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ABSTRACT

Through philanthropic donations, John D. Rockefeller and the General Education Board (GEB) encouraged vocationalism in education during the years 1880-1925, the Progressive Era. Evidently, Rockefeller believed that the best education for poor youth was vocational, presumably so they would be able to maintain occupations in their adult lives. This precedent set by Rockefeller was continued by the GEB after its founding in 1903. The GEB was known for its expenditures that rescued schools from desperate circumstances. Yet the programs they recommended time and again advocated vocational offerings for students who would not attend college. The problem with this approach was not with opening doors to poor children, as the philanthropists viewed their donations, but with closing doors to any other area a student might choose to pursue. They believed a student's destiny was known and there the future lay. Actual program changes under GEB auspices showed that vocational education was both the goal and a result of their involvement. For example, to stimulate agriculture in the South, GEB insisted that young people's education should consist primarily of agriculture and domestic science. GEB members were greatly concerned with the good of society, which would benefit from trained farmers and workers to serve it. (The three sections of this paper contain a total of 64 reference notes.) (YLB)

ROCKEFELLER AND GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD INFLUENCES ON VOCATIONALISM IN EDUCATION, 1880-1925

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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the roles of John D. Rockefeller and his established Board. the General Education Board (GEB), in encouraging vocationalism in education during the years, 1880 to 1925. Vocationalism, in this study, refers to what generally was regarded as the basic purpose for education. It does not refer to offering supplemental manual courses, but it refers to the substitution of education for itsown sake for education for future role in the job market. This major change in definition occurred during the Progressive Era when many of society's institutions were being questioned and redefined.[1]

This change in what schools were expected to do was brought about by many factors. The changing student populace was a major factor, as more and more children filled and over-filled classrooms and as more and more of the children came from poor families. many of them immigrants. Therefore, some changes occurred as a result of the humanitarian impulse, as people and organizations sought to make education understandable and meaningful. However, not all of the people advocating changes had the interests of the children in their hearts. It will be seen that some business people systematically and deliberately acted to stimulate vocationalism in schools. particularly for children who were rural or poor. This study focuses on the role of Rockefeller and the General Education Board in influencing the reworking of course offerings for youths who appeared to be destined for manufacturing or agriculture.

Part One

Personal Influences: Contributions of John D. Rockefeller to Vocationalism in Education

The John D. Rockefeller family gained a reputation for educational contributions, beginning with the elder Rockefeller. John D. In 1903 he established the General Education Board to handle his educational philanthropy. At the same time, he maintained control over the GEB and its use of his money. Rockefeller established a precedent for giving in the years before its foundation. One precedent he set was to endow programs that encouraged vocational training, especially for poor youth. This precedent was then continued by the General Education Board.

As the story unfolds it is evident that Rockefeller believed that the best education for poor youth was vocational, presumably so that they would be able to maintain occupational positions in their adult lives. The difficulty with philanthropy directed toward vocational programs is that although, in the eyes of the benefactors, the young people were being given a chance, that chance was severely limited to whatever training program the students took.

This period, 1880 to 1925, represents the Progressive Era, an era of great changes in the social and political arenas. One extraordinary change took place in the redefinition of school from an institution for those who did not have to work to an institution for all children. As laws began enforcing this expectation, the backgrounds of the students who attended schools began changing. More and more students from immigrant families flocked to school, seeking a better life than their

parents had had. More and more of these students were oppressively poor. The first part of this study will examine examples of donations to vocational schools and programs by John D. Rockefeller in the early years, continuing into the years of the GEB. Before the mass move of children into schools, many children did not attend school at all, forced to seek a living at an early age. It was to these types of young people that many of Rockefeller's donations were aimed. One of the better of these endeavors was the New York School of Applied Design. This elementary school trained girls as architects. interior decorators, jewelers, illustrators. and wallpaper and cloth designers. This school was noted for being a pioneer in vocational training for women. Rockefeller was not the only industrialist backing this school; also enclosed in a correspondence was a clipping th noted a similar gift of money from J.P. Morgan.[4]

Another educational concern to which Rockefeller contributed was the Public Education Association (PEA). PEA programs were not solely vocational; yet they, like many other programs of their time period, distinguished between poor and rich children and the education they should receive. Rockefeller gave sums annually to this group from 1913 to 1930. Sums ranged from $500 to $5000. These donations appear to have begun with a request in 1913 to underwrite the publishing of the Hanus Report, a report on New York City public schools. one of whose recommendations included expanding vocational training. Later letters offer clues to some of PEA's concerns. In 1924 Howard W. Nudd, director of PEA from 1914 to 1940, wrote that for five years they had been "grading" children according to intelligence and physical ability

and adapting courses of study to them. In 1927 he boasted further of a program at Public School 61 in Manhattan which adapted schooling to the abilities of the children they served. In this school children were grouped according to "mental measurements."[3]

Previous to the Hanus Report, the PEA, like many of its progressive counterparts, began to view education as a panacea for most of society's ills. Early in the twentieth century they advocated many educational reforms, such as vocational education and vocational guidance. This they based on a belief in the intrinsic abilities and inabilities of the individual, expecially those of the immigrant. They pursued vocational education even into the lowest grades.[4]

The PEA president from 1909-1925, Charles P. Howland, had connections with the Rockefeller famely and served as a trustee of the General Education Board (GEB). Also Abraham Flexner of the GEB was a leader in PEA, as were Leonard P. Ayres of the Russell Sage Foundation, Clyde Furst of the Carnegie Foundation, and George D. Strayer and Nicholas Murray Butler of Teachers College.[5]

Another connection that involved Rockefeller with vocational education was Pratt's Institute in Brooklyn, New York. Rockefeller himself established it as a technical institute for poor children. A letter from T.D. Kellogg states, "I learn of your establishment of Pratt's Institute, and the intelligent ideas you are seeking to work out in providing practical educational training for the poor."[6] Rockefeller also donated small amounts to the Wilson Industrial School and the Educational and Industrial Union. A donation to the latter was offered upon condition that they raise an agreed-upon sum from other sources.

