

## New Light on the Early History of Walden School

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### Abstract

*Walden School, a celebrated Manhattan private school, began in the Progressive Era. In the winter and spring 1913, twenty-one year old Montessori pioneer Margaret Naumburg attended the very first International Montessori Teacher Training Course in Rome, Italy. In the summer that year, in London, England, she had lessons with F. M. Alexander — in what in 1910 he referred to as “Re-education of the Kinæsthetic Systems” and in 1912 as “Conscious Control” (a method with precursors in performing arts training addressing postural, vocal, repertory and habits aspects). Later that year, Naumburg introduced a Montessori class in a Manhattan settlement house with the musician Claire Raphael, incorporating Dalcroze music and movement instruction within the Montessori framework. In 1914, Naumburg and Raphael began a Montessori class at Leete School, a private school for girls. Between 1914 and 1917, Naumburg began Jungian psychoanalysis with Beatrice Moses Hinkle. As Naumburg and Raphael had done earlier integrating movement disciplines with Montessori classes, Naumburg now incorporated psychoanalytic themes into the school curriculum. In 1917, Naumburg relocated her classes at Leete School, opened them to boys and girls, and called it Children's School — renamed Walden School in 1922.*

*From its inception in 1914, New York City media reported on the mixed Montessori/creative expression/psychoanalysis/Alexander inspired educational venture. Naumburg published her accounts of the school between 1917 and 1928.*

**Key Words:** Margaret Naumburg (1890-1963), Claire Raphael Reis (1888-1978), Irene Tasker (1887-1977), Ethel Webb (1866-1955), F. Matthias Alexander (1869–1955), Leete School, Public School 4, Montessori education, Walden School.

### INTRODUCTION

On October 5, 1914, Margaret Naumburg and Claire Raphael launched a Montessori class in Leete School, a private school for girls. In 1954, the educational world saluted the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Walden School's founding. New York City Mayor Robert F. Wagner, professors of education, deans and presidents of teachers colleges, illustrious alumni, among others, conveyed congratulations. Eleanor Roosevelt offered, “My congratulations to you on the fine accomplishments of this school and all good

wishes for such continued success in the coming years” (in Walden School, 1954a, p. 4). Ten years later, the school celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Walden School, 1964). Yet, Walden School would not live long enough to celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In 1988, the school merged with Lincoln School as The New Walden Lincoln School, which in 1991 in turn was closed, its school building sold to Trevor Day School. As of 2014, the Trevor Day School administration-building basement on Columbus Avenue, houses Walden School extant archives.

Naumburg's *New York Times* (1983) obituary notes, “Miss Naumburg's work at

Walden School influenced the nation's educational philosophy. She was among the pioneers in breaking away from a formal book-centered curriculum." Her *Boston Globe* (1983) obituary begins, "Though Margaret Naumburg's first book, 'The Child and the World,' written in 1928, laid out her own educational philosophy, the direction for her pioneering work with children may have been set between 1912 and 1914, when she studied under Maria Montessori in Rome and F. Matthias Alexander in London."

In this article, the authors explore the early history of Walden School, focusing on Naumburg's explorations of various approaches to movement education and psychoanalysis just before her older sister and art therapy pioneer Florence Cane joined the faculty in 1923.

### Three aspiring Montessori teachers

Margaret Naumburg (1890-1963) was the third of three daughters of Theresa (*née* Kahnweiler) Naumburg and textile manufacturer Max Naumburg. Her siblings were her older sisters Alice and Florence, and younger brother Robert. In 1908, at age eighteen, she began attending at Vassar College Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, New York). In March 1911, the *New York Times* (1911) reported a costume ball in her honour (with 150 guests). In June 1912, she completed her B.A. not at Vassar but at Barnard College in New York City, another elite Seven Sisters school. At Barnard, she was president of The Socialist Club, rooming with Evelyn Dewey, daughter of John Dewey. After graduation, she travelled to Europe.

Naumburg biographer Hinitz (2002, 2013) asserts that she studied economic reform at the London School of Economics; however, it remains unclear whether, with whom, and, if so, how long she studied economics in England. On ship's passage to Europe she first read Montessori's 1912 *The Montessori Method*; then, "From London in September she went to Rome; went to work in Montessori's laboratory" (Rosenfeld, 1924. p. 117). On September 25, 1912, she met with Maria Montessori. In a handwritten letter addressed to Dr. Montessori, written on Grand Hotel Michel at Via Torino stationary, Naumburg thanked Montessori for meeting with her, emphasizing that she would love further study in her method:

Dear Dr. Montessori,

I meant to tell you that a week or so ago I wrote to my twin nieces for their second birthday, and as the best wish I knew, I hoped they would be brought up the Montessori way. Even then I scarcely realized what a splendid wish it was, for I had not talked with you or seen the children!

You told me many of the excitable children slept more calmly after a few weeks at the school. Am I too big to say that I slept better last night for having been with you yesterday? If your book made me wish that I could study with you, you yourself have so strengthened that desire, that it will not be my fault if I do not come back to you soon.

Would you and the children take these flowers with all my love? (Naumburg, 1912)

Within four months, she was number 51 of eighty students accepted in the First International Montessori Teacher Training Course, given by Montessori between January 15 and May 15, 1913. During her stay in Rome, Naumburg befriended Irene Tasker and Ethel Webb — two British women who also attended Montessori's course. Later, Tasker would describe the meeting to a colleague: "I went out to Rome in 1912 to study with Dr Montessori. And in early 1913 was joined by Ethel Webb who had already started working with F.M. [Alexander] I thought there was an educational connection to be made between his work and that of Montessori. In Rome we both made the acquaintance of Miss Naumburg, an American, who was studying with Montessori and was herself a pupil of Dewey's and friend of his family" (Tasker, 1957).

Ethel Webb (1866-1955) was a daughter of Ann Theresa (*née* Bennett) Webb and George Webb. With John Mappin, her father founded the legendary Mappin and Webb London silversmith-chain. A budding concert pianist, her career was cut short by apparent piano-playing related back and arm injuries. For a time, she taught private piano lessons in Manhattan, but discontinued her teaching practice when her family disapproved: 'A woman from her social rank should not take students for pay.' Webb may have begun lessons with Alexander to address problems related to her

piano-related injuries as early as 1910 (possibly after having read his 1910 book *Man's Supreme Inheritance*). Soon Webb became one of Alexander's most trusted permanent advocates. In 1911, she became an assistant to Alexander. One of her main duties was helping him edit his texts like a 1912 book titled *Conscious Control* (Staring, 2005). Although Alexander spoke, dressed, and had a manner giving a first impression he was educated English gentleman, he in fact had no formal schooling after age thirteen. He had employed a ghost writer, uncredited, to assist with his first book (*ibid.*). Now Webb seems to have taken on similar behind the scene duties. Early in 1913, she travelled to Rome to attend Montessori's first international training course for teachers.

Irene Tasker (1887-1977) was a daughter of Ellen Martha (*née* Sanderson) Tasker and Rev. John Greenwood Tasker, principal of Handsworth College, a Wesleyan seminary in Birmingham, England. In 1910, she completed the Classical Tripos at Girton College Cambridge. Between 1910 and 1912, she taught a group of children in Cambridge (Butler & McMorran, 1949). Functioning essentially as an English governess, her employer gave her a copy of William James *Talks To Teachers* to guide how she would teach the children (Tasker, 1978, p. 9). Mid-1912, she travelled to Rome as English representative of the Montessori Society of the United Kingdom to assist Maria Montessori with her experiments of teaching older children. "She has been sent out to learn the whole method herself, in such a way as to teach it to teachers on her return" (Walker, 1913, p. 306; see also Tasker, 1915). When Montessori organized the first international course for teachers, Tasker enrolled immediately.

