

HIST 302/AMST 301: Democracy and Education in America
Fall Semester 2017
Tuesdays & Thursdays: 10:30-11:45 a.m.
Krannert G016

Professor Susan Curtis
Office: University Hall, 329
Telephone: 494-4159
Email: curtis@purdue.edu
Office Hours: W 2:00-4:00 p.m. and by appointment

Required Books

Wayne E. Fuller, *One-Room Schools of the Middle West: An Illustrated History*

Paul Theobald, *Call School: Rural Education in the Middle West to 1918*

John Bower, *The Common Good: An Indiana Heritage Built with Taxes, Tithes, and Tuition*

Optional Book

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for the Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*

Additional readings can be found on Blackboard

Learning Objectives

1. Develop research, analytical, and writing skills and understanding of historical methods.
2. Develop skills used by historians to make sense of a historical question: What is the relationship between Democracy and Education?
3. Gain experience using original materials to understand the past.
4. Gain experience connecting your education to the needs of the greater community.

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Part I: Education, Democracy, and America's One-Room Schools

This course is a response to a successful community effort to preserve and rehabilitate a one-room schoolhouse at the intersection of Hwy. 231 and Cumberland in West Lafayette. In Part I of this course, students begin to consider what we are remembering when we preserve a school like this one. What do one-room schools represent? What is their relationship to a democratic society and political system? And what might they offer to current debates about public education in the U.S. Through assigned readings, guest speakers, a visit to the schoolhouse, and research, students become familiar with the daily experience of education in a one-room school.

Week 1 (August 22-24)

Tuesday

Introduction to the course objectives, key issues, and assignments.

Thursday

Civic Life in Indiana: The Built Environment and What It Tells us about the State

Read for Today's Class: John Bower, *Common Ground*

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Week 2 (August 29-31)

Tuesday

Legislating Education in Indiana: The Northwest Territory and Beyond

Read for Today's class: <https://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/democrac/5.htm>

Find the Northwest Ordinance at the URL above. As you read, make note of the following:

- 1) criteria for territories to become states
- 2) responsibilities of the new state governments
- 3) criteria for voting
- 4) significance of the ordinance for the relationship between original states and later states

Thursday

One-Room Schools in Tippecanoe County in the Late Nineteenth Century

Guest Presenter: Sue Eiler

Sue Eiler was the driving force behind the community effort to save Morris School. She will present to the class information she discovered through research on the one-room schools in Tippecanoe County.

Assignment:

Prepare two questions for Sue Eiler. You may ask any question after her presentation; submit the prepared questions at the end of class. (10 points)

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Week 3 (September 5-7)

Tuesday

Republican Government and the Liberal Ideal

Read for Today's class: Horace Mann, "Education and National Welfare"; Wayne E. Fuller, *The Old Country School: The Story of Rural Education in the Middle West*, Chapter 2: "Free Schools for Farm Children"

Assignment: The final paper for this course is a research project on some aspect of the history of Morris School or of public schooling/one-room schools in Tippecanoe County. This assignment has two objectives. The first objective is to engage with the methods and practice of historical research—learning how to find and use primary sources, gaining experience connecting local experience to larger state/national trends, and responsibly citing the sources on which you have relied for your research. The second objective is to use your skills to address issues that matter to the wider community in which you now live. The effort to save Morris School demands some thoughtful attention to what the school meant in its day and continues to mean in the 21st century. The final paper is not due until the first day of Finals Week, but research in local sources can be time-consuming; don't wait until the last minute to work on this project. Indeed, you might keep notes as we proceed in the course that will help you identify a subject of interest to you. Your paper will be 5-7 pages, typewritten and double-spaced. It must cite all of the original and secondary materials you used, and it must be analytical in nature. (100 points) **Due: December 11.**

Thursday

Community History: When we save a building, what do we want to know?

Guest Presenter: Beverly Shaw is the Director of Quality of Life in the City of West Lafayette and the organizer of an organization called “CHiPS,” which stands for Community Historic Projects Support. She will talk to the class about the kinds of history community members want to know about historic sites like the Morris School.

