarkable Triple Alliance: How A Jew is Helping the Negro Through the Y.M.C.A.”
in trying to save him after he has fallen in; that it is more Christian and more economical to prepare young men to live right than to punish them for a crime (p. 492, JRP.SB1.loose).

Washington (1914) further argued that because of the inter-racial nature of this project, it would “reveal each race to the other and bring about an understanding and community interest between them that could probably have come no other way” (p. 492, JRP.SB1.loose).

There were, however, critiques of Rosenwald’s focus on interracial cooperation. Anderson and Moss (1999) argued that “[b]y supporting schools only where white authorities would help, the Rosenwald Fund gave local opponents of black education veto power” on schools serving African American children (p. 9). Anderson (1988) also noted that even within the cooperation, White philanthropists maintained much of the power over the directions of the projects.

6.5.5 Projects to Spur Governmental or Institutional Change

Rosenwald used his projects to try to move institutions and governments. When Rosenwald offered to help fund Y.M.C.A.s for African Americans, he did so with the stipulation that YMCA’s for African Americans received the same support of the national organization as all other Y.M.C.A.s. When Rosenwald funded schools, he mandated both that they be public schools and that local governments contributed to their construction. Embree and Waxman (1948) asserted that: “[m]uch of his giving was to the stimulation of public agencies to take a larger share of social responsibilities” (p. 222).
Rosenwald did have some success. By the 1930s, Anderson (1988) noted, “black elementary schools, though still far from excellent, had been transformed into a viable system of universal education” (p. 152). Nielson (1996) observed that in the post World War I years, “about 60 percent of American blacks who had completed primary school had been educated in Rosenwald schools” (p. 44). Anderson (1988) also argued that through their contributions to community Rosenwald schools, Black communities illustrated their commitment to education and thus repudiated racist claims that African Americans did not value education.

At a Y.M.C.A. meeting, Rosenwald (1921b) also expressed great satisfaction at the impact of his work with the Y.M.C.A. and Rosenwald School projects. In discussing Black education, Rosenwald (1921b) stated that he was:

filled with awe when I think of what has been wrought in the last twenty years. If we could only think of the difference of conditions today as compared with those of twenty years ago in behalf of Negro education. The states throughout the country are taking a great interest in this work (p. 1, JRP.44.6).

However, it is important to note that when the Rosenwald Fund disbanded the Rosenwald School program, it was in part because of the continued inequity in the funding of schools for African American children in the South. Embree (1936) recounted the Fund’s concern that outside funding may have been contributing to the Southern States’ “dela[y] in assuming full responsibilities” for providing public education to African American students (p. 15).

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60 Rosenwald’s quotes come from what appears to be meeting notes entitled “Saturday evening” December 3, 1921.
While inequity remained, Rosenwald did often challenge and attempt to rectify the state’s systemic racism. This may be why, in Rosenwald’s obituary published in The Crisis, DuBois wrote:

“As a Jew, Julius Rosenwald did not have to be initiated into the methods of race prejudice, and his philanthropic work was a crushing arraignment of the American White Christians. . . . . Seeing again that the White South did not propose to build decent schoolhouses for most colored children, Rosenwald again offered to help pay off such schoolhouses, provided they were real schoolhouses and on modern lines. The South accepted his gift effusively, and never to this day has apparently grasped the failure of democracy which permitted an individual of a despised race to do for the sovereign states of a great nation that which they had neither the decency nor justice to do for themselves. . . . . He was a great man. But he was no mere philanthropist. He was, rather, the subtle stinging critic of our racial democracy” (DuBois as quoted in Ascoli, 2006, p. 385).

6.5.6 Gradualist Approach to Change

Rosenwald encouraged patience and argued that while African Americans were on the right side of justice, that change would come very slowly. His model of change, like Washington’s, was very much based in developing an economic base.