This school was run by Emily Huntington. It began in 1874. Huntington was responsible also for founding "Kitchen Garden" classes, later to become the Kitchen Garden Association which featured domestic industrial education for poor and working girls.[7] Rockefeller also served as a stockholder of Cleveland Manual Training School for several years. On January 4, 1892 E.P. Williams wrote to Rockefeller asking for his signature deeding the school to the city of Cleveland. Rockefeller signed the document but dated it December 28, 1891. However, Cleveland refused to accept the school.[8]

Apparently, Rockefeller also served as a trustee of the First Ward Industrial School in New York. This school operated both a day and night program and served those who were "too poor or too disregarded to attend public schools." The first correspondence, in 1885, notes that he had been elected unanimously as a trustee and requests permission to use his name on their literature. Athough no answer is filed, one can infer his acceptance because another correspondence of 1894 announces his election as director of the school. Again no answer evidences his acceptance.[9]

Another school to which Rockefeller donated was the Manhattan Trade School for Girls. This school trained poor girls who were forced to work at ages 14 or 15. These girls, boasted V. Everett Macy, lacked earning capacity when they came. Then the school obtained positions for them in factories and trained them in trades. They learned such subjects as trade math, trade English, and knowledge of materials, design, and color. Additionally, they learned physical training and hygiene, art, millinery, pasting, dress making, and machine operating.

Rockefeller promised $25,000 on condition that they raise $200,000. This promise lapsed, presumably because they failed to raise the designated sum. He pledged again in 1908 and 1910. The 1908 pledge was fulfilled. This school was also funded in its early years by two officials of the Public Education Association.[10]

Rockefeller also contributed annually to the Industrial Education Association. Its founder, Grace Hoadley Dodge, daughter of a wealthy industrialist, began a long, charitable career in 1874 by teaching Sunday School classes (which she organized into a sewing and health club), sewing classes, and classes with the Industrial School of the Children's Aid Society (CAS). The latter was provided for children who were too poor to attend public schools. They were immigrant children. and CAS supplied food and clothing for them. These classes emphasized sewing, cooking, and handwork.[11]

In 1876 Dodge was invited to participate in teaching "Kitchen Garden" classes, a take-off on the concept of "kindergarten." These classes were offered to young girls, and in them, they were taught work through play. They learned about such topics as cleanliness, mending, cooking, baking, scrubbing, and ettiquette. The ladies organized these classes into the Kitchen Garden Association in 1880. Their purpose was to promote domestic industrial arts among the laboring classes and to promote uniform teaching methods. These classes spread throughout the world.[12]

In 1881 Dodge began meeting with girls who worked at a silk factory. These meetings were organized into a society in 1884. Others were founded later. This society offered classes for working girls in

practical skills such as dress making and machine operation. Dodge also facilitated "talks" on topics of interest, including wages and health.[13]

In 1884 Dodge and others dissolved the Kitchen Garden Association and founded the Industrial Education Association (IEA). Its broader principles included, "To study, devise, and introduce methods and systems of domestic and industrial training into schools" and "To form special classes for technical training." The members were anxious to develop "hand power" as well as "brain power." The organization offered classes in sewing, cooking, and manual training while Dodge actively promoted the cause. They were very successful, and people began clamoring for industrial education. Dodge was appointed as a commissioner of education for New York City in 1886.[14]

With a donation IEA hired Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia College as their president. The IEA's work grew in the area of preparing teachers for industrial education. They developed into the New York College for the Training of Teachers which was given a permanent charter as Teachers College in 1892. Dodge served as treasurer. She actively pursued funds, making friends with many young philanthropists, such as V. Everitt Macy and some of whom attended school with John D. Rockefeller, Jr.[15]

Apparently, Dodge was also an acquaintance of the Rockefellers: she wrote to both Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller and met with them personally at times. Dodge was a fervent advocate of her organizations, as is clear in her correspondence. She effusively thanked them for their gifts, using such phrases as it was "a pleasure to know that your sympathies were with us. . ."; you are "kind and interested in our efforts"; the

exhibition has been a success in making our association known. Some of the objects she listed were eliminating overcrowded classes, beginning vacation schools, and expanding the organization into other cities. Her statement of purpose for the IEA was to promote manual and industrial training, to disseminate information, to secure its introduction into schools, and to train teachers and organize classes in "special branches," for example domestic training in schools and orphan asylums.[16]

Some of her plans she listed for 1888 included teacher training and improved salaries for teachers in cooking, sewing, industrial drawing and modeling, mechanical drawing, and wood working. "The demand is great," she states. She continued to ask and receive yearly donations from Rockefeller. In 1889 she reported that she had only received $65,000 in pledges. J. Pierrepont Morgan and H. McK Twombly had each pledged $10,000, she stated.[17]

These are a few examples of donations that John D. Rockefeller made. indicating a continuing interest in providing vocational and even industrial training for children who were to go on to manual and factory jobs following or during their schooling. That there was rampant poverty among families of working children is known. That many of these children were from immigrant families and lacked the basic skills to make a living is also known. Therefore it is understandable that many philanthropists sought to help such young people acquire vocational skills. What remains remarkable is that they were not taught a liberal education or expected to go beyond manual occupations. Obviously, the accepted belief was that the poor and immigrant children

were inferior and that a technical training was sufficient. These examples provideinsight into some of the philanthropic activities that occurred in education. They richly illustrate that John D. Rockefeller and other philanthropists influenced the expansion of vocational education in the Progressive Era.