Read for Today’s class: Paul Theobald, “Is There a Future in the Past? Reflections on the History of Iowa’s One-Room Schools”

Assignment:

Prepare two questions for Beverly Shaw. You may ask anything at the end of her presentation but submit your questions after class. (10 points)

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Week 4 (September 12-14)

Tuesday

Attending a One-Room School in Indiana

Guest Speakers: Joan Nord Sandbloom and Robert Sandbloom

Joan Nord Sandbloom grew up near Fort Wayne and attended a one-room school in that area; Robert Sandbloom attended a one-room school in White County (immediately north of Tippecanoe County). Their experiences occurred well after the time period of the Morris-Cason School, but you can find out from their presentation how their experience was similar to the earlier period as well as different from it.

Read for Today’s class: Excerpts from Memoirs by the Sandblooms and Fuller, *One-Room Schools in the Midwest*, Chapter 10, “The Depression Years”

Use Fuller’s chapter to help formulate questions for the Sandblooms.

Assignment:

Prepare two questions for the Sandblooms. Everyone should expect to ask one question (time permitting). You will submit your questions to Professor Curtis at the end of class (10 points)

Thursday

Visit the Morris-Cason School

Today we will spend the class period at the Morris-Cason Schoolhouse so students can get a better sense of what it would have been like to go to school in such a building. While you are there, think about possible research projects related to this school. What would you most like to know? Does your academic major lead you to want to investigate a particular aspect of the school? Take note of the things you expected to see and to aspects of the building that surprised you.

Assignment: One of the projects for this course is to write a sketch of some person related to public schooling in Tippecanoe County. Professor Curtis will have a list of people who can be researched. The goal will be to find out as much as possible about the facts of this person’s life and to suggest how his/her experience was shaped by public schooling in general or the Morris-Cason School in particular. The sketches are not due until later in the semester—**November 14.** (50 points)

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Week 5 (September 19-21)

Tuesday

Public Schools in small-town and rural America

Read for Today's Class: Wayne Fuller, *One-Room Schools of the Middle West*, Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-17)

As you read this part of Fuller's book, take note of the following:

- 1) What is Fuller's view of one-room schools as agents of Democracy?
- 2) What are some of the common elements one would have found in these schools?
- 3) In what ways did the schools Fuller studied differ from your experience of grades 1-8?
- 4) According to Fuller, what did most Americans believe constituted a good basic education?

Assignment:

Imagine that you have been brought in as a consultant to a community group trying to preserve a one-room schools. You have been asked to prepare a concise report to the group that explains what one should expect to find in a school built and used between 1879 and 1916. Your report should be based on your reading of the first three chapters of Fuller's book, guest speakers' comments, and class discussion. The report should be 3 to 5 pages in length. It will be **due in class on Tuesday, September 26.** (50 points)

Thursday

Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

Today's class will be devoted to introducing students to research on local history and to brainstorming research projects. Students should bring to class ideas about subjects they would like to investigate. Professor Curtis will introduce students to resources available to do research on education between 1879 and 1916; responsible research and best citation practices; and possible research projects.

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Week 6 (September 26-28)

Tuesday

On Becoming a Teacher

Read for Today's Class: Donna M. Stephens, *One-Room School: Teaching in 1930s Western Oklahoma*, Chapter 1, "Helen Becomes a Teacher" and Fuller, *One-Room Schools of the Middle West*, Chapter 7, "Teacher! Teacher!"

As you read the memoir, take note of the following:

- 1) What were prospective teachers expected to know before being certified to teach?
- 2) Who exercised control over the process of teacher education?
- 3) How would you compare Helen's road to teaching to that followed by students in the College of Education today? (You may want to visit the CoE website to see what courses are required for majors.)

As you read Fuller's chapter take note of the following:

- 1) Why did women dominate rural school-teaching in the late nineteenth century?
- 2) What were the responsibilities of teachers in one-room schools?
- 3) How did most teachers in the Midwest get prepared to teach?

Thursday

Modernizing Rural America: Professionalizing Teaching, Standardizing the Curriculum

Read: Theobald, *Call School*, Chapter 5; and Fuller, *One-Room Schools in the Midwest*, Chapters 8 and 9, “Poor, Poor Country Schools,” and “Rural Renaissance.”

As you read, take note of the following:

- 1) At which points do Theobald and Fuller agree on the process of consolidating rural schools, and at which points do they disagree?
- 2) How did social, economic, and technological changes in rural America affect education, in general, and one-room schools, in particular?
- 3) What was gained/lost by the decision to close one-room schools?