In his dedication of the Y.M.C.A., Rosenwald (1913a) called for patience, recounting a story of a man with “an eruption on his hand” who was instructed by his doctor to treat the injury with daily applications of ointment (p. 10). Rosenwald (1913a) pointed out that while daily progress was not observed, the injury was much improved over a month’s time (p. 10-11, JRP.34.5). Rosenwald (1911a) told the audience that:

You must realize that in the evolution of a race time counted by generation is necessary. This is true of any race, white, black, yellow. The leaders and the participants in all great reforms have had their dark hours, their discouragements. But let me bring you a message of hope for your race. Let me remind you that your cause is just, that the world moves forward, that God still is on his throne,
and that back of every righteous cause there is an arm strong enough to bring victory to His side (p. 11, JRP.34.5).

6.5.7 **Contradictions in Rosenwald’s Private Life**

Rosenwald’s writings and speeches clearly illustrate his desire to use his wealth to impact change and improve conditions for African Americans. However, a desire to do well does not always translate into just actions. Rosenwald stressed the need for gradual change, with a focus upon establishing economic rights. Rosenwald (1919a) advocated for the full inclusion of African Americans in economic opportunities, throughout both the North and South, including membership in labor unions.

Yet, there are numerous contradictions between Rosenwald’s words and actions. While he stressed the need for education so that African Americans could have increased economic opportunities, Rosenwald was criticized for failing to hire many African American workers. Embree and Waxman (1948) argue that Rosenwald could not do more in terms of hiring (and combating segregation because of social context, commenting that:

Mr. Rosenwald was saddened by his inability to change the discriminatory practices in his own firm and in the Chicago office building he owned. His associates, employees, and tenants would not agree to giving Negroes wider opportunity for employment and, fearing that he might create antagonism against the very people he was trying to help, he did not unduly press these efforts. Thwarted in creating new employment, he was more successful in insuring educational opportunities (p 227).

Also, while Rosenwald stressed economic solutions, including the inclusion of African Americans in unions, his own workers did not have a union. Also, while
Rosenwald was giving away millions, it is important to note that he was criticized for failing to pay many of his own workers a livable wage. In an article published in the Examiner on 7/05/13 entitled *An Anti-Humanity’ Lobby is Called Work of Glenn and Rosenwald*, the reporter described a speech by Lieutenant Governor Barratt O’Hara. In his speech, O’Hara specifically criticized Rosenwald, who he believed was leading efforts to oppose the work of the Welfare Committee in Illinois. O’Hara is quoted as stating that “[t]he man who accumulates an exorbitant annual profit and pays the lowliest of his workers less money than they can live on respectably can find no excuse in any religion, in any philosophy, or in any doctrine of social rights to ease his conscience – not even Julius Rosenwald” (An Anti-Humanity, JRP.SB12.p41). Many objected to O’Hara’s characterization of Rosenwald.

This became a key argument against Rosenwald. While Rosenwald was part of the vice commission, for example, he argued that there was not a connection between low wages and vice – an argument rejected by many who argued that young women often turned to crime to supplement income. Finally, while giving away millions, he was indicted on tax fraud. While the tax charge was eventually dropped and while Rosenwald gained support for protesting what many wealthy Chicagoans argued was an unjust tax system in Chicago, he was criticized for not paying what he owed. Ascoli (2006) hypothesized that Rosenwald’s charges were a result of a vendetta from Chicago’s powerful political machine that he had insulted with his work on the Bureau of Public Efficiency (p. 174). Yet, his reputation as a tax evader remained.
6.5.8 Vocational Schooling

Rosenwald lived in Chicago, but much of his philanthropy was dedicated to schools serving African American children in the South. Yet, for Rosenwald there was a clear connection between that which was happening at Tuskegee and in his Rosenwald Schools and in Chicago.

