AMERICAN EDUCATION

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Thoroughly updated throughout, the 18th edition of this clear, authoritative text remains fresh and up to date, reflecting the many changes in education that have occurred since the publication of the previous edition. Topics and issues addressed and analyzed include:

- The decline of the Common Core State Standards, particularly as result of a Republican-controlled administration currently in place
- Increasing emphasis on for-profit education, vouchers, charter schools and free-market competition between schools, expected to surge with the appointment of the new U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos
- Current debates about immigration and "Dreamers"—new statistics on immigrant education, discussion of education proposals to accommodate the languages, cultures, and religions of newly arrived immigrants
- New education statistics on school enrollments, dropouts, education and income, school segregation, charter schools, and home languages
- The purposes of education as presented in the 2016 platforms of the Republican, Democratic, Green, and Libertarian parties
- Discussions around transgender students.

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PREFACE

The 2016 tumultuous national election of President Donald Trump and the appointment of U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos dramatically changed national discussions about education. Each of the chapters has been updated in the context of this election. The following changes were made to each chapter. Also, tables used throughout the book were updated.

Chapter 1 Added is a discussion of the political and religious goals of the 2016 national election and the education ideology of U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos.

Chapter 2 Added is a discussion of the traditional family, religious goals, and sexual education proposals contained in the 2016 Republican Platform.

Chapter 3 Added is a discussion of the equality of opportunity goals contained in the 2016 Democratic Platform. Statistical tables were updated.

Chapter 4 Added is a discussion of the 2016 Republican and Democratic Platform responses to human capital theory. Also, added is a discussion of the Economic Policy Institute's "Inequalities at the Starting Gate: Cognitive and Noncognitive Skills Gaps between 2010–2011 Kindergarten Classmates."

Chapter 5 Added is the Republican interpretation of Title IX and its relationship to school treatment of transgender students. Also discussed are guidelines for protecting the rights of students with disabilities in charter schools.

Chapter 6 Added is a discussion of President Trump's administration Policies on Immigration and Dreamers. Also added are protections for undocumented students under the 1982 U.S. Supreme Court ruling Plyler vs. Doe. Tables in the chapter were updated.

Chapter 7 Added are the Republican promotion of America First, American exceptionalism and nationalism.

Chapter 8 Added is a discussion of President Trump's support of school choice and vouchers. Also, statistical tables were updated.

Chapter 9 Added is a discussion of the 2016 Republican and Democratic Platform's rejection of Common Core and High-Stakes Testing.

Chapter 10 Added is a discussion of the 2016 Democratic Platform's response to the national teacher shortage. Also, the table on national teachers' salaries was updated.

PART ONE

SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

CHAPTER 1

The History and Political Goals of Public Schooling

Imagine public school principals greeting each parent at the beginning of the school year with the question: "What do you want your child to learn and how do you want it to be taught?" Of course, this doesn't happen. What is to be taught and how are usually decided by the time children begin the school year. Learning goals and instructional methods are determined by a political process involving local, state, and federal officials and, in some cases, the courts. Politically determined goals of public education guide what is taught and how it is taught. When students enter a public school they are submitting to the will of the public as determined by local, state, and federal governments. The goals of American schools are politically determined.

This political determination of school goals is exemplified by 2014 student protests in Jefferson County Colorado over a proposal by the members of the elected school board to change the Advanced Placement U.S. history curriculum by downplaying the role of civil disobedience in bringing about change in U.S. society and promoting patriotism. Students marched with signs reading "Civil disobedience is patriotism" and "Education without limitation." However, the elected county school board represents the viewpoints of voters. It is through school boards that the public is supposed to influence school curricula. So who is right: students as political activists or the school board as elected officials?

To distinguish between educational goals I have divided them into political, social, and economic. In this chapter I focus on the issues surrounding the political goals of education. In Chapter 2, I discuss the social goals of schooling. In Chapter 3, I consider one of the most important and complex goals of education, which is equality of opportunity. Chapter 4 continues the discussion of equality of opportunity in the context of economic goals.

This chapter introduces readers to:

- the goals and history of U.S. public schools;
- the debates about the political goals of public schools;
- a discussion about whether these goals have been achieved;
- questions designed to help readers formulate their own opinions about what should be the purposes of American education.

EDUCATION GOALS ARE CONTROVERSIAL

What type of goals spark public controversy? Consider the goal of educating patriotic citizens. Should teaching patriotism consist of saluting the flag and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, which contains a reference to God? Some religious groups criticize flag salutes as worshiping false gods, while others complain about the reference to God in the Pledge. Also, social goals can stimulate debates such as those related to instruction in abstinence or birth control as a means of reducing teenage pregnancy. An important traditional goal of schooling is reducing crime through instruction in moral and social values. But whose social values or morality should form the basis of instruction in public schools? Today, the economic goals of schooling primarily center on educating workers to help the U.S. economy compete in the global economy. But will this goal increase or decrease economic inequalities in society?

The previous questions do not have right or wrong answers. They are questions that reflect real debates about the role of U.S. public schools. The questions also provide insight into the historical evolution of American education. For instance, what are your answers to the following questions?

- Do you think there are public benefits from education that should override the objections of parents and other citizens regarding the teaching of particular subjects, attitudes, or values?
- Should elected representatives determine the subject matter, attitudes, and values taught in public schools?
- What should public school teachers do if they are asked to teach values that are in conflict with their own personal values?

In answering the preceding questions remember that public schools do not always operate for the general good of society. Most people assume that public schooling is always a social good. However, public schools are used to advance political and economic ideologies that do not improve the condition of human beings. For instance, in the 1930s Nazis enlisted schools in a general campaign to educate citizens to believe in the racial superiority of the German people, to support fascism, and to be willing

to die at the command of Hitler. Racial biology and fascist political doctrines were taught in the classroom; patriotic parades and singing took place in the schoolyard. A similar pattern occurred in South African schools in attempts to maintain a racially divided society. In the United States, racial segregation and biased content in textbooks was used to maintain a racial hierarchy. Consequently, the reader should be aware that "education" does not always benefit the individual or society. Public and personal benefits depend on the content of instruction.

Educational goals are a product of what people think schooling should do for the good of society. Consequently, they often reflect opinions and beliefs about how people should act and how society should be organized. Since there is wide variation in what people believe, educational goals often generate a great deal of debate. I'm sure that in reading this book you will find yourself taking sides on issues.