After receiving their Montessori teacher certificates in May 1913, Naumburg, Tasker and Webb travelled to London where Webb introduced Naumburg and Tasker to F. M. Alexander — now her employer. It is not clear that she was a paid employee, however. Webb convinced her new Montessori colleagues that there are supportive parallels between Alexander's method of "re-education" and Montessori's method. With her new friends, Webb shared a copy of Alexander's (1912) *Conscious Control* — to which Webb may have made contributions. One passage refers to how "the *means* rather than the *end* must be held in mind" (p. 3). There is

perhaps a parallel in Montessori, in which, in Tasker's 1978 words, Montessori designs "children's occupations...in such a way that no piece of work done was an end in itself, but a means to another end" (p. 9). Both women experienced lessons with Alexander, both forming favorable impressions. Naumburg encouraged Alexander to teach in Manhattan (*ibid.*). As well, subsequently, Tasker would join Webb as an assistant to Alexander.

After the visit, Webb resumed her work at Alexander's London headquarters; and Tasker began translating *Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook*, published in 1914. That year Tasker also took a post as lecturer on Montessori education at Darlington Training College in Darlington, Yorkshire, and, in June 1914, began teaching a Montessori class in the Darlington Beaumont Street Infant School (Stanton, 1966). In November that year, however, the United Kingdom War Office requisitioned the school "for billeting purposes" — converting Tasker's classroom "into a soldiers' guard-room" (Tasker, 1915, p. 8). Subsequently, the school combined with a Darlington Council School, sharing classrooms half time, which Tasker soon found untenable.

### 1913: Henry Street Settlement Montessori Class

Mid-1913, Naumburg travelled on to New York City. Together with co-teacher Claire Raphael she began offering a Montessori class at Lillian Wald's Henry Street Settlement in Manhattan's Lower East Side (Evening Post, 1916a). Claire Raphael (1888-1978) was a daughter of Eugenie (*née* Salomon) Raphael and Gabriel M. Raphael. Raphael had studied dance and music in France, Germany, and then at New York Institute of Musical Art (later renamed The Julliard School). Naumburg and Raphael first met in London in the summer of 1913, when Raphael attended T. H. Yorke Trotter's Rhythmic Method of Teaching Music classes at the London Conservatory of Music (Thomas, 1991). Raphael's enthusiasm for dance motivated Naumburg to study Émile Jacques-Dalcroze's Eurhythmics (Naumburg, 1914), and attend Interpretative Dancing courses with children's dance educator Alys E. Bentley. In turn, Naumburg influenced Bentley and her students by introducing Bentley to Alexander's

unique, indirect approach to addressing posture and breathing habits (D'Houbler, 1921, 1925; Ross, 2000). As well, between 1914 and 1916, Naumburg did postgraduate work under John Dewey at Teachers College.

Later that year, Maria Montessori toured New York City schools. In an article in the 13 December *Outlook*, Naumburg does not address the pedagogy Montessori developed at *Casa dei Bambini* in Rome. Rather, she stresses that Montessori was the first Italian woman to receive a doctor's degree, extolling her as a feminist who knows no fear and fights for "social freedom," who works with children "as the unpolluted source from which the democracy of the future must rise" (p. 797). Highest credit was for Baroness Franchetti to whom Montessori had dedicated *The Montessori Method*, and Italian Queen Mother Marguerites who financially assisted the work.

Naumburg, unwisely, stepped in an international school war, professing that Montessori had "felt the unofficial censure of the Catholic Church," and had been opposed "by the force of Jesuit priests" who had "been successful in preventing the foundation of a Montessori school in Ireland" (p. 798). Her protestations were immediately ridiculed by an American-Irish Jesuit as "rank bosh" (O'Connor, 1913, p. 71).

Naumburg (1913) stated that the first international training class for teachers gave Montessori "a fresh surge of Wanderlust" (p. 798), which led to her departure from Rome for America. She highlights Montessori's "radiant presence" when addressing an audience; then, gushing, in conclusion, with fond reminiscences of their first meeting in September 1912: "I remember vividly the dull wait in her drawing-room. I dreaded the meeting, lest the woman should be less than her book. Then the door opened, and Montessori came towards me. Serenity breathed from her as she entered the room" (p. 799). The Madonna-like photograph of Montessori *Outlook* editors published with the article lent credence to Naumburg's florid portrayal.

Naumburg knew her audience of readers. The *Outlook* article sparked considerable interest in the Henry Street Settlement Montessori class among educators. Soon visitors included Fanniebelle Curtis, Director of New York City Kindergartens and Elizabeth Farrell, Director of

Ungraded Classes (Thomas, 1991). Emma L. Johnson, Director of the Brooklyn Training School for Teachers, attended Montessori's December 11 address at the Academy of Music (*Daily Standard Union*, 1913). Johnson invited Naumburg to lecture on Montessori at Brooklyn Training School on December 22, to demonstrate "the complete series of [Montessori] didactic materials, showing how each article is used in the training of children" (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1913). This was just days before Montessori left the United States for Rome.

### 1914: Montessori education at Leete School

As with Tasker's Montessori classes at the Darlington school, the war disrupted Alexander's London teaching practice. Born in 1869, approaching fifty, too old for the war effort, F. M. Alexander now accepted Naumburg's invitation to explore teaching opportunities in the United States. He boarded the *Lusitania* on September 12, 1914, arriving in New York Harbor five days later. Naumburg helped him find suitable rooms for a teaching practice in the Essex Hotel.

There is no evidence that Alexander even once mentioned in New York his recent partnership with Mr. Ambrose Adrian Allen of Harrow. In February 1914, official records show they formed Ovoleo Drug Company Ltd. Recent research reveals that not only did Alexander register the company in London, he obtained patents in both Canada and the United States. The Ovoleo Drug Company business plan was apparently to market products with a special "tasteless" recipe of cod liver oil and eggs (*London Standard*, 1913). His failure to follow through suggests that Alexander may have merely lent his name to provide legitimacy to investors for an enterprise promoted by his younger sister and youngest brother Beaumont, who is listed as a company director in the documents. The drug company archives do reveal an ever-present entrepreneurial side of Alexander. As the oldest child of seven surviving siblings, he had become the main support of the family. Alexander was born into far less substantial means than those of his far better educated assistants. F. Matthias Alexander (1869–1955) was the eldest son of Betsy (*née* Brown) and John Alexander of the remote, down under village of Table Cape, Tasmania. By about 1900, his parents had permanently separated. Hence forward, Alexander

declared that his father had died, although he continued to live until the 1930s. His mother had once been a mid-wife. His father was an illiterate, apparently physically abusive blacksmith, mainly known for his love of betting on horses and alcohol consumption. After a brief apprenticeship with an elocution teacher in Melbourne, about 1892, for the remainder of his days, the talented Mr. Alexander, in fact the eldest son of Betsy and John Alexander, instead gave impression that he was 'to the manor born' (see: Staring, 2005).

In May 1915, Alexander returned to England. Between 1914 and 1924 (with the exception of winter 1922), Alexander spent summers in London and winters in New York. Alexander Technique literature claims that Naumburg brought him many influential (and sometimes fabulously wealthy) clients during his 1914-1915 New York sojourn. No supporting evidence exists. It is, however, highly likely that Naumburg introduced Alexander to men's clothing manufacturer Arthur M. Reis (1883-1947) and to novelist and journalist Waldo Frank (1889-1967). Claire Raphael married Reis in December 1915. Naumburg married Frank a year later.

Alexander did begin teaching ten-year-old daughter of Andrew Carnegie's partner Sylvanus Lathrop Schoonmaker. By end of 1914, Ethel Webb arrived from London to assist and become the girl's resident teacher. When Alexander returned to London in spring 1915, Webb stayed behind. Evidence suggests that Webb subsequently won over several of her old New York friends, among whom were Mary Potter Bush and her husband millionaire and Columbia University scholar Wendell T. Bush, who began lessons with Alexander as soon as the latter returned to the United States (Staring, 2005).

Sometime in 1914, around Alexander's arrival, Naumburg and Raphael discontinued their Henry Street Settlement class. In its stead, on Monday, October 5, 1914, they opened a Montessori class at Leete School. Leete is a private school for girls at 17 E. 60<sup>th</sup> Street, near Midtown Manhattan, never known as a poor immigrant neighbourhood. The Montessori class met just half-days. Hours of attendance were from 9:30 to 12 (*Evening Post*, 1914; *Sun*, 1914). The private Montessori experiment at Leete School began with only three children. Soon this Montessori class received inquiring visitors too.