Rosenwald took multiple trips to Tuskegee Institute, the Rosenwald Schools, and other institutions in the South, often accompanied by his invited guests. On one trip, in October 1911, Rosenwald praised Tuskegee as a progressive model that could be useful to Chicago and other places seeking to implement vocational education (Ascoli, 2006, p. 89). On another trip to Tuskegee, which took place on Feb 18-23, 1913, Rosenwald was accompanied by 41 guests from Chicago. Guests included famed progressive Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Ella Flag Young, Mr. Jacob Loeb (who was a member of the Board of Education), Dr. Harry P. Judson (president of the University of Chicago), Thomas Holgate (Northwestern University), and Mrs. Celia Parker Wooley (Fredrick Douglas Center) (Tuskegee Tourists, 1913, JRP.SB14. p. 51). The purpose of this trip, according to local press, was to both to study the “Negro Question” and to gather information that could be useful in thinking about the vocational programs in Chicago. In news coverage from this trip, Rosenwald believed that Tuskegee was a model of efficiency (Tuskegee Tourists Depart, 1913, JRP.SB14.p51). In fact, he argued that Tuskegee was the “most efficient system of vocational training I have ever seen,” and he hoped that Chicago could learn from Washington’s work at Tuskegee (Chicagoans Praise Booker, 1913, JRP.SB14.p51).
Yet, it is also apparent from local news coverage that many of those who accompanied Rosenwald found value in Tuskegee as a solution to the “Negro question,” but did not see how it was applicable to Chicago. For example, Dr. Harry Judson, the President of the University of Chicago argued that Tuskegee was not applicable to Chicago, but that it was useful in helping to see the benefits of industrial education for African Americans (Chicagoans Praise Tuskegee Institute: Educators, 1913, JRP.SB14.p.52). Judson argued that industrial schooling made African American students “more efficient workers” and that it served a particular need, namely that “[t]he South need[ed] a skilled working class and it is getting it through the production of the negro industrial schools” (Chicagoans Praise Tuskegee Institute: Educators, 1913, JRP.SB14.p52). Interestingly, Ella Flagg Young, a vocal critic of industrial schooling in Chicago, argued that while she was not “interested in the negro problem,” she appreciated the work at Tuskegee. She is quoted as stating that she viewed Tuskegee as “the world’s greatest university for successful vocational training” (Mrs. Young Opposes, JRP.SB16.p761).

Yet, while Holgate and Judson directly stated that a Tuskegee model of education would not be applicable in Chicago and Young praised Tuskegee, but opposed industrial schools in Chicago, Rosenwald advocated that the conservative progressivism at Tuskegee be implemented in Chicago. In Chicago, as nationally, most progressive reformers agreed that revisions must be made in the curriculum and that some form of vocational or manual training should be included. Yet, moderate progressives saw manual training as a way to help students learn about their world and explore various

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61 This article also appears in the Julius Rosenwald Papers, Scrapbook 14, p. 56, which identifies the source and date of the article. The article was organically printed in the Inter Ocean on 2/23/13.
vocations, whereas conservative progressives, concerned primarily with efficiency, sought to create a system, which separated, and trained students for specific vocations based on their perceived abilities. In Chicago, while Jane Addams, Ella Flagg Young, and John Dewey were advocating moderate progressive curricular reforms, the business community, largely led by the commercial Club of Chicago, was advocating conservative progressive reforms in the form of the Cooley Bill, which was introduced many times in the years between 1913 and 1917 (see Zilversmit, 2005). The Cooley Bill, as summarized by Zilversmit (2005), sought to create a “differentiated system of vocational education” that would be governed by an independent board and which would “shape the ideology of the working class as a way of fighting radicalism, promoting the morality of hard work, and instilling such industrial virtues of punctuality.” As a member of the Commercial Club of Chicago, Rosenwald would likely have supported the Cooley Bill, a bill that was ultimately defeated.

6.6 Conclusions and Significance

Examining the words and works of Rosenwald, it is apparent that Rosenwald was a conservative progressive who advocated industrial education for students in the South and North. While he was one of the most progressive funders of his day, Rosenwald also endorsed accommodationist schooling. In understanding Rosenwald’s influence, it is also imperative to ask questions about the role of philanthropy in creating curriculum and school policy.
6.6.1 Understanding Rosenwald within His Social Context

Rosenwald must be viewed within his appropriate social context. In many ways, Rosenwald was well ahead of many of his White counterparts (in both the progressive and philanthropic communities) in advocating for racial justice. While he did not challenge segregation and while he did support accommodationist schooling and the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education, Rosenwald attempted to fund only projects that both included partnerships with the community and that were designed to move the state (or national organizations like the Y.M.C.A.) to provide better services for African Americans. Rosenwald openly acknowledged the contradictions within the US and called upon the government and its citizens to guarantee justice for all peoples. Even though this was more progressive than many, Rosenwald was criticized in his own business practices, for not having a unionized work force, for paying workers less than a living wage, and supporting segregation in his home town.