HISTORICAL GOALS OF SCHOOLING

The historical record provides insight into current controversies surrounding public school goals. As indicated in Figure 1.1, the founding of public schools from the 1820s to the 1840s had as a goal the uniting of Americans by instilling in students common moral and political values. It was believed that if all children were exposed to a common instruction in morality and politics the nation might become free of crime, immoral behavior, and the possibility of political revolution. These educational goals have persisted into the twenty-first century with government policies still calling upon schools to instill in students moral values, a common cultural identity, and civic values. A later section of this chapter discusses the problems associated with the continuing political education mission of schools. Chapter 2 discusses the enduring problems in attempting to form the moral character of the American population through public schooling.

A persistent educational goal from these early days of schooling is providing equality of opportunity, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Horace Mann referred to this goal as the "great balance wheel of society." Worried about conflicts between the rich and poor, education was believed to be the key in giving everyone an equal opportunity to gain wealth. Equality of opportunity refers to everyone having the same chance to pursue wealth. It does not mean that everyone will have equal status or income, but just an equal chance to economically succeed. It was hoped that the poor would not resent the rich when they realized they had an equal opportunity through schooling to become rich. Today, a major goal of schooling remains providing everyone with equality of opportunity to succeed.

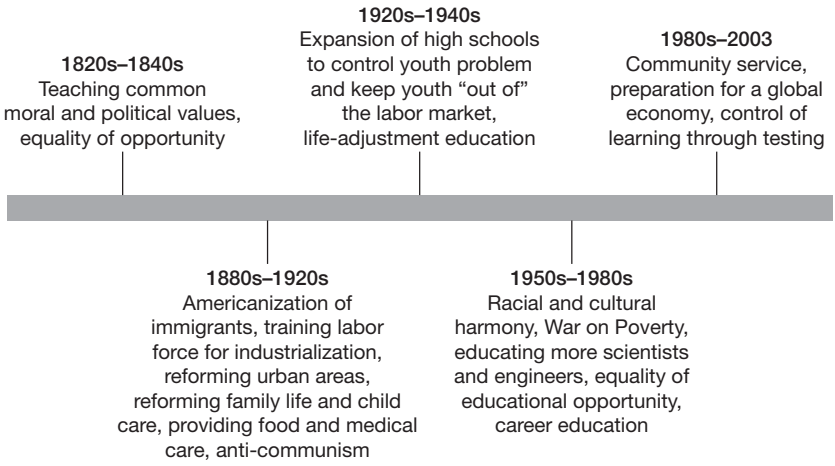

Figure 1.1 Goals of Public Schools in the U.S., 1820 to 2003

As indicated in Figure 1.1, industrialization, urbanization, and increased immigration from the 1880s to the 1920s turned public schools into welfare agencies that extended their reach to something called the "whole child." This included concerns about the health, family, and neighborhood conditions affecting students and resulted in school cafeterias, school nurses, playgrounds, extracurricular activities, after-school programs, and intervention into families and kindergartens became part of the expanded goals of schooling. Like political and moral education and equality of opportunity, these concerns extended into the twenty-first century. For instance, school cafeterias were originally introduced to ensure that children received proper nutrition. Today, this concern persists in the battle against childhood obesity.

The teaching of multiculturalism and racial harmony was highlighted in schools, as indicated in Figure 1.1, during the civil rights movement from the 1950s to the 1980s. Prior to this period, schools attempted to strip Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Mexican Americans of their languages and cultures and replace them with the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture. The result, as I discuss in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, is a continuing struggle over the language and culture of schooling.

After the 1960s, an important goal of education has been to increase economic growth and prepare students for jobs in the global economy. During the period from the 1820s to the 1840s, champions of public school argued that mass schooling would end poverty and increase national wealth. This argument persisted into the period from the 1880s

to the 1920s, when schools introduced vocational education, vocational guidance, and high school programs designed to educate students for particular jobs in the labor market. Today, mass testing and national standards are considered the key to global economic competition.

In summary, schools are the focus of many hopes for political, social, and economic improvement. The dreams of public school advocates of the early nineteenth century persist in the form of civic education, patriotic school exercises, and character education. Providing equality of opportunity to pursue wealth remains a dream of school people. Growing the economy and preparing students for work is central to political policies affecting schools. "Reform the individual rather than society" is the message of those who trust the school to end crime, poverty, broken families, drug and alcohol abuse, and myriad other social troubles.

U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION BETSY DEVOS: POLITICAL GOALS AND SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

President Donald Trump's Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos exemplifies the effect of religion, political and economic goals with how schools should be organized. The concern about religion and free enterprise in education were central to DeVos's education work prior to being appointed U.S. Secretary of Education. Born Betsy Prince, she attended Michigan Christian schools: the Holland Christian School and Calvin College. The Holland Christian Schools mission is to educate students to be:

> **Biblically Discerning**—Possess a knowledge of God's Word; understand and are able to defend a Biblical worldview; able to critically evaluate the current culture in light of God's Word.
> **Spiritually Growing**—Have a vibrant, growing relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Understand their God-given design and desire to serve Jesus Christ in whatever they do.

Calvin College proclaims: "Calvin's identity is a Christian academic community dedicated to rigorous intellectual inquiry."

With her husband, Richard DeVos, they established in 1992 the Dick and Betsy DeVos Family Foundation, which in turn created the American Foundation for Children. The major goal of the American Foundation for Children was to support state legislators who advocate school choice plans using vouchers, tuition tax credits, education savings accounts and the expansion of charter schools, especially for-profit charter schools.

School choice would allow parents to choose the schools their children attend and to pay for their children's education using either a voucher

supplied by the state or local school system or money deposited by the state in an education savings account. Another option was getting education expenses returned by parents receiving a tuition tax credit on their state or federal taxes. Within this system, parents could choose a standard public school, a charter school, a private school or a for-profit school. Charter schools are created by the state government and operate outside the control of local school districts and are an important element in most choice plans. Charter schools, depending on state regulations, can create their own curricula, including religious-oriented curricula—again limited by particular state regulations.

The couple's combined inheritances paid for the Dick and Betsy DeVos Family Foundation. Richard DeVos inherited part of the Amway fortune of $5.1 billion from his father Richard DeVos Senior. Betsy (Prince) DeVos received an inheritance from her father's estate of $1.35 billion. "The couple," according to one report, "gave $5.2 million to the foundation in 2002, $10 million in 2003 and $14 million in 2004." Dick DeVos said, "We have not hidden the fact by laying out in our disclosure that we have been blessed financially. Part of that responsibility is to be a blessing to others."

The advocacy of school choice reflected Richard DeVos's dedication to free-market economics. In addition, school choice would, they hope, allow parents to choose Christian-oriented schools. Richard DeVos's support of school choice and for-profit schools is reflected in his attendance at Michigan's Northwood University where he funded a school of management named after him. The stated mission of the university is: "To develop the future leaders of a global, free-enterprise society. We believe in: The advantages of an entrepreneurial, free-enterprise society . . . The Northwood idea: Bringing the lessons of the America free-enterprise society into the college classroom."