This precedent set by Rockefeller was continued by the General Education Board after its foundation in 1903. The second part of this study will examine some examples of GEB philanthropy directed at spreading vocational education. The GEB is known for its expenditures that rescued schools from desperate circumstances. Yet the programs that they recommended time and again advocated vocational offerings for students who would not attend college. Again, the problem is not with opening doors to poor children, as the philanthropists viewed their donations, but with closing doors to any other area a student might choose to pursue; it is with the belief that a student's lot was known and that there the future lay. The GEB continued their influences beyond their first 20 years, but much of the foundation for vocational education, for training to specific ends, was laid within this very short period of time.

NOTES

1. Louise E. Fleming, "Liberal Arts to Vocationalism: Changes in the Function of Secondary Education 1880-1920, and Certain Issues Surrounding Those Changes" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Akron, 1990), 3-5.

2. Starr J. Murphy, to Mrs. Hopkins, 5 February 1906; ? to John D. Rockefeller, 2 March 1916; Elihu Root, to J.D.R., clipping enclosed: "Morgan Gift to Art School," 8 March 1916; W.S. Richardson for J.D.R., to Frank Tilford, 6 May 1916. Rockefeller Family Archives. RG 2. Educational Interests series. Box 32. Folder 175. Rockefeller Archive Center.

3. ? to John D. Rockefeller, 3 July 1913; J.D.R., to W.K. Brice, 13 May 1914: J.D.R., to W.K. Brice, 31 May 1916; J.D.R., to W.K. Brice, 8 March 1917; Howard W. Nudd, to J.D.R., 9 November 1917; Howard W. Nudd, to J.D.R., 4 December 1917; J.D.R., to Abraham Flexner, 23 April 1919; N.W. Davis, to J.D.R., 21 May 1919; J.D.R., to W.K. Brice, 28 June 1920; J.D.R., to Nudd, 30 March 1921; J.D.R., to Nudd, 16 February 1922; J.D.R., to Nudd, 14 March 1923; Howard W. Nudd, to W.S. Richardson, 15 March 1924; W.S. Richardson, to Nudd, 31 March 1924; W.S. Richardson, to Nudd, 26 March 1925; W.S. Richardson, to Nudd, 29 April 1926: Howard W. Nudd, to W.S. Richardson, 19 April 1927; Richardson. to Nudd 12 May 1927; Richardson, to Nudd, 19 May 1928; Richardson, to Nudd, 1 May 1929; John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to Nudd, 15 May 1930. Rockefeller Family Archives. RG 2. Educational Interests series. Box 3. Folder 93. Rockefeller Archive Center. Sol Cohen, Progessives and Urban School Reform: The Public Education Association of New York City, 1895-1954 (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College. 1964), 83, 126.

4. Cohen, 8, 67, 72-74.

5. Cohen, 81-84.

6. T.D. Kellogg, to John D. Rockefeller, 8 March 1887. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 23. Folder 176. Rockefeller Archive Center.

7. M.A. Stone, to John D. Rockefeller, 26 April 1887: M.A. Stone, to J.D.R., 16 December 1890. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 45. Folder 336. Elizabeth C. Scofield. to John D. Rockefeller, 21 August 1889; Elizabeth C. Scofield, to J.D.R.. 27 August 1889. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 37. Folder 293. Rockefeller Archive Center. Abbie Graham, Grace H. Dodge: Merchant of Dreams (New York: The Womans Press, 1926), 61-62, 64.

8. E.P. Williams, to John D. Rockefeller, 4 January 1892; ? to John D. Rockefeller, 20 May 1892; E.P. Williams, to J.D.R., 27 September 1892. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 49. Folder 366. Rockefeller Archive Center.

9. George DeFerrel Leed, to John D. Rockefeller, 3 February 1885. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 23; Henry M. Alexander, to J.D.R., 5 June 1894. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 1 New York City. Rockefeller Archive Center.

10. Starr J. Murphy, to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 13 March 1906; John D. Rockefeller, to ?, 4 April 1906; John D. Rockefeller, to ?, 8 April 1908; John D. Rockefeller, to ?, 1 February 1910. Rockefeller Family Archives. RG 2. Educational Interests series. Box 31. Folder 175MI. Rockefeller Archive Center. Cohen, 72.

11. Biographical Dictionary of American Educators. 1978 ed. v. 1. "Dodge, Grace Hoadley." Graham, 48-50, 63).

12. Graham, 62-65.

13. Graham, 69-70, 83-90.

14. Graham, 121-124, 127-134, 159, 163-164.

15. Graham, 164, 166, 169. 178. The alternate spelling of Macy's first name is due to different spellings in different sources.

16. Grace H. Dodge, to John D. Rockefeller, 10 April 1886; Grace H. Dodge, to J.D.R., 18 January 1887; Grace H. Dodge, to J.D.R., 26 March 1887; John D. Rockefeller, to Grace H. Dodge, 26 March 1887. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 12. Folder 87. Other letters were also written to the Rockefellers soliciting funds for the IEA, presumably by a secretary or a treasurer. The following letters pertain to that category. ? to John D. Rockefeller, 13 May 1885; ? to Mrs. Rockefeller, 3 July 1886; John S. Bussing, to John D. Rockefeller, 15 March 1887. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 6. Folder 47; Milbarb B. Cary, to John D. Rockefeller, 21 February 1889. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 6. Folder 51; J. Cattell, to John D. Rockefeller, 3 July 1886; J. Cattell, to JDR, 1 December 1886. Box 7. Rockefeller Archives. Rockefeller Archive Center.