6.6.2 Rosenwald and Progressive Education

Julius Rosenwald is often noted as the one of the more progressive or liberal philanthropists working on “Negro schooling” in the decades following Reconstruction. There are indeed many reasons that Rosenwald was considered progressive, amongst them, his close friendships with leading progressives such as Jane Addams and Emil Hirsch, his commitment (both time and money) to countless local, national, and international causes, his financial support of WEB DuBois, Carter G. Woodson, and
countless other African American scholars, doctors, and artists and his advocacy for reform candidates. In terms of progressive education, Rosenwald even sent his own children to the Lab School under Dewey’s leadership.

In comparing major philanthropists during the era, W. A. Nielsen (1996) asserted that Rosenwald was known as “most committed to making American democracy work and to the struggle against racial and religious intolerance” (p. 39). Further, it is clear that Rosenwald believed the work he was doing was progressive. After a visit to Tuskegee in 1911, he reportedly stated: “I was astonished at the progressiveness in the schools. I don’t believe there is a white industrial school in American or anywhere else that compares to Mr. Washington’s at Tuskegee” (Ascoli, 2006, p. 89).

Rosenwald had clear links to conservative progressivism, which was based on a belief that progress came through efforts to make schools more effective and to ensure that students could contribute to the existing social order. Rosenwald’s advocacy of self-help, the Hampton-Tuskegee Model in the South, and vocational programs in the South would have all fit into the concept of conservative progressivism.

6.6.3 Rosenwald and Accommodationist Education

However, despite an allegiance with progressives, Rosenwald could also be considered a major funder of accommodationist education in the South. Watkins (2001) argued that philanthropists and educators, whom he termed the White Architects of Black

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62 Some scholars have argued that the Rosenwald Fund supported many African American leaders through the administration of Rosenwald Fellowships, grants to support promising African American scholars, artists, and doctors. Fellowship recipients included: Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison, Mamie and Kenneth Clark, and WEB DuBois (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 1999; Perkins, 2003).
Education, almost exclusively supported accommodationist education, which took the form of industrial training designed to produce gradual change that would address African Americans’ demands for education without challenging the existing social order (p. 23). Within this characterization, Rosenwald could arguably be considered a “White architect.” First, it was clear that Rosenwald advocated incremental change. He stated that he was not interested in equality and never actively challenged Jim Crow in the South or segregation in his hometown, Chicago (see Philpot 1978).

Second, Rosenwald was influenced to donate money in part by business sensibilities and economic self interest. Through the Sears Roebuck Foundation, Rosenwald funded, for example, farm education because the more prosperous the farms, the more money individuals would have to purchase items (Ascoli, 2006, p. 76). In 1912, for example, Rosenwald provided one million dollars to fund agricultural extension agents (Ascoli, 2006, p. 75-76). Rosenwald described this donation as a “business proposition” that would increase farmers’ prosperity, which would benefit “the city” and Sears (Ascoli, 2006, p. 76). When Rosenwald funded the Hyde Park Y.M.C.A., he had the Y built near his Sears plant. He argued that such projects were “win-win” proposals, benefiting the company, but also the larger community (Ascoli, 2006, p. 78).

Further, as part of what Carruthers (1977) defined as an “interlocking directorate” of the “several largest educational foundations” directly responsible for the development of black education,” (p. 300), Rosenwald worked closely with Phelps-Stokes Fund, the General Education Board (GEB), and Hampton Institute, and served on the boards of the

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Rockefeller Foundation and Tuskegee Institute. Caruthers (1977) argued that this
directorate’s “interest in black uplift mirrored their economic stability and growth of the
country” (p. 302).

6.6.4 Significance

There are divergent perspectives on the legacy of Julius Rosenwald. Current
initiatives to preserve the Rosenwald schools and tributes to Rosenwald for helping to
create universal schooling in the South are a testament to the work he did. Ascoli (2006)
argued that the Rosenwald Fund not only provided schools where none previously
existed, but that the program also “start[ed] the slow process of bringing the black and
white races together” (Ascoli, 2006, p. 153). Ascoli (2006) also noted that Rosenwald’s
support of both Washington and DuBois (and I would add Woodson) illustrated
Rosenwald’s belief that African Americans should gain both political and economic
rights (p. 95). Yet, it must be noted that after more than a decade of school building and
increased funding, inequitable funding of schools continued and numerous reports found
teaching and learning in the Rosenwald schools were inadequate (see Ascoli, 2006).