The idea of for-profit schools competing in a marketplace supported by government funds, particularly as vouchers or as charter schools, was highlighted by President Donald Trump's speech on September 8, 2016 at the for-profit charter school Cleveland Arts and Social Science Academy. In the speech, President Trump praised the owner Ron Packard as representing the entrepreneurial spirit behind for-profit charter schools.

Describing Donald Trump's selection of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education, New York University historian Kim Phillips-Fein, "They [Betsy DeVos and husband Richard DeVos] have this moralized sense of the free market that leads to this total program to turn back the ideas of the New Deal, the welfare state." As reported in New York magazine, Betsy DeVos believes a free-market ideology can "advance God's kingdom."

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos's advocacy of free markets for schools received support from Vice President Mike Pence, who as

Governor of Indiana in 2012 greatly expanded the voucher system created by his predecessor Governor Mitch Daniels. Under Daniels, a student receiving a voucher for 90 percent of a private school tuition had to be from a low-income family as determined by eligibility for free or reduced lunch. When Governor Pence took office, he worked to expand vouchers to cover 50 percent of private school tuition for families earning $67,000 to $90,000, with no limits on the number of private school vouchers they could issue.

In keeping with free-market theory, Betsy DeVos supported unregulated charter schools in Detroit, Michigan. DeVos backed 2010 Michigan legislation expanding the number of charter schools. She helped block legislation that would have kept failing charter schools from expanding or being replicated. In 2016, Secretary DeVos was described as a chief force in defeating Michigan legislation for state standards to identify and close failing charter schools. DeVos's vision was of charter schools opening and closing according to the demands of parental choice in a free market.

This free-market vision included for-profit schools with 80 percent of Detroit, Flint and Grand Rapids charter schools operating in 2016 as for-profit. According to *New York Times* reporter Kate Zernike, in defeating Michigan legislation to regulated charter schools, "Ms. DeVos argued that this kind of oversight would create too much bureaucracy and limit choice. A believer in a freer market than even some free market economists would endorse, Ms. DeVos pushed back on any regulation as too much regulation. Charter schools should be allowed to operate as they wish; parents would judge with their feet."

The DeVos–Michigan model of unregulated free-market competition between charter schools would, of course, undermine traditional public schools referred to by President Trump as "failing government schools." Tonya Allen, the president of the *Skillman Foundation*, a nonprofit that works with Detroit children, described DeVos: "She is committed to an ideological stance that is solely about the free market, at the expense of practicality and the basic needs of students in the most destabilized environment in the country." This free-market position led Randi Weingarten, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, to call Ms. DeVos "the most ideological, anti-public education nominee" for education secretary since the position was first created in the 1970s.

In summary, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos exemplifies the relationship between economic and religious goals and the organization of schools. She wants a more moral society, which, she believes, can be achieved by allowing religious-oriented charter schools to compete in an unregulated education marketplace. Quality schools would emerge, according to her argument, as parents voted with their feet. Schools that

didn't attract parental support would close and those that were attractive would remain. Competition would teach children the value of the free market, while allowing religious-oriented charter schools to expand.

PROTECTED OR PREPARED CHILDHOOD?

Social concepts of childhood are another way of thinking about educational goals. Is the educational goal designed to protect or prepare children for some future life? In *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood*, Steven Mintz argues there was a transition in American thought from the concept of "protected" childhood to "prepared childhood." "Protected childhood" focuses on the happiness and well-being of the child. In "prepared childhood" attention is given to the child's future as an adult rather than concern about the child's immediate happiness.

Goals of public schools traditionally include a concern with both protected and prepared childhood. For instance, schools reflect the concept of protected childhood by providing opportunities to play, be healthy, use imagination, and be happy. Educational practices that traditionally reflect protected childhood include:

- recess;
- availability of playgrounds;
- emphasis in instruction on intellectual enjoyment and interest of the student;
- gym;
- school clubs;
- extra-curricular activities;
- health care and instruction;
- kindergarten for imagination and personal development in contrast to preparation for the first grade;
- education for enjoyment of arts;
- personal development for a happy life.

Preparation for work or college impacts many of the practices associated with protected childhood including:

- early preschool learning skills for work and later schooling;
- kindergarten as preparation for first grade in contrast to time for social and imaginative development;
- reduction of arts programs and recess time for more class time and test preparation;
- career education.

IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS: COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS AND LITERACY

The Common Core State Standards are an example of the political determination of educational goals and its impact on the curriculum. The Standards were adopted by the National Governors Association in 2010 and adopted by many states. The Standards were strongly criticized by Republicans during the 2016 presidential election. The goal of the Common Core State Standards is to prepare students for work or college. With the goal preparation for work, the literacy standards of the Common Core State Standards call for increasing the reading of nonfiction and decreasing the reading of fiction. Eliminated from the Standards are goals of relating student feelings to a reading selection or in writing about their feelings. The goal is learning to read and write for work or a college course.

David Coleman, an architect of the Common Core Standards and president of the College Board, explained his push for students to write fewer personal and opinion pieces. As reported by Tamar Lewin, he asserted that in the working world a person would not say: "Johnson, I need a market analysis by Friday, but before that I need a compelling account of your childhood."

As reported by Catherine Gewertz, David Liben, a former New York City teacher and now a senior literacy specialist with Student Achievement Partners, told the teachers, that the Common Core "virtually eliminate[s] text-to-self connections." Liben directed teachers to eliminate from basal readers any questions dealing with how students feel about a reading along with any questions asking about the meaning of the reading in the students' life. "In college and careers, no one cares how you feel," Mr. Liben said. "Imagine being asked to write a memo on why your company's stock price has plummeted: 'Analyze why and tell me how you feel about it'."

POLITICAL GOALS OF SCHOOLING

The major political goals of American schools are:

- teaching a common set of political beliefs;
- learning to obey the law by obeying school rules;
- providing an equal opportunity for all to be elected to political positions;
- emphasizing voting as the key to political and social change;
- learning about the workings of government;
- educating patriotic citizens;
- educating students to be involved in community activities.