17. Grace H. Dodge, to John D. Rockefeller, 23 January 1888; Dodge, to J.D.R., 6 February 1888; Dodge, to J.D.R., 8 February 1888; Dodge, to J.D.R., 4 January 1889; Dodge, to J.D.R., 4 December 1889; Dodge, to J.D.R., 20 November 1890; Dodge, to J.D.R., 27 November 1890; Dodge, to J.D.R., 17 December 1891. Rockefeller Family Archives. Box 12. Folder 87. Rockefeller Archive Center.

Part Two

Board Influences: Contributions of the General Education Board Toward Vocationalism in Public Schools, 1905-1925

John D. Rockefeller, a nineteenth and twentieth century philanthropist, founded the General Education Board in 1903 in order to direct his educational contributions. This study addresses their programs that led to the growth of vocationalism in public education during the early period of their development. It will be seen that their spirit of philanthropy greatly enhanced the development of vocational programs, especially for young people who, in their opinion, would seek manual employment, especially agricultural. Three problems are central to this part of the study and will be examined. The first is John D. Rockefeller's control over the GEB. The second is the GEB's control over their programs (although they often insisted that they had none.) Finally, the third is to document actual program changes under GEB auspices that show vocational education as both a goal and a result of their involvement.

First, it is significant to note that the activities of the GEB had to reflect that of its benefactor, John D. Rockefeller:

> In making my recent gift to the General Education Board . . . I provided that two-thirds of the gift should be applied to such specific objects within the corporate purposes of the Board as either I or my son might from time to time direct.

While the Board members also developed their own philosophy regarding Board endowments, Rockefeller and his son, John D.

Rockefeller, Jr. oversaw its activities. Sometimes Rockefeller, Jr. participated on a committee; other times he stamped his approval at the end of a report or memo. On still other occasions he wrote a follow-up memo expressing his approval. A more subtle way that they maintained control was by hiring personnel whose agendas matched theirs.

An example of the relationship between board and benefactor can be seen in the 1914 report of an "in-house" committee. The committee was formed to recommend the most "fruitful" areas for educational investigation. Serving on the committee were Jerome Greene, Wallace Buttrick, and Abraham Flexner, friends of the Rockefellers and members of the board of the GEB. Their report, confidential to Board members, described the two directions of GEB programs: extensive, to extend educational facilities where they had not been before, and intensive, to make existing programs more responsive to needs. The former included two Southern programs, Professors of Secondary Education and Rural School Supervisors. The latter included experiments to perpetuate what the Board termed the "ideal rural school." This report corroborates their interest in promoting vocational education, and it further indicates special interest in effecting programs in areas, such as rural schools, where they could make an impact.[4]

The committee report suggested that surveys be done in all the states. The states would pay for these surveys, while the Board would provide the support staff. They envisioned emulation

between the states that would result in educational "improvements." They also wanted the GEB to help the states select counties in which to develop model educational systems, including agricultural clubs and county training schools. They expected that these models would influence other counties and reshape other schools; thus "the ideal rural school, pictured by the chairman and authorized by the Board, could be realized more effectively. . . ." Their part, according to the report, would be to support county industrial teachers and to contribute industrial equipment. They also recommended five "important phases of educational experience" to investigate and publish, including city school surveys, training of teachers, and industrial education. Furthermore, they added four areas that they termed "urgent." These included organizing county and state surveys which would recommend educational changes. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. stated in a follow-up memo that he appreciated and valued the report.[3]

Another example of Rockefeller control and GEB interest in vocational education is a 1915 committee whose recommendations regarding "educational research" included a study of the Gary Schools. Rockefeller served as the chair of this group. Abraham Flexner, second secretary of the GEB, addressed their findings: "Following this, I hope very much that we can enter upon the larger problem of industrial and vocational training in the public schools." In fact another committee was formed later that year, in order to study industrial education. This

committee reported that states had been working to foster industrial education, both within and outside of public schools, and that a national commission had been formed to propose that the federal government fund vocational and industrial schools. The Board selected Leonard Ayres, the efficiency-minded educator who had written Laggards in Our Schools in 1909, to conduct the industrial survey.[4]

Although Wallace Buttrick, appointed by Rockefeller as the first secretary of the GEB stated that the GEB's "one policy is to have no policy,"[5] it would appear that the Board operated under many predetermined policies. For example, under their auspices, many educational programs turned from largely academic to largely vocational, with an emphasis upon agriculture and domestic training in rural areas. The problem was not so much the addition of vocational courses but the replacement of traditional curricula, that they expended significant amounts of money and energy in order to offer vocational subjects but none to increase or improve academic offerings. The GEB, as a group, tended to view education as preparation for future employment, which, in turn, hinged on the family's employment and economic status. For example they believed, and did not question, that rural children needed agriculture and domestic science to prepare them to be farmers and wives of farmers. In the curriculum, they manifested this belief by simply not encouraging academics for these children while they applauded efforts to vocationalize their programs.