Interestingly, Naumburg and Raphael had attended Marietta Johnson's 1914 Fairhope Summer School in Greenwich, Connecticut. Johnson, in turn, gave a talk at Leete School in February 1915 (*Evening Post*, 1915b; Staring, 2013b). In March 1915, Naumburg and Raphael welcomed teachers from the Brooklyn Training School for Teachers — where Naumburg in December 1913 had previously lectured on Montessori (*Evening Post*, 1915a).

#### **1915: Public Montessori education at PS4**

Sometime during the school year, Simon Hirsdansky, Principal of Public School 4 (PS 4) in The Bronx and Fanniebelle Curtis, Director of New York City Kindergartens, invited Naumburg and Raphael to apply to teach a Montessori class in Hirsdansky's public school. Naumburg's solicitation before the Board of Education Commissioner George J. Gillespie appeared to be successful. Perhaps there was also support from New York City's recently elected new progressive mayor, John Puroy Mitchel. They received the Board's approval shortly after, on April 13, 1915. The experimental class began April 19. Naumburg and Raphael would not only utilize a classroom in PS 4 for their public education Montessori experiment — but, they learned, there was, as well, a porch of Bronx House Settlement associated with PS 4 for outdoor play and work.

Only a day later, on April 20, Maria Montessori, on her second United States tour, spoke at an American Montessori teachers' conference at the Children's House, a Montessori school in a model tenement at 520 E. 77<sup>th</sup> Street. Naumburg announced the good news. "We have just secured permission to establish a class in Public School 4. It was only possible because of the enthusiasm of the principal...for [your] work." However, perhaps Naumburg saw a cloud on the horizon; she pleaded, "But you Dottressa...why won't you stay and help us?" Montessori had famously insisted that it was "easier to teach the children of the poor" than children of means. Naumburg's experience differed. She stated, "I had a group of poor children last winter, and a group of well-to-do children this winter...and the latter learned in six weeks more than the former learned in a year" (in Rodman, 1915a).

From its small beginnings, the Montessori class at Leete School began to flourish. Early May 1915, feminist educator Henrietta Rodman

(1915b) reported on the Montessori class at Leete School for *New York Tribune*. Rodman found that the class was not strictly Montessori. Instead, Raphael and Naumburg were merging Montessori, Froebel, Bentley Interpretative Dancing, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, and Alexander's method of motor habit re-education. Rodman quoted Raphael asserting, "I was amazed at first to find that Dr. Montessori did so little work with sound in her sense training. Then...I realized that no one genius can possibly construct a complete system of education." Naumburg acknowledged, "We have accepted Dr Montessori's work with keen appreciation of its great value...and we have added to it what we have learned from other great teachers, from Froebel and Dalcroze, and Miss Bentley, and most recently from Mr. Matthias Alexander, of London."

Just one month later, in May 1915, ostensibly since PS 4 had become extremely overcrowded, the public school administration transferred the Montessori class to the enclosed porch of Trinity Annex, a church school building and annex of PS 4 at Washington Avenue and 176<sup>th</sup> Street (*Sun*, 1916). Was the move and overcrowding unexpected by school board administrators? Did Naumburg and Raphael realize the threat this move to the annex posed to their public school Montessori experiment? They did begin to take up the cause to prevent public school overcrowding. The June 23, 1915, *Outlook*, had Naumburg's (1915) first article on the Gary System — a plan to address overcrowding by class reorganization implemented by William Wirt of Gary, Indiana, which school reformers proposed implementing in New York City public schools. As well, the October 22, 1917, *Evening Post* (1917) quoted Raphael — now Mrs. Arthur M. Reis, and Vice-Chair of the Gary School League as well as Chair of the Education Committee of the Women's City Club — advising, "Parents should learn about the Gary system by watching it in operation at the [New York City] schools."

### **1916: Public education tragedy vs. private education success**

In the autumn of 1915, Alexander returned to New York City welcomed by Ethel Webb. He immediately began teaching the Bushs, and, on their, Webb and likely Naumburg's references, Alice Chipman Dewey (John Dewey's wife) and

several of their children. Early in 1916, he met John Dewey, who also took lessons. Other leading New York City academics did too, including Richard M. Hodge (Teachers College and Union Theological Seminary faculty), Horace Kallen (future New School philosophy of aesthetics faculty), Wesley Mitchell (Columbia and future New School economics faculty), and James H. Robinson (Columbia history faculty and future New School faculty). As well, perhaps the most influential (but least recognized until recently) was progressive education curriculum designer and education reform activist Lucy Sprague Mitchell. Wesley was Sprague Mitchell's husband. They also brought their children to Alexander for lessons.

Naumburg and Raphael's private Montessori classes thrived. When Leete School opened for the autumn 1915 term, enrollment surged. Parents who could afford tuition anywhere found Naumburg and Raphael's approach of integrating Montessori with music and dance training desirable for their children. They now had two groups of children in Montessori classes at Leete.

The 1915-1916 school year Montessori experimental class in the public school did not fare as well. During the winter of 1916, Naumburg and Raphael's PS 4 class abruptly lost students. Cold weather had forced a second move, from the enclosed Trinity Annex porch to the Annex's "dark and badly ventilated cellar gymnasium" (*New York Tribune*, 1916). Astoundingly, the Board of Education had provided no funding to heat the classroom, not to mention minimal furnishing of equipment and supplies (A Statesman's Granddaughter, 1916; *Evening World*, 1916; Feigenbaum, 1916; *New York Call*, 1916; *New York Tribune*, 1916; *Sun*, 1916). Eventually, the PS 4 Montessori class completely dissolved. Naumburg resigned in February 1916.

The sorry episode raises several questions: When Naumburg wrote her article criticizing Irish Catholic and Jesuit reception to Montessori (see above), did she inadvertently, perhaps naively, and certainly unnecessarily make enemies within sectors of the New York City public school system? Especially among Catholic sectors? Did religious and ethnic biases play a role? Did Horace Kallen's theory of "cultural pluralism" enter into the discussion of the education reform

activists? Those questions are beyond the scope of this article. Except, the story of early twentieth century New York City school wars has been repeatedly visited by able historians, especially, Cohen (1963), Ravitch (1974/1988), and recently Staring (2013b). The consensus is that these school wars, which certainly concerned important debate about how to deliver education, the kind of concerns addressed by Naumburg and her colleagues, also occurred within shifts of power between old Protestant elite and newly emerging civic power among Irish Catholics. The latter arrived during an early nineteenth century immigration, when the population of “[Irish] Catholic population of New York City rose from 1,300 in 1800 to 100,000 in 1800” (Cohen, 1975). By 1890s, Protestant and Catholic power centers were not only vying for control of civic governmental, both faced new threats from a second, much larger influx of immigrants.

The statistics are staggering. From about 1890 until looming of America’s entrance into WWI in 1915, some 13 million immigrants came to make a new home in the United States (Ratner, 1984). Most passed through Ellis Island, many settled in New York City, seventy-five percent of whom were Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe, perhaps another twenty-five percent Catholics from Italy. The city hardly had housing or other infrastructure to meet their needs. Novelists and essayist documented all the worst slum conditions. One Protestant response, drawing on a rich missionary tradition, was to turn schools into welfare agencies and offer to education the immigrant children (Cohen, 1964).

The idea to ‘Americanize’ the new residents via schooling followed a long English tradition. The British strategy of using education to sustain empire dates at least to latter Elizabethan England and East India Company formation in 1600. It was not limited to India. According to a 1628 Charter, converting American “Indians” to Christianity was ostensibly the principal aim of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Frazier, 1975, p. 18). The British Empire tradition may have been best summed up in 1838 by Thomas Babington Macaulay, 1st Baron Macaulay, who advocated English schooling in India “to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, — a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in

intellect.” (Parenthetically, a great nephew of 1st Baron Macaulay, Sir George Trevelyan, was a student in F. M. Alexander’s first training course for Alexander Technique teachers in the 1930s).