Before the actual establishment of public schools, American political leaders wanted schooling to create a national culture and to educate qualified politicians for a republican government. The role of schools in determining national culture continues into the twenty-first century, particularly as a result of increased immigration. The concern about education focusing on American nationalism appeared in the 2012 National Republican Platform with its call for a "renewed focus on the Constitution and the writings of the Founding Fathers, and an accurate account of American history that celebrates the birth of this great nation." This renewal focused in American schools was to be accompanied by the idea of American exceptionalism as stated in the same National Platform: "Professing American exceptionalism—the conviction that our country holds a unique place and role in human history—we proudly associate ourselves with those Americans of all political stripes who, more than three decades ago in a world as dangerous as today's, came together to advance the cause of freedom." In contrast, the 2012 Democratic National Platform mentioned nothing about teaching American nationalism and focused on education for improving the economy and increasing incomes.

After the American Revolution, many worried about national unity and the selection of political leaders. In his first message to Congress in 1790, President George Washington proposed a national university for training political leaders and creating a national culture. He wanted attendance by students from all areas of the country. What was hoped was that a hereditary aristocracy of the British would be replaced by an aristocracy of the educated. Washington's proposal was criticized as elitist. Requiring a college education, some protested, would result in politicians being primarily recruited from the elite. If none but the rich had access to higher education, then the rich could use higher education as a means of perpetuating and supporting their social status. To avoid the problem of elitism, Thomas Jefferson suggested that education could provide an equal opportunity for all nonslave citizens to gain political office. All citizens were to be given an equal chance to develop their abilities and to advance in the political hierarchy.

Jefferson was concerned with finding the best politicians through a system of schooling. In the 1779 Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge, Jefferson proposed three years of free education for all nonslave children. The most talented of these children were to be selected and educated at public expense at regional grammar schools. From this select group, the most talented were to be chosen for further education. Jefferson wrote in *Notes on the State of Virginia*, "By this means twenty of the best geniuses will be raked from the rubbish annually, and be instructed, at the public expense."

The details of Jefferson's plan are not as important as the idea, which has become ingrained in American social thought, that schooling is the best means of identifying democratic leadership. This idea assumes that the educational system is fair in its judgments. Fairness of selection assumes that judgment is based solely on talent demonstrated in school and not on other social factors such as race, religion, dress, and social class.

Besides educating political leadership, schools were called on to educate future citizens. However, opinions were divided on how this should be accomplished. Jefferson proposed a very limited education for the general citizenry. The three years of free education were to consist of instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic. He did not believe that people needed to be educated to be good citizens. He believed in the guiding power of natural reason to lead the citizen to correct political decisions. Citizens were to receive their political education from reading newspapers published under laws protecting freedom of the press. Citizens would choose between competing political ideas found in newspapers. For Jefferson the most important political function of schools was teaching reading.

Interestingly, while Jefferson wanted political opinions to be formed in a free marketplace of ideas, he advocated censorship of political texts at the University of Virginia. These contradictory positions reflect an inherent problem in the use of schools to teach political ideas. There is always the temptation to limit political instruction to what one believes are correct political ideas.

In contrast to Jefferson, Horace Mann, often called the father of public schools, wanted to instill a common political creed in all students and an obligation and desire to vote as part of maintaining a republican form of government. Mann developed his educational ideas and his reputation as America's greatest educational leader while serving as secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education from 1837 to 1848. Originally a lawyer, Mann gave up his legal career because he believed that schooling and not law was the key to creating the good society.

Without commonly held political beliefs, Mann believed, society was doomed to political strife and chaos. According to Mann, it is necessary to teach the importance of using the vote, as opposed to revolution and violence, to bring about political change. This was an important issue during Mann's time because the extension of universal male suffrage took place in the 1820s. Before that time, the vote was restricted by property requirements. In reference to the vote replacing political violence, Mann stated: "Had the obligations of the future citizen been sedulously inculcated upon all children of this Republic, would the patriot have had to mourn over so many instances, where the voter, not being able

to accomplish his purpose by voting, has proceeded to accomplish it by violence."

Also, Horace Mann worried that growing crime rates and social class conflict would lead to violence and mob rule. Commonly held political values along with the belief in the power of the vote, Mann hoped, would maintain political order. For Mann, the important idea was that all children in society attend the same type of school. The school was to be common to all children. Within the public or common school, children of all religions and social classes were to share in a common education. Basic social disagreements were to vanish as rich and poor children, and children whose parents were supporters of different political parties, mingled in the schoolroom.

Within the walls of the public schoolhouse students were to be taught the basic principles of a republican form of government. Mann assumed there was general agreement about the nature of these general political values and that they could be taught without objection from outside political groups. In fact, he opposed teaching politically controversial topics because he worried that conflicting political forces would destroy the public school idea. The combination of social mingling in school and the teaching of a common political philosophy would establish, Mann hoped, shared political beliefs that would ensure the survival of the U.S. government. Political liberty would be possible, according to Mann's philosophy, because it would be restrained and controlled by the ideas students learned in public schools.

Is there a common set of political values in the United States? Since the nineteenth century, debates over the content of instruction have rocked the schoolhouse. Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, conservative and liberal political groups pressured local public schools to teach their respective political viewpoints.

SHOULD SCHOOLS TEACH POLITICAL VALUES AND PATRIOTISM?

There is a strong tradition of dissent to public schools teaching any political doctrines. Some argue that teaching of political ideas is a method of maintaining the political power of those in control of government. In the late eighteenth century, English political theorist William Godwin warned against national systems of education because they could become a means by which those controlling government could control the minds of future citizens. Writing in 1793, Godwin stated, "Their views as institutors of a system of education will not fail to be analogous to their views in their political capacity: the data upon which their instructions are founded."

In addition to teaching political doctrines, the organizational features of schools were to instill political values. Simply defined, *socialization* refers to what students learn from following school rules, interacting with other students, and participating in school social events. Socialization can be contrasted with academic learning, which refers to classroom instruction, textbooks, and other forms of formal learning.

For some educational leaders, socialization is a powerful means of political control. Learning to obey school rules is socialization for obedience to government laws. Advocating the use of schools for political control, Johann Fichte, a Prussian leader in the early nineteenth century, wanted schools to prepare students for conformity to government regulations by teaching obedience to school rules and developing a sense of loyalty to the school. He argued that students will transfer their obedience to school rules to submission to government laws. According to Fichte, loyalty and service to the school and fellow students prepare citizens for service to the country. The school, according to Fichte, is a miniature community where children learn to adjust their individuality to the requirements of the community. The real work of the school, Fichte said, is shaping this social adjustment. A well-ordered government requires citizens to go beyond mere obedience to written constitutions and laws. Fichte believed children must see the government as something greater than the individual and must learn to sacrifice for the good of the social whole.

To achieve these political goals, Fichte recommended teaching patriotic songs, national history, and literature to increase a sense of dedication and patriotism to the government. This combination of socialization and patriotic teachings, he argued, would produce a citizen more willing and able to participate in the army and, consequently, would reduce the cost of national defense.