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PART II: A Critical Appraisal of Education and Democracy in America

Many Americans hold the symbol of the one-room schoolhouse dear to their hearts—they either remember attending one or they are moved by what they believe it represents. As scholars, however, students in this course will be seeking to understand more of the nuances in public education. Histories of the one-room schools, as we have already seen, offer nostalgic views of the heroic efforts of property owners, teachers, and children to provide/take advantage of public education in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. But did all children, regardless of race and ethnicity, enjoy access to public schools? Were girls and boys treated equally in terms of public education? Who decided what students would learn? What DID they learn? In what ways did public schooling prepare students for the challenges they faced, and in what ways did they create blind spots in terms of who should be considered an “equal” and a “citizen”? In this part of the course, students engage a body of literature that shines a critical light on these questions.

Week 7 (October 3-5)

Tuesday

Education in a Transforming Nation: The United States between 1879 and 1916

Read for today’s class: Paul Theobald, *Call School*, Chapters 1-2, (pp. 1-64)

As you read, take note of the following:

- 1) What is Theobald’s main argument?
- 2) What factors does he believe compromised the democratic basis of public schooling?
- 3) Did all members of the community share in making school policy?
- 4) If not, who did, and who did not get to participate in school governance?

Thursday

1892: The Pledge of Allegiance and “Americanization” of Immigrants

Read for Today’s class: Theobald, *Call School*, Chapter 3 (pp. 65-101)

As you read, take note of the following:

- 1) Who does Theobald identify as the “Community Gatekeepers”?
- 2) How did many of these gatekeepers regard immigrants?
- 3) What did school board members regard as “American” values?

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Week 8 (October 10-12)

Tuesday

NO CLASS – OCTOBER BREAK

Thursday

Essential Knowledge: Readers, Primers, and Textbooks

For Today's class read: Theobald, *Call School*, Chapter 4, (pp. 102-152)

As you read, take note of the following:

- 1) Theobald lumps playground activity, discipline, and recitation into the same chapter—how does he explain their relationship to one another?
- 2) According to Theobald, were textbooks limited to the essentials of “reading, writing, and arithmetic”?

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Week 9 (October 17-19)

Tuesday

Curriculum as Culture I

Read for today's class: Ruth Miller Elson, *Guardians of Tradition*, Chapter 4, “Races of Man”

As you read, take note of the following:

- 1) Pay attention to her footnotes to see the titles of the textbooks she studied.
- 2) How did the presentation of racial difference inform the treatment of the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction?
- 3) Does Elson show how discussions of race changed from the antebellum to postbellum era?

Thursday

Curriculum as Culture II

Guest Presenter: Virginia Smith

In today's class, we will be spending time with some textbooks from the period during which the Morris-Cason school was in operation. The textbooks include Readers, Math texts, literature, and geography. This will be a hands-on day, looking through books and interrogating their contents. By the halfway point of class, you will have identified one textbooks that you would like to analyze in light of the scholarship you have read and lecture material you have encountered in class. You should come to class prepared to take notes (either by hand or electronically), and we will keep the classroom computer open and available to students who want to do a search on authors anthologized in literature texts, on authors of textbooks, or on subjects discussed.

Read before today's class: Elliott Gorn, *The McGuffey Readers*, “The McGuffeys' Lessons”

Assignment: Using Elson and Gorn as examples of this kind of work and drawing upon Fuller and Theobald where appropriate, you will prepare an essay to discuss turn-of-the-century textbooks as cultural artifacts. What do the contents of your textbook tell us about the culture in which they were used? Do they reflect religious assumptions, economic beliefs, and social ideals? Do they assume a certain way of teaching/learning that says something about the way adults related to children in this period? What were some of the important national and world events in the decade preceding the publication of your book, and would your textbook have offered any insight into how Americans experienced those events? Identify the author of the textbook and find out something about her/him—do his/her personal history perhaps shape the kind of text s/he produced? Your paper should be 4-7 pages in length, typewritten and double-

spaced. Be sure to include specific examples from the textbook to support your analysis, and cite properly according to the Chicago Manual of Style (or Kate Turabian). The paper is due in class on Thursday, October 26. (100 points)

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Week 10 (October 24-26)

Tuesday

Class period devoted to working on your papers. Professor Curtis will be available for consultation in UNIV 329.

Thursday

Taking stock and Looking to the final part of the course. The main focus of part III of the course is on original research related to the Morris-Cason School or public education in Tippecanoe County between 1879 and 1916. Professor Curtis will provide some resources for doing this research.