In early twentieth century New York, empire instead translated to “melting pot.” The wealthy Protestant business leaders who financed the Public Education Association (PEA), one even a Mayflower descent (*e.g.*, see: Cohen, 1964, p. 66) follow a path parallel to that of the wealthy donors of the Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England who financed the celebrated Stockbridge Mission, where, in the 1740s, Jonathan Edwards took on a task of education and advocated an education program not unlike that of the experimental classes promoted by the progressive education reformers (Frazier, *ibid*). In American nineteenth century history, the more institutions appeared to change by becoming secular, the more the values that drove them stayed the same.

In this context, Naumburg and Raphael’s ethnicity seems noteworthy. The story of their experiment in PS 4 shows that these two young, talented, well-educated Jewish women learned from their radical PEA sisters who came from an Anglo-Saxon Protestant heritage — much as the Protestant heritage radicals were learning from their far more radical Eastern European sisters in the labor movement (Staring, 2013b).

Naumburg entered Vassar in 1908, the year Kallen graduated from Harvard. The latter was a Jew who developed a theory of “cultural pluralism” (see: Ratner, 1984). Kallen’s classmates included his life-long friend Alain Locke, an African American and civil rights leader. A generation earlier the civil rights leader and American radical WEB Du Bois also attended Harvard. By 1909, one response to influx of immigration is that for Jews and African Americans, the doors of admission were slamming shut at elite Ivy League schools like Harvard and the related Seven Sister schools, which included Naumburg’s Vassar and Barnard. That rigid, restrictive non-enrollment of so-called ethnic minorities was set in motion by Harvard President Abbott Lawrence Lowell (see: Karabel, 2005) and lasted until the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1965.

Cohen (1964, pp. 123-36) and others (*e.g.*, de Lima, 1942) have documented the demise of a

subsequent experimental school, Little Red School House, led by secular Protestant-heritage women of the PEA. The women were originally PEA staff. Unlike the failed experiment with the Montessori class, the PEA funded administration costs for the Little Red experiment from 1921 to 1932, when the depression ate into charitable donations from businesses (Cohen, *ibid.*).

Did, Yentl-like, the two young Jewish women Naumburg and Raphael perhaps take on a role of teaching a school that in an ethnic culture in which in previous generations women traditionally had no role? Certainly, women had no role in intellectual life in traditional Jewish communities. Teaching was done by a male Rabbi. Now, these two young women demonstrated courage to take on a new role within their own and their new culture. They expressed their feminism in the context of an emerging cultural pluralism particular to New York City.

Along with the PEA sponsored experimental class, historians of the progressive era can add the Naumburg-Raphael Montessori experimental class to the history of progressive experiments in the public schools. Investigate further whether ethnic and religious bias played a part in the sabotage of the school board in granting permission to open the class, and then failing to provide a heated classroom, which led to its closing. Or, it could simply have been an incompetent, overwhelmed administration?

Claire Raphael Reis married in December 1915, turning her attention to non-education matters (Oja, 1997). A month after Naumburg's resignation, she and Raphael Reis became members of a committee of one hundred women who in April 1916 would organize into the Gary School League propagandizing restructuring of overcrowded public schools (Tanenbaum, 1916). The Gary School League propagated the Gary Plan, or Wirt Plan, of reorganizing congested schools. Among the League's officers were Raphael Reis's friend Mary Potter Bush, PEA worker Lucy Sprague Mitchell, and Alice Dewey (Staring, 2013b). In May 1916, on the heels of receiving a substantial inheritance Sprague Mitchell and others founded the Bureau of Educational Experiments. The Bureau was an independent educational clearinghouse and research organization that would almost immediately launch an exhibition on Gary

Schools. The Bureau firmly supported Gary plan principles and the Gary School League. John Dewey promoted the Gary Plan; his former student William Wirt headed the reorganizing of inner-city public schools according to his Gary Plan; Dewey and Wirt served as Bureau's honorary members.

In 1917, the Bureau asked Naumburg to report on her private education Montessori classes for their fourth bulletin (see below).

In May 1916, when Raphael Reis withdrew from co-directing the Leete School Montessori classes, Naumburg made a trip to Gary, Indiana to observe first-hand how classroom reorganization and efficient management of schools could prevent school overcrowding. She followed up with a series of articles on Gary schools and the Gary Plan in 1916 issues of the *New York Evening Mail* (Hinitz, 2002). Naumburg also travelled on to Chicago, where she visited the Francis W. Parker School and Jane Addams' Hull House Settlement (Hinitz, 2002). It was essentially a pilgrimage.

Meanwhile, in mid-1916 England, after ending employment at Darlington Training College and at Beaumont Street Infant School Montessori class, Irene Tasker embarked on an ocean liner to the United States. In New York City, she began attending Dewey's advanced psychology and pedagogy classes at Teachers College (*Christian Advocate*, 1918). This was exactly parallel to the path Naumburg followed between 1914 and 1916. In the fall, after Claire Raphael Reis' resignation, Irene Tasker became Margaret Naumburg's Leete School Montessori classes associate. At Leete School, now renamed Lehman-Leete School, advertisements under the banner "Montessori Classes and Primary" appearing in the November and December 1916 *The Seven Arts* issues, announce Tasker's fresh presence:

Montessori Classes and Primary for children from 2 to 8 years old.

The aim of this school is to develop each child's personality as a basis for social consciousness. Emphasis is placed on creative self-expression through music, drawing, dancing, carpentry, etc. Special afternoon play-hours for children of 2 and 3 years. Write for booklet. Miss Margaret

Naumburg. Miss Irene Tasker, Associate.

In November 1916, *New York Evening Mail* reporter Marion Weinstein observed, “Miss Naumburg has her own ideas about teaching youngsters drawing and dancing. The children are encouraged from the first to express their feelings and ideas with paints and crayons” (in Hinitz, 2002, p. 49). Weinstein’s observation that “Naumburg has her own ideas” suggests Naumburg was fashioning a curriculum with elements from Alexander, Bentley, Dalcroze, Froebel, and Trotter — as well those of a Montessori.

### **1917: The Children’s School: Naumburg’s credentials**

In spring 1917, Alexander asked Tasker to join his New York practice. When he returned to London during summers, Tasker and Webb were unable to join him, since “women were not allowed to travel by sea” during wartimes” (Tasker, 1978, p. 13). Mid-1917, Tasker resigned as Naumburg’s associate at Lehman-Leete School. When Alexander returned from London in the fall, Tasker instead joined Alexander as a second assistant with Webb. Tasker (1957) noted in correspondence that she “joined [Alexander] as an assistant and during that time Dewey and Mrs. Dewey were having lessons.” Like Webb, her main duties were a background role of assisting with the teaching of Alexander’s clients and editing his texts. In a reminiscence, Tasker (1978) recalled that she would often spend “hours and hours a day” working on Alexander’s texts (p. 15). An enhanced US edition of his 1910 book *Man’s Supreme Inheritance* would be released in the winter of 1918. It is unclear how much content Webb and Tasker contributed; they seemed to be better at finding ‘Alexander’s voice’ than did Alexander’s ghostwriter for the earlier edition.

In spring 1917, Margaret Naumburg was writing too. The Bureau commissioned Lucile C. Deming to edit a series of bulletins on ‘experimental schools.’ Early in 1917, the Bureau asked Naumburg to report on education in her Lehman-Leete Montessori classes, to be included in the fourth Bureau Bulletin. When published mid-1917, including Naumburg’s “A Direct Method of Education,” the title of Deming’s (1917) article that followed Naumburg’s piece

renamed Naumburg Montessori classes The Children’s School. Deming also indicated that Naumburg was planning to relocate the school to two brownstones at 32-34 W. 68<sup>th</sup> Street. Another feature of the school showed as well — perhaps for the first time. Earlier reports of Naumburg and Raphael’s Leete School Montessori class (by Rodman in 1915, and Weinstein a year later) discussed its curriculum as forming a kindergarten program of merging of Montessori, Froebel, Bentley, Dalcroze, and Alexander methods. Additionally, between 1914 and 1917 Naumburg had begun psychoanalysis with the Jungian Dr. Beatrice Moses Hinkle, the influence of which was unmistakable in her 1917 Bureau Bulletin article.