Also, although in correspondence GEB personnel never forced their agents to follow their dictates, remarkably the agents always seemed to agree with their employer. One way the GEB influenced their agents was by conferences. For example, a series of letters between Henry Pritchett of the Carnegie Foundation and members of the General Education Board demonstrates that they met with their agents privately before the conferences began. They requested:

> A rather private conference with these men [the high school inspectors] so that we may get at real things and not waste time and opportunity at a more public meeting where the friends would talk to the galleries.[6]

GEB officers also distributed tentative recommendations which the supervisors usually accepted. Evidence indicates that this move was intended to exert more control over conference results. For example, following a conference in 1924, two of the GEB's field agents reported to the president of the GEB that the proposals had paralleled exactly the recommendations of the GEB.[7]

The GEB sponsored conferences for Rural School Supervisors who acted as agents for the GEB in Southern elementary schools. A 1914 conference statement included a proposal that rural schools be the center of community life. This same report suggested that each principal be trained in agriculture and that each school have at least one teacher trained in domestic science or household economy. Following the report, Abraham Flexner confirmed the GEB's interest in the "entire rural school problem."[8]

Another conference of Rural School Supervisors in 1917 proposed simplifying the elementary curriculum and, in both subject areas and textbooks, omitting "minor facts" and "secondary matters." Additionally, they recommended that school facilities include classrooms, a library, laboratories, classrooms for domestic science and farm mechanics, a school garden, and a demonstration plot. Their suggestions included courses such as "home building," "farm life," and "rural economy."[9]

Background letters for this particular conference also provide insight regarding GEB control over their programs and hired agents. The Rural School Superisors had planned to attend another conference which they had attended annually. Upon learning of their decision to attend this conference, the GEB gave them permission to attend but informed them that the GEB would not provide the funds to do so. One rural school agent summarized his correspondence with the GEB regarding this conference, that the GEB officers "were not inclined to favor" the planned meeting. As a result, the rural school agents did not attend the conference, but the Board scheduled another one for later in the year.[10]

One issue discussed at a 1919 conference which GEB officials was, "What Forms of Industrial Work Can Be Profitably Introduced into Country Schools?" The account included such projects that were already in progress as farm mechanics, cooking and sewing, woodworking, "practical" agriculture, and industrial work.[11]

Attendance at conferences was only one way the GEB popularized their ideas. Other examples that illustrate GEB interest in promoting vocational education abound. For example, Board members expressed their personal beliefs about education in articles and "Occasional Papers." Occasional Papers were developed to provide GEB members a platform from which to disseminate ideas. They were distributed in large numbers and, in some cases, Abraham Flexner sent them to selected people and requested a response.[12]

Occasional Paper Number One was The Country School of Tomorrow, by Frederick Gates, a member of the board of trustees. In it Gates called for dropping educational traditions: to teach students not to be philosophers, men of science, lawyers, doctors, or politicians but to meet the "lowly" needs of rural life. He suggested that educators teach "every industry in the district," such as would be found in the kitchen, barn, dairy, and shop. According to Gates students should learn health, how to make clothing, how to cook, and what and how to eat, and they should learn in model kitchens and model homes. Further, he addressed the importance of scientific farming, and he envisioned a community of young workers producing in agriculture, sewing, the kitchen, the dairy, the orchard, and the lawn. He minimized the importance of the "three R's" and suggested they only be taught within the realm of the child's experience.[13]

In a letter to Charles Eliot, former Harvard president and member of the GEB upon his retirement, Abraham Flexner addressed

Gates' proposal, stating that the Board had been authorized to promote such an experiment in rural education. Eliot's response referred to a surgeon who had been compelled to study Latin and Greek:

> He believed that he got as much appropriate mental training out of the languages as he would have out of natural history and mechanical studies. He was of course deluded; but he did not know that.

Flexner's return letter agreed with Eliot.[14]

Charles Eliot wrote Occasional Paper Number Two, Changes Needed in Secondary Education, in which he supported practical courses, elimination of memory work, and use of concrete experiences.[15] The GEB issued a press release approving Eliot's paper, reiterating that the best knowledge came from observation of the senses. They recommended for poor children more hand, ear, and eye work, such as drawing, carpentry, turning, music, sewing, cooking, and the sciences of observation (chemistry, physics), physculture and work in a school garden.

Occasional Paper Number Three, A Modern School by Abraham Flexner, also dealt with subject matter in schools. He supported the need for the rudiments of education but not for courses whose purpose it is to "train the mind." Rather, he maintained that a "man educated in the modern sense . . . will be contentedly ignorant of things for learning which no better reason than tradition can be assigned." He preferred studies that served "real purposes," which he divided into four fields: science, industry (including learning a manual skill and work in

industry), aesthetics, and civics. Although he recommended algebra and geometry for those who would later attend college, for those "who would not need it," he recommended industry.[17]

In addition to the Occasional Paper, Flexner wrote some articles that appeared in a popular magazine. In one article he stated that mental discipline did not carry over to other subjects, except in particular categories. Virgil is just as valid as learning to bake a pumpkin pie, he declared: either task should only be performed for enjoyment or for a purpose. According to the article, if a student was not planning to attend college, he should not study Latin. He further maintained that formal grammar and arithmetic should not be studied beyond a few basics if one did not need them. Another article proclaimed that schools should concern themselves with what children naturally do, offering vocational and purposeful subjects, replacing Latin, math, ancient history, and "bookish" science.[18]

A fourth member of the GEB, Wallace Buttrick, discussed the poor state of agriculture in the South. His report called for agricultural schools, one in every consolidated district, and practical textbooks to teach agriculture. He warned that "nature study," such as it was known then, was too cultural and not practical.[19]

These directly-stated philosophies of Board members informed the programs which they established. In keeping with their interest in vocational and agricultural education, they appropriated funds and hired personnel who fostered these aims in

public schools, particularly in the rural South. The GEB undoubtedly chose the South because it was the most fertile ground for their ideas on vocational education. At the time, their systems were new, disorganized, highly rural, and did not ehibit the independence of midwestern schools.[20] In this light the GEB adopted a program in 1905 which involved hiring professors of secondary education to represent them in improving high schools in the South. These professors served as catalysts to expand offerings in practical courses such as agriculture, sewing, and carpentry.[21]