In reconciling Rosenwald as both a “White architect” and also “the subtle stinging
critic of our racial democracy,” it becomes apparent that Rosenwald represented many of
the paradoxes in the progressive education movement. Rosenwald was both a progressive
and a supporter of accommodationist education. As a donor who was very involved in
setting his terms of giving, there were times in his philanthropic career where
organizations, especially of higher learning, had to insist that conditions be changed or to
decline the money. For example, when Rosenwald donated $10,000 to Harvard to honor Eliot’s birthday, he initially stipulated that his gift was dependent on a particular professor remaining at the school. Of course, the University would not agree to giving a donor control over academic decisions and Rosenwald agreed to take out the provision (Ascoli, 2006, p. 287-288). Further, even though many wealthy businessmen, including Rosenwald, supported the Cooley Bill in Chicago, which would have created separate vocational school, the initiative was defeated. In politics, Rosenwald actively opposed Frank Smith, whom he perceived as being corrupt, in his run for IL Senate (1926). Rosenwald reportedly offered Smith shares of Sears, Roebuck stock to withdraw from the race (Rosenwald as quoted in Ascoli, 2006, p. 291). Smith did not take the money and Rosenwald’s reputation was badly tarnished.

The instances are of interest because they illustrate the limits to Rosenwald’s power. Of course, unlike the elite colleges, very few county training schools were in the economic position to resist the donations of Rosenwald and other philanthropists; thus, they were much more vulnerable to the influence of philanthropists. Also, unlike in the political race in 1926, where Rosenwald’s money was not able to change the course of the election, he and other philanthropists acted as “unelected, unregulated policymakers” in the South (Watkins, 2001). While Rosenwald’s particular projects may have been of worth given the inadequate funding of public schools, it is important to challenge both the constant state of disinvestment and to challenge the ability of those with money to control public education.

The issue of power to decide the curricula of most worth and which reforms are identified as progressive is further complicated by the influence of philanthropists. While
many African American communities maintained independent schools, there was a great need for funding. Thus, the seeming popularity of industrial education for African Americans during reconstruction was much less an ideological victory in the scholarly community or a popular victory within the African American community, than an imposition of corporate philanthropists’ will. Philanthropists, including progressive philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, largely funded the creation and operations of southern school serving African American children; yet, they only funded those schools that supported accommodationist industrial education.

It is telling that even with the support of influential businessmen in Chicago, the Cooley Bill was defeated numerous times. Moderate progressives and educators were able to defeat the initiative to create separate vocational schools in Chicago. This may provide insight about the manner in which progressives funded reforms in the South that would have been difficult if not impossible to carry out in well-funded schools in the North. Anderson and Moss (1999) argue that by the 1920s, many philanthropic foundations were run by paid staff, some of whom:

were primarily interested in black education experiments for their relevance to the overall Progressive educational agenda, including the elimination of ‘dead languages,’ the introduction of ‘practical’ vocational training and reformation of the curriculum to promote ‘life adjustment.’ . . . . Educational innovation was easier to carry out in weak and underfunded black schools than in more secure white schools (p. 10).

While the literature does not indicate this applies to Rosenwald, it is important to note that with his funding, he was able to carry out many things in the South that did not materialize in his hometown.
I would argue that we could learn from the example of Rosenwald. While he did many very good things and while he discussed the impact of systemic racism much more than did his White counterparts in both the progressive movement and the philanthropic movement, we must ask: (a) Who is empowered to determine the curriculum within our schools? (b) Who determines the nature of progressive reforms? (c) How does the reliance on philanthropic dollars influence school policy? (d) How can we respond when the public is failing to meet the needs of our children? (e) How can we guarantee equitable and high quality education to all?
7: CONCLUSIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE

7.1 Conclusions

In 1932a, George Counts challenged progressives by asking: “Dare progressive education be progressive?” Within this dissertation, I seek to challenge contemporary scholars and educators to ask similar questions: were the past progressive movements politically progressive? How did moderate and radical progressives enact a democratic vision? What does it mean to be progressive? And what can those seeking to build a new, more expansive progressive movement learn from the limits of the past?