Hinkle was a remarkable woman. Before coming to New York City, Hinkle was the first woman medical doctor certified to practice in San Francisco, California (McHenry, 1980). Upon her move to New York in 1905, fascinated with psychoanalysis, she became determined to study with Freud. During analysis with Freud in Vienna in 1909, however, she became disillusioned with his views on women’s psychology. Hinkle went on to study with Carl Jung, finding Jung’s psychology to be better for both women and men (Karier, 1986). By the time Naumburg sought Hinkle for psychoanalysis, Hinkle was internationally known for many firsts. As well as the first woman doctor in San Francisco, she founded the first psychotherapeutic clinic with her friend Charles Dana at Cornell Medical School, was the official translator of Jung’s work into English in the United States, the first Jungian psychologist in the U. S., — and the most celebrated woman analyst in New York City (McHenry, 1980). Hinkle (1923) theorized that women and artists are analogical. Both are creators who do not appreciate criticisms of their creations. It is hardly surprising that Hinkle would demonstrably influence Naumburg’s use of analytical psychology at The Children’s School, which is evident in the very beginning of Naumburg’s 1917 article in the fourth Bureau Bulletin:

Up to the present, our methods of education have dealt only with the conscious or surface mental life of the child. The new analytic psychology has, however, demonstrated that the unconscious mental life which is the

outgrowth of the child's instincts plays a greater role than the conscious...School problems can no longer be dealt with as they appear on the surface, for our deeper knowledge must direct our attention to the deeper realities beneath. (p. 7)

Naumburg now argued that conventional, 'former knowledge' interpreted potentially unwelcome children's behavior as forgetting what they had been told to do, lying, showing fear or disobeying, *etc.* In contrast, analytical psychology, she theorized, did not treat such behavior as isolated, but re-interpreted it as "the outgrowth of the activity and interplay of...inborn instincts." She asserted that since the "very young child is absorbed in himself, in his bodily functions and in those individuals who intimately surround him [the] problem of weaning him from those ego-centric interests is deeper and more complex than educators commonly realize. [The] usual process of education, in combating merely the symptoms of these attachments, may result in repression. [True] education must tend to bring forward these emotional sources so that they may be freed from their infantile stations and consciously re-directed into social and creative channels" (p. 8).

Following this broad summary of analytical psychology, Naumburg (1917) continued "[in] handling the physical as well as the mental life of the child the teacher must be trained to work back from the external end-symptom to the real underlying causes of the problem" (p. 9), which, in her unique synthesis, Alexander's psycho-physical procedures work synergistically with psychoanalytic means (pp. 9-10):

In handling the physical as well as the mental life of the child the teacher must be trained to work back from the external end-symptom to the real underlying causes of the problem. In this field of physical co-ordination, a new and remarkable method of readjusting the child's bodily control has been developed by Mr. F. Matthias Alexander. The technique of his method has a surprising analogy with the new analytic psychology...The correlation of these two approaches to the sources of mental and physical activity constitutes a real method of *re-*

*education.* Education in the sense of 'leading forth' what is already there is not enough. The child comes to the school with physical inhibitions and emotional fixations which must be analyzed back to their elementary components, in order that his energies may be released for proper growth. With true control, the child can now use his powers for expression and creation...Of great importance in analyzing the child's psychic life is the buried material that comes to light in his spontaneous creative activities. Among these are his first free drawings, his early attempts at dancing, making up of songs, and the beginnings of play...Through them much of the material of primitive thinking is brought forth symbolically by the child, long before language and writing become accessible as means of free expression...For this reason, I encourage children to draw, dance, and so on, without external plan or suggestion.

Always with Naumburg's penchant for effusive prose, her representation can seem like a recent-convert's sermon of analytical psychology and Alexander's procedures. Naumburg prophesizes that "no true social adjustment can be hoped for, without the release of the ego impulses brought about through creative work. Expression and experience serve to transfer the childish energies into social consciousness and can alone bring about a deep inner adjustment with the group" (p. 11). It can seem as if Naumburg had found her gurus, uncritically preaching her understanding of their views. In fairness, Dewey (1918) would, with similar content and similar gushing, conclude that

The spontaneity of childhood is a delightful and precious thing, but in its original naive form it is bound to disappear. Emotions become sophisticated unless they become enlightened, and the manifestation of sophisticated emotion is in no sense genuine self-expression. True spontaneity is henceforth not a birth-right but the last term, the consummated conquest, of an art —

the art of conscious control to the mastery of which Mr. Alexander's book so convincingly invites us. (p. xvii).

Perhaps he was reading Naumburg's Bureau Bulletin article when he wrote that introduction to the second edition of Alexander's *Man's Supreme Inheritance*. However, while Naumburg embraces and uncritically endorses Alexander, neither he nor his assistants Tasker and Webb ever used a phrase like "release of ego impulses." They would have found her psychoanalytic bent incompatible.

Naumburg anticipates an understanding of the role of Alexander lessons in the learning process and in performing arts training never articulated by Alexander, nor other teachers during Alexander's life time. When Webb introduced Naumburg and Tasker to Alexander, he promoted himself (in modern terms, which Alexander would abhor, but the shoe fits) as an 'alternative medicine healer.' There is a strong quasi-medical (*i.e.*, quack-like) odor in Alexander's pre-1910 presentations of his poorly articulated services when he offered "treatments." However, the talented Mr. Alexander had a good ear and ability to learn from, absorb, and adapt to the understandings of his new "pupils." The latter soon became the term of art for persons taking "lessons" from Mr. Alexander, this during his interactions with the New York progressive educators.

However, it was only after Alexander's death in the mid-1950s that others found a role for employing Alexander's kinesthetic teaching method in performing arts conservatories. Curiously, when Michel Saint-Denis (1982) was establishing The Julliard School Drama Division in 1969, actually the centennial of Alexander's birth, he chose the Alexander Technique to be the required "basis" for the elite acting conservatory's vocal and movement training. Independent of Naumburg, Saint-Denis reaches a Naumburg-like rationale for lessons. He depicts the Alexander Technique as "a method by which the student can free himself of postural habits and become aware of the meeting point of his body and mind. At the same time the Technique corrects the alignment of his body and his coordination in general" (pp. 104-105). Next he discusses how this connects training with processes of informed but spontaneous expression. Naumburg, in 1917,

proclaimed she had found an effective way to offer this kind of training to children in an elementary school, one deeply connected to music and dance training Raphael had first introduced a few years earlier. It seems not accidental that in its heyday, the school alumni included a substantial number of leading actors, musicians, and composers in American performing arts.

Deming's (1917) Bureau Bulletin article is less philosophic than Naumburg's. She calls attention to work attitude classroom relationships. Most of the time, she observed students worked alone in the classes; but, during dancing and various games "the class participates as a whole...The aim of the teacher in directing the child is to keep him independent and individual so that just as he is free from the repression of the conventional schoolroom he may also be free from the dominating influence of any of his companions in the group" (p. 13). She announces that field trips would be made into the city. The excursions would include "trips to the park and country and museums with a naturalist whose work will be supplemented in the school with pet animals and growing plants" (p. 14). All in all the school would "try to create an all-day, all-around life for city children" (*ibid.*). Assuming Deming's description of use of field trips for contextualized content learning to be accurate, as well as her earlier assimilations of Montessori, Dalcroze, Alexander and the like, Naumburg was now incorporating the experiential curricula worked out at Caroline Pratt's Play School. Naumburg is more psychoanalytic. She never connects James' psychology to her efforts. Nevertheless, with her movement explorations, especially the psychoanalytic perspective she brings to understanding her lessons with Alexander, she approaches finding a way to address the layer of micro-movements that James observed to be connected to emotional processes, which, in the procedures Alexander adopted from his particular synthesis of vocal training, turn of century physical therapies, and disproven evolutionary theory of inheritance of habits, are instead connected to motor processes of stance, gait, and respiration.

When school opened after the summer break, children from two to eight-and-a-half years were welcomed in four groups at the new Children's School, at their new address. Note, however, that advertisements in the Augustus,

September and October 1917 issues of *The Seven Arts* did not (yet) indicate a curriculum influence by analytic psychology, nor by the vaguely articulated habit-changing method taught by Alexander:

The Children's School (Fourth Year). Classes in open-air rooms throughout the building. [...]