Early reports by the professors would indicate that most existing schools offered highly academic programs, with such electives as agriculture, manual training, domestic science, school garden work, and bookkeeping. These same reports also seem to indicate that the professors supported these curricula. However, as time progressed the professors expressed urgency for vocational education, particularly agricultural and domestic. For example, Professor of Secondary Education, Joseph S. Stewart of Georgia recommended a highly academic program in his reports until 1906. This attitude changed following a visit to a private industrial school. He boasted to Wallace Buttrick about the work which he had observed at the school, in the home, dairy, garden, barns, and woodworking shop. This visit led to his recommending higher taxes to support schools. Furthermore, that Fall, the Georgia legislature passed legislation to build an agricultural high school for every congressional district. Stewart had

assisted in formulating the curriculum for these schools: English, mathematics, history, science plus agriculture, shop work, laboratories, and farm plots. Buttrick advised him to oversee these schools, to get the best men to run them, and to write him monthly reports.[22]

Another professor of secondary education, Charles G. Maphis of Virginia wrote to a superintendent in 1912 blaming him for his high dropout rate. He accused him of placing too much stress on preparing students for professions; he then recommended parallel courses of study, equally emphasized: classical, business, agricultural, domestic arts, and so forth. He stated, "Your schedule administers practically the same diet to all alike, though their tasks may be different and their needs may vary." He urged the superintendent to require less homework, to strengthen the commercial courses, and to add manual training, domestic science, and homemaking. "Your attendance is far too low," he concluded.[23]

This example illustrates what the other participating professors seemed to think, that academic requirements turned away students. As Gates, Flexner, and Eliot had rejected the idea that certain subjects were more worthwhile than others, and had stated that the curriculum ought to reflect what the child needed for his or her future occupation, these professors seemed to embrace the belief that students should attend school to prepare themselves for a future vocation. According to a third professor of secondary education, L.L. Friend of West Virginia,

agriculture was not offered seriously as it should be. Not many schools offered domestic science and manual training, he reported, but where these courses had been introduced, high school instruction was in closer contact with life. He also recommended practical application of chemistry, hygiene, geometry, and drawing. Furthermore, he reported that several high schools were offering commercial courses and emphasizing practical English. Other professors reported similar results in vocational expansion. Some oversaw the building of agricultural high schools or the addition of industrial and household arts in more schools. All indicated that these courses represented "progress" and that the changes were welcomed.[24]

Another way that GEB members advanced their philosophy regarding vocational education was by working through state boards of education in the South. They often gave money to these boards to help them establish certain programs, with the idea that the state would eventually fund the entire program. They hired agents to represent the state in stimulating better schools. One of these agents, a state high school inspector for the GEB in South Carolina, reported in 1920-21 that 33% of South Carolina's secondary pupils were in vocational courses, making up 11.2% of the total teaching time in the state.[25] Another of their agents recommended that one school district reopen its manual training shop. A third agent reported that one department of home economics had been "made right," "a full time teacher well qualified having been employed."[26]

The GEB also appointed rural school supervisors, referred to earlier regarding conferences, in order to expand rural education in the South and to back such programs as consolidation, increased tax support, organization, salary and training of teachers, and length of school terms. In addition to their involvement in these categories, the supervisors backed expansion of vocational education.[xx] Many of the rural school supervisors expressed the belief that it was the job of public educators to assure the future of agriculture and domestic science. For example, school people often officiated at fairs where children's agricultural and domestic products were displayed. One such exhibit was described by the Kentucky rural school supervisor. He saw "real dresses, and real canning,. . .real plows, real gates, and real axe-handles" in both "the regular school work and the work in manual training, domestic science, agriculture, etc." Another supervisor wrote about student contests and demonstrations in baking, sewing, and agriculture. In another state a county fair included competitions in physics, writing, maps, drawing, spelling, music, culinary arts, needle work, manual training, farm and garden work, and club work.[xxi]

Many other examples evidence involvement of the rural school supervisors with vocational agriculture and domestic science. The rural school supervisor of South Carolina sent a letter to his county supervisors, encouraging them to read two pamphlets regarding vegetable growing and preserving. He urged them to promote manual training, cooking, homekeeping, and agricultural

clubs in schools. A workshop provided by another supervisor in South Carolina emphasized manual training for boys and domestic science for girls; in addition, he recommended that industrial work be taught in every school and that home and farm demonstration work be closely allied with school. Another of the state supervisors reported that his "progressive teachers" gave regular and systematic instruction in agriculture to boys and tomato growing and canning, home gardening, cooking and sewing, home making, and house keeping to girls. He, as other rural school supervisors, worked to expand county demonstration schools to instruct teachers in proper methods for teaching cooking, sewing, music, and practical agriculture in order "to increase the professional efficiency of the teachers."[29]

All of the supervisors, at one time or another, reported "progress" in expansion of agriculture, gardening, home economics and domestic science, and manual training in schools.[30] Other "progress" involved a gift of $7,000 for a domestic science department in Charleston, South Carolina. The rural school supervisor from South Carolina later wrote Frederick Gates of the GEB, complimenting him on his Occasional Paper on rural schools. He cited some examples of domestic science and agriculture in schools of South Carolina, including one school in which the teachers taught on farms and in homes of the community. Furthermore, to dispense with "boring" curricula, this supervisor established a school in an old farmhouse, with a workshop for boys and a kitchen for girls. He did not teach academics but had

the students grow vegetables and make wooden articles. Students learned from measuring gardens, dividing profits, and reading recipes and books about birds.[31] GEB responded to him by asking him to participate in studying "interesting and significant experiments" in rural education. Two major topics he chose were agriculture and homemaking.[32]

A different source pertinent to this discussion of rural southern educational projects is an article that praised GEB involvement in farm demonstrations and building dormitories for county high schools. Their activities included introducing the teaching of domestic science and aiding agricultural and demonstration work.[33]