Within this dissertation, I have examined some of the contradictions within the progressive education movement by exploring its relationship with accommodationist reforms. When I began this work, my questions were very different – instead of contemplating the relationship between progressives and accommodationists, I sought to understand why progressives were largely silent about the proliferation of accommodationist policies in the South. My assumption was that progressives would be in natural opposition to accommodationism. Yet, after completing my initial research, I realized that there was much more than silence – there was also implicit and sometimes explicit support of accommodationism by leading progressives and that some scholars, both in the time period being studied and today, identified the Hampton-Tuskegee model of accommodationist education as progressive.

After reviewing historical works, primary and secondary sources, and archival data, I have found that within a context of scientific racism, regionalism, changing economic and political realities, and theoretic and practical ambiguity within the
progressive education movement, many progressive educators supported and/or ignored the creation and proliferation of accommodationist schooling in African American communities in the American South. My research suggests that there were three dominant reasons that many progressives did not oppose (and in some cases even supported) accommodationist education. First, the progressive education movement was large, diverse, and even contradictory in focus. Given that progressivism was often defined as a rejection of intellectual traditionalism and a move towards more relevant schooling, reformers that ranged from social behaviorism, to experientialism, to accommodationism, and even to radical Reconstructionism could have all been considered “new” or “progressive.” This is not to say that the various branches of progressivism and accommodationism were ideologically aligned – in fact, they had competing social and pedagogical visions. Second, while the progressive education movement was diverse, there were a few generally defined characteristics, including a greater focus on health and character; a more relevant curriculum focused upon meeting the needs/interests/perceived abilities of children; and pedagogical changes designed to make school more relevant to students and to the changing society (Cremin, 1959/1978, p. 2). Many of these characteristics would also apply to accommodationism. Thus, while the political ideology of accommodationism differed from most progressive philosophies, my research suggests that accommodationist education had many pedagogical similarities with elements with moderate progressive education. Finally, there were significant connections between the conservative progressive focus on efficiency and stability and the accommodationist desire to maintain existing social structures, while preparing students to find “success” in the existing social order.
From examining the “embodied” contradictions of John Dewey (the quintessential moderate.radical progressive), Booker T. Washington (the leading spokesperson of accommodationism), and Julius Rosenwald (the most progressive philanthropist funding African American education), I learned that each man, to varying degrees, embraced elements of both progressivism and accommodationism. This is important because rather than conceptualizing what Kliebard (1995) described as the struggle for the curriculum as being fought primarily by separate and definable elements within a larger movement, I have noted that individual reformers could often embody numerous (and seemingly contradictory) sides of the struggle. The purpose of these examinations is not to judge the value of each man’s work. Rather, the purpose is to understand the context in which progressivism was developed and to expose some of the contradictions in the early progressive movement.

While Dewey was a leading moderate.radical progressive who envisioned schools as sites of democratic transformation, I noted that he did not always acknowledge the role of race or social class in his discussion of pedagogical or curricular reforms. While Dewey had multiple influences and was involved in various education projects, many of Dewey’s theories on education were formulated and tested in a small, private school that was neither racially nor economically diverse. Yet, my research suggests that many of the theories developed by Dewey were universalized without fully theorizing the manner in which race, economic status, and community would impact the manner in which progressive reforms were enacted.

In my research on Washington, I noted while Dewey often ignored societal constraints, Washington’s reforms were based largely on the study of social conditions
and the provision of education that would best fit students into the existing social order. Given the realities of extreme racism, white supremacy, and oppression of his day, this meant that the school would largely prepare students for subservient positions. My work suggests while Washington was clearly an advocate for accommodationist schooling, he also employed many progressive pedagogical tools in his work at the Tuskegee Institute. As such, he could be considered both an accommodationist and a progressive. Thus, it is important to see the contestation between various progressive branches as reflecting more than ideological or pedagogical differences and to understand the manner in which power, politics, and resources impacts the implementation of progressive reforms.