The aim of this school is to develop the personality of each child as a basis for social consciousness. A large roof playground; carpentry shop; studio for modelling and drawing; auditorium for music and dancing. Particular attention in Science and spoken French. Special teachers for special subjects. Afternoon trips in connection with school work. Write for booklet. Miss Margaret Naumburg.

### **1918: Alexander attacks 'free expression' schools**

When Children's School was opening in the fall of 1917, Tasker and Webb began revision and editing of Alexander's texts. The revised *Man's Supreme Inheritance* appeared February 1918. Dewey (1918) wrote the "Introductory Word." A number of Alexander's new pupils, among whom Naumburg's husband Waldo Frank, wrote laudatory reviews. The book sold well. A reprint was already called for in May 1918. However, before the reprint was published, Alexander returned to London. Also in May, Tasker accompanied Alice and John Dewey on a train journey to California. By the end of May, Dewey delivered his Raymond Fred West Lectures at the Leland Stanford Junior University. In Los Angeles, Tasker taught one of Alexander's New York clients, an 18-year-old young woman who spent the summer in Hollywood, and gave lectures on several Women's Clubs' invitations, collecting "quite considerable sums of money for the British Red Cross" (Tasker, 1978, p. 14).

Sprague Mitchell, her husband, and their children had had lessons with Alexander since 1916. It is the year Sprague Mitchell received an inheritance and an endowment from a relative that allowed her to found the Bureau of Educational Experiments. It is not widely reported that Alexander nearly became a Bureau member

himself. During a November 1916 meeting of the Bureau policy-making Working Council, there was a call for nominations of new Bureau members; someone, probably Sprague Mitchell, proposed Alexander. Ostensibly, it was Alexander's successes in "treating" the Mitchells and their children that prompted Sprague Mitchell to recommend to study Alexander's methods in an elementary school setting — and to invite Alexander to address an informal Bureau conference. Action on the proposal was postponed, as well as arrangements for the informal conference, until the Bureau members would know the exact results of lessons given by Alexander to a boy in the Laboratory School of the New York City Neurological Institute. The recommendation suggests that Bureau members had at that time adjudged Alexander's service to be largely therapeutic rather than educational in nature, likely an impression formed from Alexander. Subsequent to a physical examination of the child, they concluded that the boy's condition was not robust enough to have lessons with Alexander. The next idea was not to wait for results of lessons of individual children, but to instead observe a group in Caroline Pratt's Play School, including before-and-after physical examinations and 'shadowgraphs' of the children. There is no record that this idea was followed up. Next, they discussed hiring a field worker to investigate Alexander's former pupils, this to estimate the overall viability of Sprague Mitchell's proposal to study Alexander's procedures. In May 1917, Alexander made his summer journey to London. He returned to New York City during the fall. Sprague Mitchell's 1916 proposal to study Alexander's methods was never realized. In November 1917, Alexander's name was withdrawn from the list of nominations of new active Bureau members.

Two months later, Alexander's (1918) disapproving and condescending views on the use of dance and music in progressive education classes appeared in the greatly expanded second edition of *Man's Supreme Inheritance*. The book caused commotion amid New York progressives. Philosopher and journalist Randolph Bourne (1918a-b) famously, and effectively, satirized Alexander's foolish attempts at an evolutionary theory. Other reviewers were Frederick Peterson (1919a-b, New York Neurological Institute

neurologist, psychoanalyst, and Professor of psychiatry at Columbia University), Samuel Slavson (1921a, engineer, journalist, and originator of group psychotherapy), and art historian Carl Zigrosser (1918).

The evolutionary theory that Bourne savaged was not new in the 1918 edition. What caused concern among the progressive educators is that Alexander disapproved of music, dancing, drawing, and carpentering, in the “so-called ‘free’ schools” (p. 123) and that he disparaged the teachers, “Free Expressionists” who introduced,

...the practical side of two of the channels for self-expression, which are specially insisted upon in schools where the new mode is being practised, namely, dancing and drawing. A friend of mine always refers to them as the two D’s, a phrase that refers very explicitly to these two forms of damnation when employed as fundamentals in education.

The method of the “Free Expressionists” is to associate music with the first of these arts. Now music and dancing are, as everyone knows, excitements which make a stronger emotional appeal to the primitive than to the more highly evolved races. No drunken man in our civilisation ever reaches the stage of anæsthesia and complete loss of self-control attained by the savage under the influence of these two stimuli. But in the schools where I have witnessed children’s performances, I have seen the first beginnings of that madness which is the savage’s ecstasy. Music in this connection is an artificial stimulus and a very potent one. And though artificial stimuli may be permissible in certain forms of pleasure sought by the reasoning, trained adult, they are uncommonly dangerous incitements to use in the education of a child of six. (pp. 124-125).

Alexander concludes his diatribe with an argument that it is counterproductive to offer free movement without some kind of guiding intervention. When left to their own devices, children will develop maladaptive habits that will

remain out of their awareness, by “subconscious” rather than “conscious” guidance and control, to use Alexander’s terms.

I have seen children of various ages amusing themselves — somewhat inadequately in quite a number of cases — by drawing, dancing, carpentering, and so on, but in hardly a single instance have I seen an example of one of these children employing his physical mechanisms in a correct or *natural way*. (p. 132).

Dewey proposed that Alexander’s methods are essential in education. Alexander fully embraced this new way of characterizing what he offered, “Give a child conscious control and you give him poise, the essential starting point for education...he will have wonderful powers of adapting himself to any and every environment that may surround him” (p. 136). However, he warned, advocates of progressive education were not free themselves. As long as human “mechanisms are operated by inherited subconscious guidance and control” (p. 142), he thought, the principles of ‘free expression’ would not bring results. He saw his methods of changing motor coordination and breathing habits as means to gain conscious guidance and control instead. He sketched his methods in ‘conscious control’ terminology, as ‘race culture,’ that is, eugenic, measures to improve humans. And he used an old metaphor: “The gardener does, indeed, train the young growth. He draws it out to the light and warmth and leads it into the conditions most helpful for its development” (p. 144). In the first (1910) edition of *Man’s Supreme Inheritance*, Alexander seems to adopt the language and phrases and concepts of a popular English Eugenicist who also advocated Montessori method (e.g., Staring, 2005, pp. 111-12). However, Alexander’s eugenic program was founded on disproven Lamarckian inheritance of habit theory, a theory rejected as completely disproven by the English Eugenicists. Alexander’s “subconscious guidance and control” is somehow “inherited” (e.g., p. 142). Somehow, by taking control of a layer of minute sensory motor habits, Alexander had the keys to the salvation of mankind. It is the kind of argument that a Randolph Bourne would have an easy time ridiculing when he chose to confront his former

beloved professor John Dewey about a dispute concerning American entry in World War I.

An Alexander biographer (Bloch, 2004, p. 111) — and a historian of education in his wake — speculate that Alexander taught at Naumburg's Children's School — and that Alexander's scolding of progressive education "Free Expressionists" thus referred to Naumburg. Hinitz, for instance, (2013) claims, "Naumburg discontinued her direct association with [Alexander], around 1917, possibly over some critical comments he made...in his book *Man's Supreme Inheritance*" (p. 188). Note, however, that Alexander's book appeared in February 1918.

There is no evidence that the experience that led to Alexander's disparaging observations about dancing and drawing is about classes he observed at Naumburg's school. There is evidence in Bureau of Educational Experiments archives that they were made in response to classes taught by Bureau member Caroline Pratt at Play School (subsequently renamed City and Country School) — and by interactions with this strong-willed woman. Alexander met Caroline Pratt in early November 1916. Wesley Mitchell brought Pratt to Alexander's teaching rooms at the Essex Hotel. Later that month Pratt and Alexander dined with the Mitchells, discussing Alexander's method over diner (Mitchell, 1916).