Southern education was not the GEB's only target of influence. They also acted upon the surveys, referred to earlier in a Board report. These were conducted nationally, both statewide and locally, and were comprised of a committee and a chair who was selected by the GEB. They conducted a survey of Maryland schools in 1915 and paid three quarters of the cost from Board funds. "Shake-up Expected" read the headline that preceded the Board's final report. The recommendations included vocational training in industrial sections and agricultural in farming areas. In 1916 the State legislature accepted the GEB report and enacted many of their recommendations into law.[34]

The GEB also surveyed the famous schools of Gary, Indiana. These schools attempted to become the epitome of redefined education: social services, recreation, adult education, and

manual training. Believing that children had different abilities, interests, and employment opportunities that must be recognized, they also offered vocational courses. Boys regularly took courses in shop work, carpentry, electrical work, plumbing, and painting, while girls participated in domestic science, restaurant work, and secretarial skills. Many people expected that Gary schools would prepare skilled laborers for the mills of Gary.[35] Although the survey was conducted in 1916, the reports came out in a series beginning November 1918. The GEB found, not that the program was deficient but that the administration was. In fact, they praised the "genuine life activities."[36]

Another survey, in 1919, took place in Tarrytown, North Tarrytown, and adjoining districts in New York. The GEB found that Tarrytown High School met college entrance requirements but did not "neglect the needs of students who desire to pursue the commercial course or to work in the area of industrial and household arts." They commended North Tarrytown Junior High for adding a vocational course to the regular courses and for endeavoring to give a "practical turn" to regular courses and adding manual training for boys and cooking for girls. But they recommended that both the junior high and the high school broaden "the practical opportunities . . . certainly in commercial work and in the household arts for the girls and in the industrial arts for boys."[37]

An inheritance of $1,650,000, left for the education of the poor in Winchester, Virginia, prompted a request to the GEB for a

survey. A news clipping of 1920, published by the Winchester Chamber of Commerce, explained the outcome of the GEB's study. They planned an athletic stadium, auditorium, art-history museum, dispensary and center of hygiene instruction, swimming pool, gymnasium and shower baths, domestic science and home economics laboratories, cafeteria lunch facilities, open air classroom for anemic or convalescent children, vocational and pre-vocational shops for agriculture and industry, library-study room, and an agricultural laboratory and experimental orchard.[38]

A GEB survey in Indiana, 1921 to 1922, concluded that vocational education was inadequate and limited. They specifically recommended agriculture for all boys and home economics for all girls, as part of their regular education program. In fact, a news paper report stated that the study favored vocational education "beyond all other forms of education."[39]

When considering the influence of the General Education Board, their activities are educational, as well as the outcomes of their programs. Additionally, other sources address the impact of their programs on schools: "It is difficult to overestimate the value of the several general studies in public education financed by the Board," concluded an in-house report.[40] The report praised the "far reaching" effects of Professors of Secondary Education, which had taken place in twelve states, and Rural School Supervisors. Among GEB successes the report included a two-year demonstration of rural supervision

in Indiana, which had resulted from the Indiana Survey. Other successes included "helping" southern secondary education by extending the cooperative farm demonstration movement and by improving facilities, teachers, attendance, legislation, and "suitable" courses of study:

> They emphasized the importance of placing in the curriculum subjects which would prepare boys and girls for living a useful life--for example such subjects as agriculture and home economics. As a result some of the southern states established farm life or agricultural schools . . . Reform of curriculum remains as one of the major problems facing educational leaders.[41]

Not all of their programs achieved their desired ends, however. A later memorandum bemoaned that those surveys which they had funded had been publicized as General Education Board surveys. This had caused political problems for them, it stated, making it hard for their representatives to put their recommendations into effect.[42]

Another source that supports the thesis of Board control of program outcomes is a policy statement by GEB officials: "The Board, however, has the right to terminate its support if the essential purpose of the Board in making the appropriation is no longer being carried out." The statement then cited examples of personnel hired and fired in such a manner. Although this policy was not directly stated until 1932, the implication was that this policy had been in effect for a long time, as the examples referred to past experiences.[43]

These examples, expressed by Board members themselves, indicate that the GEB wielded much greater control that they had

admitted to previously. An excerpt from an article by another source attests to the influence that the GEB wielded in the education community. Although the quote addresses a more general problem than vocational education, it does illustrate that Rockefeller and other industrialists influenced public education in many areas and with powerful results:

> We view with alarm the activities of Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations, agencies not in any way responsible to the people, in their efforts to control the policies of our state institutions; to fashion after their conception and to standardize our courses of study, and to surround the institutions with conditions which menace true academic freedom and defeat the primary purpose of democracy as heretofore preserved inviolable in our common schools, normal schools, and universities.

Of course GEB officials denied such motives but chose not to respond publicly.[44]

A final area, relating indirectly to the topic of Rockefeller and General Education Board influences on vocationalism, provides evidence of activities corresponding to education according to expected vocational destination. Two psychologists, Lewis M. Terman and Robert M. Yerkes, wrote to the GEB, seeking support for a program of vocational guidance for young people leaving school and for businesses hiring them. They also wanted to diagnose children with intelligence levels near the borderline of "mental deficiency" and to introduce a three-tiered educational format for public schools. These ideas stemmed from tests that they had developed for the military and which had separated and trained personnel according to "ability." Yerkes claimed that it was not undemocratic to base training upon

test results, but rather, he stated that his program gave a "man a proper chance to learn." He said that he had been bombarded by requests for such tests to use in schools.[45]

Yerkes attacked the present educational system because it "ignored individuality" and was undemocratic. Instead, his proposal tracked students, according to test scores, into three separate schools which educated for professions, industry, or manual jobs. What would normally be kindergarten through 5th grade would be a three year program for the high track, four for the medium track, and six for the low track.[46]