My examination of Rosenwald indicated that while he was a progressive philanthropist who in many ways challenged systemic racism, he was aligned with Washington’s model of gradual change through economic development within existing social conditions. Thus, he saw schools as central sites of change, but only change that had widespread acceptance and did not immediately threaten the existing social order (which included, at times, accepting segregation). Despite the assessment about the impact of his donations on the progressive movement or on schools, it must be noted that Rosenwald, and other philanthropists, had inordinate power to decide which reforms were enacted.

I must note that my findings do not imply that progressives caused racism or existing economic inequity in schools or society. Progressives generally sought to improve social conditions; however, early progressives were very much influenced by a social context wherein the ideas of scientific racism, eugenic ideology, and gradualism were pervasive. Thus, while advocating a more humane and child centered pedagogy, a
more relevant curriculum, and a more just and democratic society, many progressives
failed to challenge the impact of racism, white supremacy, and economic injustice on
students and schools. Within these finding, I am left with a number of questions,
including: could movements which ignore, accept, or maintain existing inequity be
considered progressive? How could progressives engage in reforms seeking to expand
democracy without contending with racism?

7.2 Significance

I believe this study is significant because it suggests the deep entanglement
between progressive education and accommodationist ideology in ways that continue to
impact our schools today. By illustrating the close relationships between progressive and
accommodationist reforms, I have pointed to the need for curriculum workers and
theorists to better understand the history of progressive education and the impact of
racism, regionalism and white supremacy on early progressive thought. Further, I believe
this work illustrates the need for those involved in progressive reforms today to learn
from the past and actively consider pedagogy, policy, and power in any conceptualization
of progressivism.

I believe that this study is relevant because we are still contending with what
Gloria Ladson Billings described in her 2006 Presidential Address to AERA as “an
education debt” composed of “the historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral
decisions and policies that characterize our society” (p. 5). This debt must be addressed
honestly and actively in part by acknowledging the role of regionalism, racism, and
eugenics in early progressive reforms. When addressed without historical context, contemporary discourse about such issues as the “achievement gap” or even drop-out rates can serve to: reinforce the cultural deficit models; normalize the experience of White students; and obscure gaps in opportunities to learn.

This study is also relevant because many of the critiques of the early progressive education movement that were addressed in my dissertation continue to be debated today. This suggests that there is still much work to be done. Today, more than a century after the progressive education movement sought to improve schools, the struggle for education justice continues. As during the time period studied, there is generalized discontent about the state of education, especially the education opportunities for low income students and students of color; however, there is little consensus as to the way forward. In a brief survey of contemporary scholarship regarding education reforms, I have found that current progressive movements have some similarities with movements in the past.

First, in my study, I noted that there was great ambiguity within the term progressive. Today, a large variety of reformers still identify as progressive. Constructivists, brain-based researchers, charter school operators, small school teachers, turn-around experts, union members, and community activists fighting to strengthen public schools can all define themselves as progressive reformers. While all such reformers may embrace ‘change,’ their ideologies and methods are as diverse as the three branches of progressivism highlighted in this study. How, then, can we define a progressive response to contemporary problems?
Second, in my study I noted the influence wealthy philanthropists and corporate foundations had on school reforms (see Watkins, 2001). In the South, where public funds were insufficient, many communities had no publically funded schools and had too few economic resources to independently establish community schools (see Anderson, 1988 and Watkins, 2001). As such, philanthropists, including progressive donors like Julius Rosenwald, had disproportionate power to determine the direction of education for African Americans. Contemporary parallels of philanthropic control of curricula can also be seen. Much of the current funding for reforms, even those identified as progressive, is tied to specific initiatives defined by government and corporate sources. When a small number of individuals or foundations controls grants and set the trends that other foundations follow, they exert inordinate influence. Today, neoliberal reforms, including calls for greater marketization and privatization of schools, are growing in force. Such reforms, often opposed by those within schools and communities, are largely supported by foundations and business groups (see Lipman, 2004; Shipps, 2006).