In the United States, patriotic exercises and fostering school spirit were emphasized after the arrival in the 1890s of large numbers of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. In 1892, Francis Bellamy wrote the Pledge of Allegiance and introduced it in the same year to educators attending the annual meeting of the National Education Association (NEA). A socialist, Bellamy wanted to include the word "equality" in the Pledge but this idea was rejected because state superintendents of education opposed equality for women and African Americans. The original Pledge of Allegiance was: "I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." Bellamy's Pledge of Allegiance became popular classroom practice as educators worried about the loyalty of immigrant children.

In the 1920s, the American Legion and the Daughters of the American Revolution thought that the Pledge's phrase "I pledge allegiance to my Flag" would be construed by immigrants to mean that they could remain loyal to their former nations. Consequently, "my flag" was replaced by "the flag of the United States." It was during this period that schools initiated Americanization programs that were precursors to current debates about immigrant education. Americanization programs taught immigrant children the laws, language, and customs of the United States. Naturally, this included teaching patriotic songs and stories. With the coming of World War I, the Pledge of Allegiance, the singing of patriotic songs, participation in student government, and other patriotic exercises became a part of the American school. In addition, the development of extracurricular activities led to an emphasis on school spirit. The formation of football and basketball teams, with their accompanying trappings of cheerleaders and pep rallies, was to build school spirit and, consequently, prepare students for service to the nation.

In the 1950s, the Pledge of Allegiance underwent another transformation when some members of the U.S. Congress and religious leaders campaigned to stress the role of religion in government. In 1954, the phrase "under God" was added to the Pledge. The new Pledge referred to "one nation, under God." Congressional legislation supporting the change declared that the goal was to "acknowledge the dependence of our people and our Government upon . . . the Creator . . . [and] deny the atheistic and materialistic concept of communism." For similar reasons, Congress in 1955 added the words "In God We Trust" to all paper money.

Reflecting the continuing controversy over the Pledge, a U.S. Court of Appeals ruled in 2002 that the phrase "one nation, under God" violated the U.S. Constitution's ban on government-supported religion. The decision was later dismissed by the U.S. Supreme Court because the father in the case did not have legal custody of his daughter for whom the case was originally brought. The suit was filed by Michael Newdow, the father of a second-grade student attending California's Elk Grove Unified School District. Newdow argued his daughter's First Amendment rights were violated because she was forced to "watch and listen as her state-employed teacher in her state-run school leads her classmates in a ritual proclaiming that there is a God, and ours is 'one nation under God.'" While the issue remains unresolved, the suit raised important questions about the Pledge of Allegiance.

In reaction to the Court's decision, Anna Quindlen wrote in the July 15, 2002, edition of *Newsweek*. "His [Bellamy's] granddaughter said he would have hated the addition of the words 'under God' to a statement

he envisioned uniting a country divided by race, class and, of course, religion." Another dimension of the story was that Bellamy was a socialist during a period of greater political toleration than today. In contrast to the 1890s, today it would be difficult to find a professional educational organization that would allow an outspoken socialist to write its patriotic pledge.

On May 9, 2014, the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance did not discriminate against non-religious students. However, the ruling did recognize that the Pledge was voluntary according to a 1942 U.S. Supreme Court Decision *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*. In the 1942 decision a group of students refused to say the Pledge because it violated their religious beliefs against worshiping graven images. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that students could not be forced to say the Pledge and that it had to be voluntary. Many students are not told about this Constitutional right and that they do not have to participate in saying the Pledge.

In recent years, service learning has gained additional prominence as part of citizenship education with some school systems requiring community service. The National Service Learning Clearinghouse states:

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. . . . Service-learning combines service to the community with student learning in a way that improves both the student and the community. As they participate in their community service projects, actively meeting the needs of communities, youth develop practical skills, self-esteem, and a sense of civic responsibility.

Service learning is a form of civic education rather than an education for direct involvement in politics. It is based on a belief that voluntary engagement in civic organizations and community work is necessary for the maintenance of a just society. Commentators on America's political life point to the important role of civil society where legislation often follows the actions of civil organizations. In *The Idea of Civil Society*, Adam Seligman writes, "social movements and not political parties have been the chief form of articulating and furthering demands for social change in the United States—the uniquely American response to social crises."

In conclusion, political education in American schools has consisted of teaching a national culture, performing patriotic exercises, political socialization through the life of the school, the study of government and national history, and the teaching of a dedication to voting as a means of social change. Like any other political agenda, political education in public schools is surrounded by controversy.

CENSORSHIP AND AMERICAN POLITICAL VALUES

What should be the political values taught in public schools? Horace Mann assumed that schools could just teach the basic principles of government free from controversy. Time has proved his assumption naïve as the schools became embroiled in censorship issues, textbook struggles, and court decisions about freedom of speech.

Textbooks are a traditional means of instilling political values. But, as I will describe, textbook content is highly politicized with many conflicts over what values should appear on their pages. These controversies are highlighted by the state adoption policies in California and Texas and pressures on textbook publishers by special-interest groups. Oddly, given the struggle over their content, textbooks appear bland with history and civics texts often being just plain boring and seem like compendiums of facts containing no political messages. In part, this appearance is caused by the wish of textbook publishers to avoid controversy. But embedded in the blandness are facts and ideas that are the product of a whole host of political debates and decisions.

Texas's textbook hearings are extremely important for publishers. This situation has changed in recent years as California is replacing textbooks with open source readers. This action is making Texas the major determiner of the content of textbooks. Texas represents 8 percent of the $2.2 billion national market in textbooks.

Texas' selection of textbooks is the most controversial. Writing for the *Washington Post* in 2014, Valerie Strauss stated, showing her bias against the Board's actions, "Back in 2010, we had an uproar over proposed changes to social studies standards by religious conservatives on the State Board of Education, which included a bid to calling the United States' hideous slave trade history as the 'Atlantic triangular trade.' There *were other doozies*, too, such as one proposal to remove Thomas Jefferson from the Enlightenment curriculum and replace him with John Calvin."

Exemplifying the problem of finding common political values, the Texas State School Board was sued in 2003 for rejecting the textbook *Environmental Science: Creating a Sustainable Future* (sixth edition) by David D. Chiras. The board rejected the book for "promoting radical policies" and being "anti-free enterprise, and anti-American." In its place, the board chose a science textbook partially financed by a group of mining companies according to the suit filed by Trial Lawyers for Public Justice, a Washington-based public-interest law firm. The suit claimed that the board's actions violated the free speech rights of Texas schoolchildren.