Abraham Flexner received letters expressing approval for Yerkes' proposal from two men whom he had consulted. To his credit, Flexner approached Yerkes cautiously. He suggested that the proposed program made schooling too complex, but he also suggested some trial programs. Yerkes sent a pamphlet which explained the Army program, enumerating his complaints about education: "low grade" children receive far too much attention, he stated, while "high grade" children are sacrificed. Finally, Fexner notified Yerkes that the GEB was donating $25,000 for them to develop intelligence tests for school children.[47]

This illustration ties into the study, as evidence that the GEB did influence outcomes within public education. Perhaps, in this case, the climate was right for testing and it would have made its way into public schools with or without GEB support; nevertheless the GEB did get involved and did fund what turned out to be controversial at best, even in today's schools.

Likewise, perhaps vocational education would have worked its way into the curriculum, given the culture and social constraints of the time; yet GEB influence cannot be denied.

To summarize this study, the three central problems must be reviewed. John D. Rockefeller and his son did maintain control of the money and programs which the GEB directed. This control was financial as well as by presence on committees, approval of decisions, and hiring of personnel. Also the GEB maintained control over its own programs. GEB officials funded conferences for their field representatives, presented them with an agenda, met with them privately as a group, and influenced the conclusions accepted. Regarding outcomes of their programs--Professors of Secondary Education, Rural School Supervisors, and state agents--although Board officers appeared not to interfere with the field work or recommendations, all of these programs took a vocational turn, strongly advocating agricultural and domestic education.

In surveys as well, GEB findings included praise for vocational programs and expressions of urgency where they did not appear to be strong. Additionally, publications by Board members stated their desires to see vocational education emphasized, academics deemphasized, and agricultural education glorified. They, as well as other sources, corroborated the influence that GEB programs wielded in the public arena.

Finally, the donation to develop testing for school children crystallizes the thesis that the GEB and its founder and mentor,

John D. Rockefeller believed that children ought to be educated according to what was supposed to be their occupational outcome. Rockefeller, himself, funded several programs to this end, providing vocational training for poor children. Yet the fact that they assumed children would take jobs based on their own social and economic backgrounds is also obvious in their statements and their donations.

The most extraordinary and obvious inference that can be made from the entire study is that John D. Rockefeller and his agent, the General Education Board, acted as if people's destinies were set and that education should parallel these destinies and prepare people to meet them. Further, it may be stated that the destiny of the children of the South was closely tied to the rural nature of their environment and the lack of a highly formalized school system. Apparently, for example, it bothered GEB members not the least that, in order to stimulate agriculture in the South, young people's education should consist primarily of agriculture and domestics. It must also be remembered that the members of the Board were greatly concerned with the good of society which would benefit from trained farmers and workers to serve it.

Further study needs to be done concerning other industrial philanthropies. In addition, exploring the individual states in which the GEB had its progams would be enlightening and may indicate specific influences. Also, numbers of students involved in vocational programs may be compared with such personal

statistics as family income and occupation.

The benefit of this study lies not in placing blame or praise, but in observing actions. Again, the problem is not that they tried to help but that the "help" assured that the poor or rural young people who received the benefactions would serve society in particular ways and that doors to other life styles were closed. Whereas urban schools did need to change many of their practices in order to welcome immigrants, and whereas rural schools, especially in the South, were extremely poor and needed money and attention to better their programs, the changes that ensued may not have been the blessings that were publicized. It can be concluded that John D. Rockefeller and the General Education Board did exert a powerful influence on the growth of vocational education during the years, 1880 to 1925. However, it can be questioned that this growth of vocational education helped the field of education to serve children or, rather, to serve the structure of society.

NOTES

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3. Ibid. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to Jerome Greene, 24 November 1914. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 346. Folder 3586. Rockefeller Archive Center.

4. Abraham Flexner, GEB, to Henry Pritchett, The Carnegie Foundation, 23 June 1915. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 207. Folder 1991. Judson, Frissell, Rose, and Flexner, GEB Committee, to GEB, report, 27 October 1915. Judson to Abraham Flexner, GEB 18 December 1915, General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 353. Folder 3650. Rockefeller Archive Center.

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7. "Report on Conference held in Baltimore, April 22, 23, and 24, 1919, with the State Agents for Rural Schools and the State Agents for Negro Schools, and at Old Point Comfort, April 25, 26, and 27, 28, 29, and 30, 1919, with the Professors of Secondary Education and the State Superintendents," and "Detailed Reports of Conference of State Supenintendents, Old Point Comfort Virginia, April 28, 29, and 30, 1919." A.A. Murphee and John W. Abercrombie, to Wickliffe Rose, GEB, 27 December 1924. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 267. Folder 2779. Rockefeller Archive Center.

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11. "Report of Conference of State Agents of Rural Schools, April 22-24, 1919," to GEB. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 275. Folder 2863. Rockefeller Archive Center.

12. Wallace Buttrick, GEB, to Leon S. Merrill, Maine, 11 May 1915. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 275. Folder 2864. Rockefeller Archive Center.

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14. Abraham Flexner, GEB, to Charles Eliot, GEB, to Abraham Flexner, 24 July 1916. Abraham Flexner, to Charles Eliot, 27 July 1916. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 270. Folder 2797. Rockefeller Archive Center.

15. Abraham Flexner, GEB, to Professor Paul Shorey, Chicago, 29 January 1917. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 275. Folder 2864. Charles H. Judd, Chicago, to Abraham Flexner, GEB, 30 November 1915. General Education Board records. Series 1. Box 261. Folder 2700. Rockefeller Archive Center.

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