In November 1918, while during a Bureau Executive Committee meeting Bureau members were discussing the possibility of having someone trained by Alexander placed as a teacher in his methods in Play School, Evelyn Dewey strongly objected. Dewey was Naumburg's former Barnard College roommate. Even in otherwise dry Bureau meeting notes, the vehemence of Dewey's heated protest comes through. Calling attention to Alexander's views about dancing and drawing, declaring explicitly that they were made about a visit Alexander made to Pratt's Play School, she voices strong objections to having *any* teacher trained with Alexander in an elementary school. Wesley Mitchell attempted to intervene later, unsuccessfully. Dewey attended only one more Bureau meeting. In protest, in January 1919, she resigned from Bureau activities. A psychoanalytic assessment of the episode would suggest that the level of emotion reflects something more than what the participants acknowledged to each other. Perhaps Evelyn Dewey was in 1919 also thinking about her good friend Randolph Bourne. Bourne,

her father's new adversary and Alexander book critic had become dangerously ill during the flu epidemic of 1918. He died within weeks of that Bureau meeting, at the apartment of Caroline Pratt and her life-partner Helen Marot. Whatever the motivation for Evelyn Dewey's outburst, the consequence is that Alexander's procedures to manage postural and breathing habits were never examined by the Bureau.

### 1918-1922: The Children's School Expands

Relations between Tasker and Webb with Naumburg do appear to wane considerably after 1917. There are no reports of exchanges. Webb and Tasker (and Alexander), however, did benefit from Naumburg, as well as from Sprague Mitchell's proposal to incorporate Alexander lessons in an elementary school setting. Among Webb and Tasker's new duties as Alexander's assistants, as well as their unacknowledged contributions to his (1923) book *Constructive Conscious Control of the Individual*, they increasingly began accepting children for lessons in the method — children who needed attention for special needs.

In the meantime, enrollment at Children's School continued expanding each year. The revolutionary curriculum of Naumburg and, really, Raphael's design drew students. The school added a class each year. While 1917 advertisements (*e.g.*, in the 23 November *Columbia Alumni News*) stated that Children's School would welcome children from 2 to 8-1/2 years, and 1919 advertisements (*e.g.*, in the 20 September *The Public*) stated that children from 2 to 10 years were welcome, 1921 advertisements (*e.g.*, in the 16 August *The Survey*) declared that the school taught children from 2 to 12 years. After the renaming, Walden School advertisements (*e.g.*, in September 2, 1923 *New York Times*) announced that Walden School educated children from nursery through junior high school. Early in 1923 an adjacent brownstone house, at 36 W. 68th Street, was acquired to accommodate new classes.

Enrollment expansion continued despite a near total drop off of publicity about the school. Of the two occasions in which the school, and/or Naumburg, received media coverage between 1918 and 1920, one was highly unfavorable — Helen Wayne's (1919) *New York Times Magazine*

report on a March 1919 meeting of the Women's Freedom Congress. Under the provocative banner headline "Bobbed Hair and Maiden Names for Wives," Wayne highlighted "Greenwich Village notables," including Henrietta Rodman, Helen Marot, and Rose Schneiderman. Wayne singled out Naumburg, who indeed continued using her maiden name. According to Wayne, Naumburg most zealously imposed an analytic psychology principle of taking children away from their parents:

"Margaret Naumburg, director of an all day modern school for very young children...urged that all such children would be better away from their mothers, (she said she could prove this by psycho-analysis!) and brought up in a sort of big brooder house."

Perhaps Wayne had a point. No doubt her Jungian psychoanalyst influenced Naumburg. Jung believed that the purpose of early schooling was to free the child from the mother's unconscious, this being necessary for the child's true personality to emerge (Jung, 1954). Or, Wayne was scare mongering.

Another report was hardly unfavorable. In September 1919, *The Modern School* reprinted Naumburg's 1917 Bureau Bulletin "A Direct Method of Education" (Naumburg, 1919). In light of the assertion that Naumburg broke ties with Alexander after 1917, this 1919 reprint included her admiration for Alexander's procedures. Of course, the reprint could only have been reprinted with blessings of Naumburg and the Bureau. Its publication belies the idea that there was animosity between Naumburg and Alexander.

Few other newspapers reported about Children's School. Still, there was news that former Cornell University lecturer Hendrik W. van Loon, and Swiss composer Ernest Bloch would teach the students at Children's School (e.g., *Ithaca Daily News*, 1919).

A December 1920, *New York Call* article by Naumburg, "School Must Study Child," mainly consists of quotations from her 1917 Bureau Bulletin article that came immediately after her reference to Alexander's procedures, also reprinted in full in 1919 in *The Modern School* magazine. In the Children's School catalogue for the 1921-1922 school year, issued in April 1921, Naumburg returns to the issue of movement, with some faint echoes of her work with Alexander.

*Physical Co-ordination.* A basic problem of education is the achievement of physical and mental equilibrium. It must be solved before a child can perfectly harness his energies in the direction of any work whatever. There need be no such thing as a clumsy or uncontrolled child. The School makes a special point of getting at the various problems of co-ordination.

The catalogue copy does not indicate what method the school will use to help children achieve physical and mental equilibrium. Interestingly, Samuel Slavson, *New York Call* education editor, became a Children's School curriculum consultant in 1919. Slavson (1921a), in an article on Alexander's arguments comments on dancing in 'free expression' schools, issued only a few days after Children's School brochure, dismisses Alexander's arguments as nonsense: "Whatever the deductions of a kinaesthetic specialist may be, common observations of normal cases and the opinion of teachers qualified to judge lead to a deduction contrary to that of Mr. Alexander's. In educating children, we must abandon the conception that children are incapable creatures." Combined with the article, Slavson's new role at Children's School indicate Naumburg may have been turning away from Alexander's idea that co-ordinating, 'conscious control' requires an intervention. However, in her 1928 book *The Child and the World*, Naumburg instead again articulated strong support for Alexander's approach to addressing coordination and other issues. As well, she favourably refers to Alexander's 1918 book that Slavson disparaged (pp. 265-271).

In April 1921, the school catalogue (above), stressed that the Children's School "came into being in response to the need of developing a type of education suited to the interests of children growing up in the world of today as contradistinguished from the traditional methods of education" (p. 7). In the light of the discourse about Alexander, and whether she had broken away from him, the evidence suggests she continued to hold admiration for him and the method he taught. However, Naumburg (1921, p. 6) in fact, is becoming increasingly psychoanalytic in her mode of expression, indicating more the influence of Hinkle than of

Alexander, and doing so in terms Alexander would hardly embrace.

The most important task of The Children's School is to reach the personal problem of each child and to master it as a means for his development...In the light of modern psychology, education in its original sense of "leading forth" what is already there is not enough. The causes of a child's problem are not to be found on the surface. It is necessary to trace them back to the early impulses hidden beneath the external action. It is necessary to have real cooperation between the school and the home. For only when a child's impulses are understood is it possible to lead him to a true direction of his powers.

Naumburg's new 'modern psychology' includes very little of Alexander. We can infer from curriculum guidelines, how they were used in different age groups "to create, to the extent of their development, an organic school society, including its actual duties and responsibilities of organization" (p. 8), and that from "the sense of school responsibility there is then developed a sense of civic responsibility" (p. 9). She named the school's 'Group Teachers,' among them Margaret Pollitzer (future Walden School Director), the special teachers in Music, Indian Arts and Crafts, Folk Dancing, General Science and French, Domestic Science, and school psychologist Elizabeth Goldsmith (future Walden School Associate Director). The school's prospectus shows the consideration given to the work in various age groups. For instance, "The children in the two youngest Groups...soon come to *organize* their interests and desires about such constructive occupations as building, drawing, digging, carpentering, or schemes of floor games" (p. 9). Did they drop dancing?

*Evening Post* (1921) published a short article taken directly from the 1921-1922 Children's School prospectus, providing little insight into Naumburg's 'modern psychology' philosophy and the actual work done in various groups. Three weeks later, however, in the *New York Call*, Slavson's (1921b) illustrated article discussed a project set up by the students themselves as a surprise for their Director Naumburg; the new school paper. He went into

considerable detail portraying the school's philosophy of group work, standing committees in various groups, group buying for the domestic science class, as well the philosophy behind the school's maxim to "attempt to reach, understand and solve the problems of the individual child." It was certainly good publicity for the school, and no doubt helpful for parents who could afford private school tuition in deciding where to place their children. Slavson advocated dancing.