Assignment: Go to the *Indiana School Journal* any issue from 1875 to 1900 that you can find on-line. Identify an article that you find interesting and revealing of what education in public schools meant in the late nineteenth-century, and be prepared to share the article and what you found interesting about it in the next class period. Also, be ready to discuss how you see it related to the themes under consideration so far in this course. (20 points)

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PART III: Education and Democracy in Tippecanoe County, Indiana

In this part of the course, students delve into research on the Morris-Cason school and/or local educational issues. The class will look at original materials related to schools in Tippecanoe County, and the main assignment is to conduct original research a subject that will shed light on the educational experience of a one-room school. At this point, students should have a firm grasp on the complicated relationship between democracy and education in the United States, and will be able to contextualize their research in the debates surrounding that relationship.

Week 11 (October 31-November 2)

Tuesday

The Indiana School Journal: The State of Public Schooling in the Morris-Cason School era
Students present their articles and discuss relevant issues.

Thursday

The Public School: A Local Source of Information for Educational Issues

If necessary, we will finish the student presentations on the *Indiana School Journal*. We also will begin an examination of *The Public School*, a publication from Lafayette edited by William Caulkins, Superintendent of Schools in Tippecanoe County. Students will identify research questions that arise as they examine this publication—its articles, its format, its advertising, and its editor.

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Week 12 (November 7-9)

Tuesday

Updates on final papers. What are your sources? What have you discovered? What do you think your findings tell us about public schooling in Tippecanoe County between 1879 and 1916?

Thursday

Research day. Professor Curtis is available in UNIV 329 for consultation.

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Week 13 (November 14-16)

Tuesday

Biographical Sketches

Thursday

Biographical Sketches

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Week 14 (November 28-30)

Tuesday

Workshop final papers. Students bring a draft of their final paper to class. Students work in pairs, reading, asking questions, suggesting revisions.

Thursday

Research day. Professor Curtis is available in UNIV 329 for consultation.

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Week 15 (December 5-7)

Tuesday

Last update on final papers.

Thursday

Discussion: What are we remembering when we remember one-room schools? Do you see anything in the one-room school experience that might address public schooling in the 21st century? What have you concluded regarding the relationship between democracy and education in America?

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FINAL PAPER DUE ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, BY 5:00 P.M. DELIVER TO PROFESSOR CURTIS, UNIV 329.

Assignments and Grading

Your grade in this class depends upon your performance on the 8 assignments outlined in the Assignment section plus the quality of your participation in class discussions and activities. A total of 50 point is assigned to participation; there are 400 possible points for the assignments and participation in this course. It should be easy to earn 30 points by simply writing good

questions for our guest speakers and being present on the day they present. Grades will be determined by the scale that follows:

Grading

A+	98-100%	C	73-77
A	93-97	C-	70-72
A-	90-92	D+	68-69
B+	88-89	D	63-67
B	83-87	D-	60-62
B-	80-82	F	0-59
C+	78-79		

Attendance Policy

This course involves a good deal of discussion and hands-on learning, and they both demand your attendance. Toward the end of the semester, I have built in several days in which you will be free to use class-time for research. Recognizing that “things happen” when you are a university student, I allow two absences, no questions asked. After that, points will be deducted from your participation grade. If you do not attend on days where we have guest speakers or a field trip planned, however, you will not be able to earn full credit for assignments turned in late—the highest grade permitted will be 70%.

Academic Dishonesty

Assignments in this consist of questions, essays, and presentations. Your work on all assignments must be your own. Cheating, copying other students’ work, or bringing in essays written by others into the classroom will result in failure. If you use someone else’s words without indicating the source and without enclosing in quotation marks, the result will be failure. IF YOU ARE UNSURE WHAT CONSTITUTES ACADEMIC DISHONESTY, PLEASE SEE PROFESSOR CURTIS.

Pandemic Policy

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor’s control. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course.

See the Blackboard page for this course.

Contact Professor Curtis via email: curtis@purdue.edu

Contact Professor Curtis via telephone: Office: 494-4159

Course and Instructor Evaluation

During the last two weeks of the semester, you will be provided an opportunity to evaluate this course and your instructor. To this end, Purdue has transitioned to online course evaluations. On Monday of the fifteenth week of classes, you will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site. You will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. Your participation in this evaluation is an integral part of this course. Your feedback is vital to improving education at Purdue University. I strongly urge you to participate in the evaluation system.