The suit reflects the continuing censorship issues surrounding the actions of the Texas State School Board. For instance, during the hot

summer of 2002, the board began public hearings to select textbooks in history and social studies for its 4 million students. Texas's textbook hearings are notorious for their strident demands by opposing interest groups to add and delete material from textbooks. At the opening of the hearings in 2002, there already seemed to be agreement among board members not to select for advanced placement classes Pearson Prentice Hall's history text *Out of Many: A History of the American People* despite its being a national best seller. The problem was two paragraphs dealing with prostitution in late-nineteenth-century cattle towns. "It makes it sound that every woman west of the Mississippi was a prostitute," said Grace Shore, the Republican chairwoman of the Texas State Board of Education. "The book says that there were 50,000 prostitutes west of the Mississippi. I doubt it, but even if there were, is that something that should be emphasized? Is that an important historical fact?"

During the hearings, *Out of Many: A History of the American People* was criticized not only for its section "Cowgirls and Prostitutes" but also for its mention of Margaret Sanger and the development of contraception, and the gay rights movement. Complaining about the book's content, Peggy Venable, director of the Texas chapter of Citizens for a Sound Economy, said, "I don't mean that we should sweep things under the rug. But the children should see the hope and the good things about America."

In 2010, Don McLeroy represented conservative Christians on the Texas Board of Education. He was first elected to the board in 1998 and appointed chair of the Texas Board of Education in 2007 by the then Governor Rick Perry. In 2010, Democrats in the Texas legislature objected to McLeroy as board chair. Democratic state Senator Eliot Shapleigh said McLeroy "has demonstrated he is not fit to lead the board of education. He has used his position to impose his extreme views on the 4.7 million schoolchildren in Texas. He has tried to revise the curriculum in a way that is inconsistent with scientific standards, and he has obstructed reading standards on a regular basis."When interviewed by reporter Mariah Blake, McLeroy asserted "Evolution is hooey" and "we are a Christian nation founded on Christian principles."

What does it mean to emphasize in textbooks that the United States is a Christian nation? A project of Peter Marshall and David Barton is to ensure that textbooks reflect this point of view. Marshall gained some notoriety by claiming that "California wildfires and Hurricane Katrina were God's punishment for tolerating gays." His web site Peter Marshall Ministries declares, "there is the urgent necessity of recovering the original American vision, and the truth about our Christian heritage. How can we restore America if we don't know who we are?" In 1977,

Marshall began publishing a series of history books emphasizing America's Christian heritage and distributing DVDs with teacher and student guides.

David Barton is former vice chair of the Texas Republican Party. In 2009, the reelection campaign for Governor Rick Perry proudly announced Barton's support. Barton declared, "Gov. Perry has been a leading voice across Texas and our nation in the effort to strengthen families, protect life, and stand up for the values that have made our nation prosperous." Barton is the founder and president of an organization called WallBuilders, which is described on its web site as "an organization dedicated to presenting America's forgotten history and heroes, with an emphasis on the moral, religious, and constitutional foundation on which America was built . . . which was so accurately stated by George Washington, we believe that 'the propitious [favorable] smiles of heaven can never be expected on a nation which disregards the eternal rules of order and right which heaven itself has ordained.' "

Both Barton and Marshall represent those who believe in an "American exceptionalism" that envisions a Christian God as not only guiding the founding of the nation, but also using it to spread Christianity around the globe. Marshall's web site describes his book series as "Reading like novels, these books tell the stories of God's providential hand in our history."

In March 2010, Don McLeroy was not reelected to the Texas Board, reducing the number of conservatives voting on curriculum and textbook matters. However, he did have ten more months of service after his failed reelection attempt. Working with other religious conservatives on the board, he vowed to impact the writing of social studies texts by issuing publication guidelines. These guidelines included requiring publishers:

- to include in texts a section on "the conservative resurgence of the 1980s and 1990s, including Phyllis Schlafly, the Contract with America, the Heritage Foundation, the Moral Majority and the National Rifle Association";
- to include material on "the effects of increasing government regulation and taxation on economic development and business planning";
- to not refer to American "imperialism," but to call it "expansionism";
- to add "country and western music" to the list of cultural movements to be studied;
- to remove references to Ralph Nader and Ross Perot;
- to list Stonewall Jackson, the Confederate general, as a role model for effective leadership;
- to highlight the Christian roots of the U.S. Constitution.

In 2014, the above concerns were answered by the Texas Freedom Network: Education in its report: "Writing to the Standards: Reviews of Proposed Social Studies Textbooks for Texas Public Schools." The report criticized the Texas State Board of Education citing a review from the "conservative" Thomas B. Fordham Institute that the Texas State Board of Education's guidelines for U.S. history provided a " 'politicized distortion of history' filled with 'misrepresentations at every turn'." The report stated that these charges were collaborated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Social Studies Faculty. Working with faculty and graduates at Southern Methodist University in reviewing the work of the Texas State Board of Education and history textbooks, the Texas Freedom Network issued these concerns:

- A number of government and world history textbooks exaggerate Judeo-Christian influence on the nation's founding and Western political tradition.
- Two government textbooks include misleading information that undermines the Constitutional concept of the separation of church and state.
- Several world history and world geography textbooks include biased statements that inappropriately portray Islam and Muslims negatively.
- All of the world geography textbooks inaccurately downplay the role that conquest played in the spread of Christianity.
- Elements of the Texas curriculum standards give undue legitimacy to neo-Confederate arguments about "states' rights" and the legacy of slavery in the South.

The Texas controversy highlights attempts to censor textbooks and ensure that the teaching of history reflects a particular political point of view.

COURTS AND POLITICAL VALUES

As noted in the previous section, teaching political values can generate conflict. Sometimes these issues have ended up in the courts. Court cases involve the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. As I discuss throughout this book, court decisions have a significant role in shaping school policies. The First Amendment states:

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion [Establishment Clause], or prohibiting the free exercise [Free Exercise Clause] thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech [Free Speech Clause], or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Our interest is the Free Speech Clause and its applicability to teaching political values.

One court case, *Board of Island Union Free School District v. Steven A. Pico* (1982), involved using a political agenda to remove books from the school library by the local board of education. Several board members attended a conference of a politically conservative organization concerned with school legislation in New York State. While they were at the conference, the board members received a list of books considered morally and politically inappropriate for high school students. Upon returning from the conference, the board members investigated the contents of their high school library and discovered nine books were on the list. Subsequently, the board ordered the removal of the books from the library shelves. The books included *Best Short Stories of Negro Writers* edited by Langston Hughes, *Down These Mean Streets* by Piri Thomas, *The Fixer* by Bernard Malamud, *Go Ask Alice* of anonymous authorship, *A Hero Ain't Nothin but a Sandwich* by Alice Childress, *Naked Ape* by Desmond Morris, *A Reader for Writers* by Jerome Archer, *Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr., and *Soul on Ice* by Eldridge Cleaver.