### 1922: The Walden School under Naumburg

In February 1922, an article by Lucy Price (1922a-b) featured an exhibition of drawings and paintings by Children's School students at the Bourgeois Gallery. Price quoted Naumburg reflecting, "[The] reason the children have done what they have is because they have been allowed ever since they first took up the pencil to depict just what they felt impelled to portray, not what they were told to." In April, *New York Call* (1922) reported a successful performance of a play written by Children's School students. In May, Naumburg became a mother to son Thomas. Children's School changed its name to Walden School when "the older elementary school children protested against the school name" (Hinitz, 2002, p. 43; see also Hinitz, 2013, pp. 193-195). At some time in 1922, Hinitz (2002) reports, Naumburg turned over Walden School executive direction to Margaret Pollitzer, former Group Teacher, and to school psychologist C. Elizabeth Goldsmith, who now became Associate Director. This transfer of authority occurred after she had considered closing down the school (Hinitz, 2013, pp. 182-183). Did she wish to focus her attention on being a mother?

When school doors reopened after summer break, the September issue of *The World Tomorrow* issues Naumburg's (1922) "Life in a New School," addressing the benefits of the all day Walden School where children could, according to her, develop a true world of their own. Naumburg, undoubtedly, continued to be influenced by Hinkle and her Jungian analysis. Hinkle (1923) and Jung (1954) would support Naumburg's notion of children developing a world of their own as a salient part of healthy personality development. Motivating for further research is what Naumburg indicated as

underlying *raison d'être* for Walden School (p. 265; emphasis added):

By keeping the children throughout the entire day, we are able to develop a fundamental and well-rounded educational scheme. *It enables us first of all to eliminate the negative influence of haphazard street play, incompetent nursemaids and superficial governesses.* It also makes possible a well-balanced program of work and play under the direction of teachers who know the exact needs of each.

While she proposes to keep children “throughout the entire day,” her rationale hardly reverberates with Helen Wayne’s (1919) charge in her *New York Times Magazine* article about the March 1919 meeting of the Women’s Freedom Congress (see above) —that Naumburg wanted to take children away from their parents. Naumburg instead warns parents about haphazard street play and poor childcare help. While additional research on Wayne’s charges subject may be warranted in light of Naumburg’s Jungian influences, it is unlikely that this expectant mother would want let anyone take her own baby away.

Naumburg (1922) continues to challenge conventional notions about ‘idle hands being the devils workshop,’ proposing instead that “in order to make possible a true development of individual and group work, two things not to be found in formal school organization were essential: plenty of free space and plenty of free time” (p. 266).

Could research help resolve what works best to enhance children’s learning? Perhaps following the lead of the schools associated with Bureau of Educational Experiments, she refers to analysis of data gathered through what she called “practical tests,” anticipating today’s concept of action research:

For instance, we discovered that where children of seven years could spend thirty minutes to the best advantage in science work, they did their best in French or Music in twenty minute periods. By similar practical tests we discovered that eleven year old children were most successful in learning French in half hour periods, while work combining History and

Social Science could be most satisfactorily developed in forty-five minute periods, and that science work including laboratory time achieved the best results in periods ranging from three-quarters of an hour to an hour. (*ibid.*).

Based on this kind of systematic observation and qualitative inquire, she asserts, the school developed a flexible curriculum.

### **1923: The Walden School exclusive of Naumburg**

Giving birth in 1922 may have been a joyous occasion. It also seemed to accelerate disintegration of her already failing marriage to Waldo Frank. She began planning to obtain a divorce. At the time, to divorce in New York, essentially required that she and her new son would travel to Reno, Nevada and to reside there for a period of at least six months.

At a March 1923 exhibition of artistic and manual work of Walden School students, New School for Social Research anthropologist Goldenweiser, Columbia University sociologist Ogburn, and Naumburg spoke on ‘The Need of Modern Society for a New Type of Education.’ A *New York Call* (1923) announcement of the event quoted Naumburg declaring, “The Walden School is one of the few schools in America...which is attempting to work out experimentally the new type of education required by modern society. We are discovering ways of developing in the individual child his innate recourses, which would best fit him for a life in an evolving society.” Interestingly, the *Call* introduced Naumburg as “founder and educational advisor of the Walden School.” The announcement may be the first public indication that Walden School management changes were imminent. It is not clear what exact measures the school took to transfer executive management. The *Call* (1923) also names her as the school’s founder and educational advisor, as do advertisements in July to October 1923 issues of the *New York Times*.

While Naumburg was determined to carry out her divorce plans, which required her departure from New York and her beloved school, stringent measures were taken to secure a firm foundation for the school’s future. Earlier that year, for instance, a third brownstone house, at 36 W. 68<sup>th</sup> Street, was acquired to guarantee the

school's future expansion. A 'Walden School Development Fund' was created to implement a fund-raising campaign to amass \$100,000. In December 1923, the Walden School (1923) issued *Pictures of a Child's Own World*, a prospectus outlining the school's educational policy, conveying the students' work, with pictures highlighting them engaged in their activities. The prospectus had framed congratulatory words of the Editors of *The New Republic*, *The Survey*, *The New York Evening Mail*, and others. Solicitation by the Walden School Development Fund for contributions secured an open-ended scholarship policy and successfully allay of a deficit of \$18,550. The press paid due attention, reporting the fund-raising initiative (e.g., *Evening Post*, 1923). The 1929-1930 Walden School catalogue now references Naumburg as founder and as member of the Board of Trustees, no longer as educational advisor (see: Walden School, 1929). The brochure lists eight scholarships by name.

## CONCLUSION

Slowly, Naumburg's school grew from a single Montessori kindergarten class of three students, inspired by Alexander's procedures and by methods of creative expression through dance, music, carpentering, and drawing/painting (e.g., Cane, 1926a-b, 1983; Naumburg, 1926), to an all-day school. Additionally, progressively, inspired by analytic psychology. "When [Naumburg] founded the Children's School [in 1917], the teaching staff was asked to undergo psychoanalysis, so that they would be able to conduct a school where children could add to their emotional, as well as intellectual, power" (Hinitz, 2002, p. 39). The majority of teachers complied with the request.

Reports of visitors (e.g., Johnson, 1923) and writings by the Walden School staff published during the mid- and late-1920s reveal little about the organization and curriculum of the pre-1922 Children's School. Pollitzer (1925) does observe that staff members were "constantly trying...to observe and record the child's life at home and at school, and to get behind the meaning of [these] objective data to understand its meaning as a whole" (p. 18). Goldsmith and Nitscheke (1929) report that the school kept "health records, and physical charts...tabulating daily physical adjustments of the children [and] consecutive records of the emotional adjustments of children,

[and teachers were] doing research along the line of a special school of psychology" (pp. 227-228). The data were available for internal school use only. Research into the kinds of questions a progressive educator like Naumburg would have asked from the data acquired at the school was not feasible in an era when all the leading quantitative psychologists were either nascent behaviourists or reductionists.

## How did Naumburg and her school part?

Clearly the Walden School Development Fund reached its 1923 target of collecting \$100,000. The following years the school thrived, became well known, nationally and internationally, and added another building. The focus on creative expression and analytic psychology principles remained a characteristic of Walden School. Early in 1924, without much delay after the start of the school's fund-raising campaign, Naumburg and her son Thomas departed for Reno, where they would dwell from February to September. When her divorce from Frank was granted in the Reno District Court (*Nevada State Journal*, 1924), Naumburg returned to New York City. She did not return as Director of Walden School, but continued educational consultative work for a number of years. Outside the school, she became involved in several occult groups before she later in her life turned to art psychotherapy (Hinitz, 2002).

In 1928, Naumburg published *The Child and the World: Dialogues in Modern Education*, discussing her educational stance: her legacy. Another legacy is certainly the way other schools incorporated much of the creative synthesis of methods first made by Naumburg and Raphael when they were in their early twenties. By opening their school to visitors, offering in effect a demonstration school, Naumburg and Raphael appear to have had considerably more influence on how to deliver performing arts education than their individual contributions at their school. One question to consider, for instance, is how much the presence of Walden School in Midtown Manhattan made possible the 1936 creation of Midtown Manhattan's famed Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts?

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