Third, in my research, I found that progressives often focused heavily on pedagogy, while ignoring issues of power. Today, this trend continues. In discussing school reform, Charles Payne (2008) argued that “[i]f the mother of all conservative sins is the reluctance to think seriously about the redistribution of resources, the first of all progressive sins may be the fetishizing of pedagogy” (p. 119). Payne (2008) further states that focusing only on “how we teach . . . may prevent us from getting to some of the questions our most marginalized youth are struggling with” (p. 119). By focusing only (or primarily) on pedagogical initiatives, educators and scholars often ignore discussions of power, privilege, and outcome. Many contemporary scholars discuss the need to
acknowledge power and to understand the impact of school policies on students of color and low income students. Theresa Perry (2003) argued many schools that are “individualistic, committed to giving their students lots of degrees of freedom, and highly stratified and competitive” hinder the success of African American students (p. 107). Perry (2003) argued that even schools within “highly ranked systems in small towns, progressive college towns, and suburban communities” often fail to address the needs of African American students (p. 107-108). Similarly, in a study of an integrated high school in Berkeley, California (a “liberal” city that has “embraced progressive social reforms”), Pedro Noguera (2003) found that despite its willingness to pursue progressive reforms in education, there were “extreme disparities in academic outcomes among students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds” (p. 60). As such, I would argue that progressive reforms need to look beyond a focus only on pedagogy and also look at who is being served (and harmed) by reform initiatives.

Fourth, in my dissertation I note that in the period between the 1860s and 1930s, many curricular reforms (whether implemented by the funders or leading progressives) were implemented without the participation and perspectives of African Americans. Today, recent scholarship suggests that there needs to be a greater focus on voice and representation. Lisa Delpit (1995) argued that in recent debates over skills versus processes (which were often framed as a progressive issue of pedagogy):

the dilemma is not really in the debate over instructional methodology, but rather in communicating across culture and in addressing the more fundamental issues of power, of whose voice gets to be heard in determining what is best for poor children and children of color (p. 46).
I would argue that Delpit’s critique needs to be heard by those in the field of Curriculum Studies, as well as by school based practitioners. Delpit’s work reminded curriculum workers that the very definition of “progressive” is still contested. Henry (1998) argued that the very conception of “progressive” needs to move beyond a White, middle class understanding of the term. In her study of “African Canadian Women Teachers’ Lives and Practices,” Henry details multiple ways in which the teachers had to “reshap[e] the universalized discourse of child-centered learning for children who are not White and middle class” (p. 96).

In a related finding, my research suggests that within the field of Curriculum Studies, the voices of African American scholars and curriculum workers have largely been largely ignored. As such we have a very limited view of the field. Understanding the manner in which regionalism and scientific racism impacted the progressive movement is essential not only to better understand efforts to improve education for African American students, but to understand our schools and the field of curriculum in their complexity and contradiction.

It is my hope that by complicating our understanding of the relationship between progressive and accommodationist policies, we begin to understand more completely the limitations of reform focused simply on progressive pedagogy without an analysis of power, voice, or social context. It is also my hope that scholars and contemporary progressives begin to wrestle with the manner in which our history impacts the manner in which we understand and act upon current conditions. By contending with past limitations and seeking to address our historic debt, we can envision a new progressive movement, one which includes not only better ways to implement more humanistic,
critical, and democratic ways of teaching and being in education, but also one which insists upon democratic and inclusive determinants of knowledge of worth.

### 7.3 Future Research

In completing this research, there were a great number of questions that were beyond the scope of this research project. In the future, I would like to further examine the legacy of accommodationism in education policy. How was accommodationism infused in other initiatives? In what form, if any, does accommodationism get enacted today? Who are the accommodationists today? Are they considered progressive?

I am also interested in further researching the progressive movement today. Who are the new progressives? What are their core pedagogical beliefs? What are their core political beliefs and objectives? Who are the new conservative, moderates, and radicals within the larger progressive movement? How do they understand the legacy of progressivism? Within this line of inquiry, I am interested in understanding how teacher educators, curriculum workers, and education professors present both progressivism and accommodationism to their students. What do teacher candidates or new teachers mean when they claim that they are “progressive”?

Finally, I am interested in further exploring how better understanding the contradictions in the early progressive education movement can help those building a new progressive movement. How can those building progressive movements today respond to past shortcomings? How can scholarship on progressive education contribute to the buildings of such movements? How can progressive educators respond to
changing social conditions? How, then, can a progressive movement really become progressive?
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