In its decision the U.S. Supreme Court gave full recognition to the power of school boards to select books for the school library and to the importance of avoiding judicial interference in the operation of local school systems. On the other hand, the Court recognized its obligation to ensure that public institutions do not suppress ideas. Here, there was a clear intention to suppress ideas by making decisions about book removal based on a list from a political organization.

The Supreme Court's method of handling the preceding dilemma was to recognize the right of the school board to determine the content of the library, if its decisions on content were not based on partisan or political motives. In the words of the Court, "If a Democratic school board, motivated by party affiliation, ordered the removal of all books written by or in favor of Republicans, few would doubt that the order violated the constitutional rights of the students denied access to those books." In another illustration, the Court argued, "The same conclusion would surely apply if an all-white school board, motivated by racial animus, decided to remove all books authored by blacks or advocating racial equality and integration." Or, as the Court more simply stated, "Our Constitution does not permit the official suppression of ideas."

On the other hand, the Court argued that books could be removed if the decision were based solely on their educational suitability. In summary, the Court stated:

> We hold that local school boards may not remove books from school library shelves simply because they dislike the ideas contained

in those books and seek by their removal to prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion.

What about upholding free speech rights of students? Certainly, free speech is an important political value in the United States. *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District* (1969) is the landmark case involving free speech rights for students. The *Tinker* case originated when a group of students decided to express their objections to the war in Vietnam by wearing black armbands. School authorities in Des Moines adopted a policy that any student wearing an armband would be suspended. When the case was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court, clear recognition was given to the constitutional rights of students. The Court stated that a student "may express his opinion, even on controversial subjects like the conflict in Vietnam. . . . Under our Constitution, free speech is not a right that is given only to be so circumscribed that it exists in principle but not in fact."

One extremely important condition is placed on the right of free speech of students and that is the possibility of disruption of the educational process. The Court does not provide any specific guidelines for interpreting this condition and limitation. What it means is that school authorities have an obligation to protect the constitutional rights of students and, at the same time, an obligation to ensure that there is no interference with the normal activities of the school.

In recent years, student rights were limited by claims of interference with the educational purposes and activities of schools. A federal appellate court ruled that a school administration can disqualify a student campaigning for student body president because of remarks about the vice principal and school administration. The appellate court reasoned that the administration's educational concerns allowed it to censor comments that might hurt the feelings of others. This form of censorship taught students to respect others.

In *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlemier* (1988), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that school administrators have the right to control the content of school-sponsored publications because they are part of the curriculum. The case involved a newspaper published by the journalism class at Missouri's Hazelwood High School. The newspaper contained articles about student pregnancies and students from divorced families. False names were used to protect the students interviewed for the articles. The school's principal objected to the articles because the interviewed students might be identifiable to other students, and he considered the sexual discussions inappropriate for high school students. The authors of the articles responded that both divorce and pregnancy were

appropriate topics for modern youth and that they were widely discussed among students.

The right of school administrators to censor student publications was expanded to include all school activities. School administrators have the right to refuse to produce student plays, to prohibit student publication of articles that are poorly written and vulgar, and to ban student expression that advocates drugs, alcohol, and permissive sex. In censorship cases of this type, the legal test is whether the school administration's actions are based on legitimate educational concerns.

School authorities are allowed to punish student speech that they consider to be lewd and indecent. In *Bethel v. Fraser* (1986), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that school administrators in the Bethel, Washington, school system could punish a high school senior, Matthew Fraser, for giving a nominating speech at a school assembly that used an "elaborate, graphic, and explicit sexual metaphor." The Court said that school officials have the right to determine what is vulgar and offensive in the classroom and at school activities and to prohibit vulgar and offensive speech. This decision did not apply to speech about political, religious, educational, and public policy issues; it was limited to the issue of indecent speech.

Even patriotic exercises are subject to court rulings. Some religious groups object to pledging allegiance to a flag because they believe it is worship of a graven image. In *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that expulsion from school of children of Jehovah's Witnesses for not saluting the flag was a violation of their constitutional right to freedom of religion. Some teachers view patriotic exercises as contrary to the principles of a free society.

In summary, contrary to Horace Mann's original hope, finding common and agreed upon political values to be taught in public schools has been difficult. As we shall see in the next section this problem has extended to finding common political values to include in state and national education standards.

THE FRUITS OF POLITICAL EDUCATION

Horace Mann considered voting the most important political act because it protected orderly change in contrast to revolution. It could be argued that the effect of citizenship education might be measured by the simple act of voting. Voting is the most fundamental act of political participation in a democracy. Has schooling increased political participation as reflected in voter turnout at elections?

It is difficult to separate the effect of schooling on voter turnout rates from other influences such as the political effects of schooling from the

influence of media, family, friends, community, and other social organizations and groups. These other influences make it almost impossible to establish a causal relationship between the influence of a public school education and voting or not voting. However, one could hypothesize that the expansion of public school might lead to greater voter turnout rates.

In examining this issue let's first look at the history of school attendance in the United States. Government records on school attendance are available since 1868 and are partially represented in Table 1.1. While the historical Table 1.1 only includes up to 2004–2005, the most recent figures provided by the Nation Center for Education Statistics in *The Condition of Education 2016* is: "In 2014, some 93 percent of 5- to 6-year-olds and 98 percent of 7- to 13-year-olds were enrolled in elementary or secondary school."

Table 1.1, adapted from the U.S. Government's *Digest of Educational Statistics*, provides statistics on the percentage of five- to seventeen-year-olds attending school and the average days of attendance. If public schools are actually educating students for political engagement, then one might assume that as the number of five- to seventeen-year-olds attending school increases and more time is spent in school, voter participation would also increase.

According to Table 1.1 there was significant growth in school attendance and days in school since 1869, when 64.7 percent of five- to seventeen-year-olds were in school for an average of 78.4 days. By 1999 the percentage of pupils in school jumped to 88.7 percent for five- to seventeen-year-olds and attendance increased to an average of 169.2 days.

Table 1.1 School Enrollment and Average Days of Attendance, 1868–2004

Years	*Enrollment as a Percentage of 5- to 17-Year-Olds*	*Average Number of Days Attended per Pupil*
1869–1870	64.7%	78.4
1899–1900	71.9	99.0
1919–1920	78.3	121.2
1939–1940	84.4	151.7
1959–1960	82.2	160.2
1979–1980	86.6	160.8
1999–2000	88.7	169.2
2004–2005	91.9	Not Available

Source: Adapted from National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics,* "Table 33: Historical Summary of Public Elementary and Secondary School Statistics for Selected Years 1868–70 through 2006–07." Retrieved on August 5, 2010 from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09_033.asp.

According to our hypothesis, increased school attendance and more days in school should result in larger voter turnout rates. But this doesn't seem to be the case according to voter turnout rates in Table 1.2.

While Table 1.2 only includes records up to 2004, the percentage of eligible voters voting in 2016 according to the United States Election Project was around 60 percent.

Table 1.2, derived from the American Presidency Project (www.americanpresidency.org) at the University of California–Santa Barbara, compiles statistics on voter participation beginning in 1824. Of course, measuring voter participation before the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which eliminated barriers to voting by minority groups in the United States and particularly African Americans, is difficult. In addition, women did not gain the right to vote until 1920 with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Keeping these issues in mind, it is possible to reach some tentative understanding of voter participation in national elections since 1824 as represented in Table 1.2. Surprisingly, only 26.9 percent of the voting age population participated in 1824. This figure jumped to 57.6 percent in 1828 with the largest percentage of voter participation in presidential elections occurring from 1840 (80.2 percent) to 1900 (73.2 percent). After 1900, voter participation plummeted to 49.2 percent in 1920 before rising to 62.77 percent in 1960. Again it must be noted that these figures do not necessarily represent citizens interested in voting since many citizens were discouraged or kept from voting by discriminatory state laws until the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Despite this Act, however, voter participation in presidential elections since 1965 fell from 60.84 percent in 1968 to 49.08 percent in 1996 before rising to 55.27 percent in 2004. This would indicate that a relatively high percentage of eligible voters during this period (from 50.92 percent to 44.73 percent) did not exercise their political right to vote for the president of the United States. Why? Did schools fail in their goal of political education? Or could it be that school attendance does *not* affect voter participation rates?

When combining some of the data in Tables 1.1 and 1.2, there appears to be little effect on voter participation rates from increased schooling. In fact, voter participation rates declined from 1900 as school attendance and days in school increased. Since 1900 voter participation rates declined from 73.2 percent to a low point of 49.08 percent in 1996 while school attendance for five- to seventeen-year-olds increased from 71.9 percent in 1900 to 88.7 percent in 1999. During the same period the average number of days attended per pupil increased from 99 to 169.2.

In other words, voter participation rates actually declined as more people attended school for longer periods of time! A causal relationship cannot be established; there is no proof that attending school results in

Table 1.2 Voter Turnout in Presidential Elections: Select Years 1824–2004

Year	*Total Voting Age Population*	*Turnout*	*Percentage Voting of Voting Age Population*
1824			26.9%
1828			57.6
1832			55.4
1840			80.2
1852			69.6
1860			81.2
1872			71.3
1880			79.4
1892			74.7
1900			73.2
1912			58.8
1920			49.2
1932			56.9
1940			62.5
1952			63.3
1960	109,672,000	68,838,204	62.77
1964	114,090,000	70,644,592	61.92
1968	120,328,186	73,211,875	60.84
1972	140,776,000	77,718,554	55.21
1976	152,309,190	81,555,789	53.55
1980	164,597,000	86,515,221	52.56
1984	174,468,000	92,652,680	53.11
1988	182,630,000	91,594,693	50.15
1992	189,044,500	104,405,155	55.23
1996	196,511,000	96,456,345	49.08
2000	205,815,000	105,586,274	51.30
2004	221,256,931	122,295,345	55.27

Source: Adapted from the American Presidency Project. Retrieved on August 5, 2010 from www.presidency.ucsb.edu/data/turnout.php.

less political engagement through voting. However, there appears to be little effect from school attendance or time in school on increased citizen participation in voting.

What about the civic knowledge of public school students? In 1999 the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) assessed the civic knowledge of ninth-grade students in twenty-nine countries. American students ranked sixth compared to students in the other nations. Table 1.3 provides the international rankings.

This study demonstrates that American students do quite well when tested for civic knowledge. But does this create a disposition to actively engage in political activities? While ninth-grade American students affirmed the importance of voting, the study questioned this as an indicator of future voting. The study's report states, "Overall, most students thought that voting in every election and showing respect for government leaders were the two most important factors in being good citizens. . . . *These results seem at odds with the fact that a relatively low percentage of adults typically do vote in elections in the United States* [author's emphasis]."

The study also found that the majority of American students defined good citizenship as "respect for authority and obedience to the law." This is a passive concept of citizenship in contrast to an active concept of citizenship. Active citizenship involves participation in political movements and organizations and community activities.

What are the fruits of the political goals for American schools? There seems to be little relationship between school attendance and voter turnout. While American students compare well to other nations in civic knowledge their concept of good citizenship is primarily passive—respect and obedience. Does this mean that American public schools are educating a large number of citizens who will not vote and who do not believe that good citizenship involves active participation in civic and political life? Is the major accomplishment of the political goals of American schools an inactive citizen who demonstrates little civic responsibility but who is obedient to authority and the law? Is this the meaning of a democratic education?

CONCLUSION

Political education in American schools is plagued by controversies over its content. Also, a large percentage of school graduates do not vote despite this being a central creed of civic education. Many students seem to leave school with a concept of citizenship focused on obedience to the law and authority in contrast to community activism. In considering these issues, the reader might ask the following questions:

Table 1.3 Average Total Civic Knowledge Achievement of Ninth-Grade Students by Nation, 1999

Nation	*Average Score*
Poland	111
Finland	109
Cyprus	108
Greece	108
Hong Kong (SAR)	107
United States	106
Italy	105
Slovak Republic	105
Norway	103
Czech Republic	103
Hungary	102
Australia	102
Slovenia	101
International average	100
Denmark	100
Germany	100
Russian Federation	100
England	99
Sweden	99
Switzerland	98
Bulgaria	98
Portugal	96
Belgium (French)	95
Estonia	94
Lithuania	94
Romania	92
Latvia	92
Chile	88
Colombia	86

Source: Stephane Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results from the International IEA Civic Education Study* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education, April 2001), p. 14.

- Should there be a consensus of political values in the United States and should public schools develop that consensus?
- Should the public schools develop emotional or patriotic attachments to symbols of the state through the use of songs, literature, and history?
- Should the purpose of teaching history be the development of patriotic feelings?
- Does the teaching of patriotism in schools throughout the world increase the potential for international conflict?
- Who or what government agency should determine the political values taught in public schools?

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