The Irony of Industrial Welfare and Progressive Education: The CF&I Sociological Department's Educational Programs In Southern Colorado, 1901-1915

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THE IRONY OF INDUSTRIAL WELFARE
AND PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION:
THE CF&I SOCIOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN SOUTHERN COLORADO, 1901-1915

By

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In Southern Colorado, 1901-1915

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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet the acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above-mentioned discipline.
Bartels, Bradley (Ph.D. Education)

The Irony of Industrial Welfare and Progressive Education: The CF&I Sociological Department’s Educational Programs, 1901-1915

Dissertation directed by Professor Rubén Donato

Between 1900 and 1915, the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company was one of the largest corporations in the United States, employing thousands of miners and steelworkers in southern Colorado and adjoining states. CF&I workers and their families lived in poverty and worked under dangerous conditions in closed company mining camps, and were dependent on the company for their livelihood. The vast majority of the coal miners and their families living in these company coal camps were either recently-arrived immigrants from southern and eastern Europe or Hispanos, a segment of the Mexican population living in southern Colorado for generations. In 1901, CF&I officials, in response to some of the progressive social ideas of the time as well as periodic labor unrest, sought to improve the living conditions in the camps to insure labor stability while insuring maximum industrial control over their workers. Adapting some of the ideas of progressive reformers and welfare capitalists of the era, CF&I initiated a number of educational programs through the work of the company’s Sociological Department. The Department built schools, provided educational funding, hired and trained teachers, standardized the school curriculum, provided resources and instructional materials, and sponsored kindergarten and domestic science educational programs in the coal camps and communities in southern Colorado. But this came at a cost, since these educational programs were designed in part to assimilate and acculturate immigrant and Hispano children and their parents and to insure social efficiency by preparing children for their stratified roles in an industrial society. Ironically, the educational programs implemented through the Department resulted in an increased measure of access to schooling, without regard to race or ethnicity, as well as social commonality for children and their families. This, in turn, resulted in an increased level of autonomy and class solidarity. Through education, the children and families of the workers forged new social communities and gained new economic and political power.
Dedication

To Fred Anderson and Ken Howe,

Thanks for the discussions concerning the practice of historical research and the various methodological and philosophical perspectives that attend to it.

And especially to Rubén Donato,

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The Sociological Department Schools, Southern Colorado
Introduction

Rockefeller’s “Square Deal”

At the conclusion of one of the most deadly labor wars in United States history in 1915, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. arrived in Colorado to promote what he referred to as a “square deal” for coal miners employed by The Colorado Fuel & Iron Company. Rockefeller, as the family spokesman for controlling interests of CF&I, had cause for concern. In the aftermath of the labor violence which occurred in 1913 and 1914 in Colorado, he was roundly vilified by organized labor and the press as a scoundrel who was responsible for the deaths of innocent women and children in his pursuit of his alleged obscene profits from the coal-mining and milling industry in Colorado and elsewhere.

Between 1900 and 1915, CF&I was one of the largest corporations in the United States, employing thousands of miners and steelworkers in southern Colorado. CF&I controlled thousands of acres of coal-rich land in Colorado and surrounding states. The employees of the company lived, for the most part, in closed company towns which were completely controlled by the company. Coal miners and their families often lived and worked under extremely primitive and dangerous conditions, and were completely dependent on the company for their livelihood and well-being. The vast majority of the coal miners and their families living in these company coal camps were either recently-arrived immigrants from Europe, particularly southern and eastern Europe, or Hispanics, a segment of the Mexican population living in southern Colorado for generations that had deep New Mexican roots.
The lives of the miners and their families were virtually under complete economic, social, and political control of the company. By 1900, CF&I officials, in response to some of the progressive social ideas of the time as well as periodic labor unrest that had plagued the company, sought to improve the living conditions in the camps to insure labor stability while insuring maximum control over their workers. Adapting some of the ideas of welfare capitalists of the era, CF&I implemented a number of programs to moderately improve the health and safety of families living in the camps. These programs were initiated through the work of the company’s Sociological Department, and included educational programs for both children and adults. The Sociological Department built schools and clubs, provided teachers, sponsored kindergarten and domestic science educational programs, and provided other programs for the children and families of the miners in the camps. To a lesser degree, some of these programs were also intended to benefit the children and families of the steelworkers in Pueblo. The Sociological Department functioned, with a lessening degree of financial support, from 1901 through 1915.

The work of the Sociological Department, however, did not result in the end of labor strife in the company towns. In the early years of the twentieth century, the United Mine Workers of America had been organizing in the coal towns of Colorado, including those controlled by the company, with varying degrees of success. In 1913, the UMWA called a strike. The union demanded recognition, better working conditions, and economic independence from the company. Striking miners and their families were summarily fired and evicted from the coal camps, which was a common practice of CF&I at that time. The UMWA then set up tent cities for displaced miners and their families outside of the company towns in order to press their demands.
Shortly after the strike was called, the level of labor violence immediately escalated. There were allegations that the strikers had injured or killed replacement workers, and the company’s hired detective agents responded with intimidation tactics with the remaining working miners as well as open violence with random sniper attacks on the tent cities. CF&I officials ordered non-striking workers at its steel mill in Pueblo to manufacture an armored car which came to be known as the “Death Special” to patrol, harass, and intimidate the striking miners and their tent communities. The miners remaining in the camps were enclosed by barbed wire and guards to protect them from striking workers. By October, 1913 the Colorado National Guard was called out to quell the labor violence, but their tactics were little less violent than those of the company agents, and the striking miners retaliated in kind. By April, 1914, units of the Colorado National Guard had been augmented by militia and company camp guards, and the labor tensions which had sparked periodically greatly increased as striking miners fought back sporadically in the winter of 1913-1914.¹

On April 20, 1914, after a number of deadly incidents, one such spark ignited a conflagration. In one of the tent cities, Ludlow, which was located between the towns of Walsenburg and Trinidad, violence erupted between the militia, camp guards, and the striking miners. A number of the miners, camp guards, and militia were killed or murdered. By the end of the day most of Ludlow’s residents had fled by railcar to the nearby hills, the tent city was put to the torch, and fifteen women and children perished in the fire. The UMWA then openly armed striking miners, and, after ten days of battle in many of the coal towns and dozens of additional deaths, federal troops were rushed to Colorado to stop the violence. Hundreds of striking miners were arrested and several were charged with murder, as were a number of militia and National Guardsmen. The strike finally ended in late 1914, and although the UMWA did not
obtain their demands on behalf of the striking miners, the strike is generally credited with, over the long run, improving the rights and working conditions of the miners in the Colorado coal fields.

After the strike, the calls for labor reform grew as government commissions were convened and social reformers took on the challenges of addressing the causes of the labor violence. Company officials were compelled to again make increased attempts to improve the working and living conditions of the coal miners and their families.

Although the company’s position was that the labor violence was caused by the strikers as they sought to press their demands, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. was advised to initiate his own public relations campaign to limit the damage to the company and the interests of the stockholders caused by public perceptions of the strike. On June 5, 1914, Rockefeller wrote a letter to Harold F. McCormick of the International Harvester Company in Chicago requesting a recommendation for a publicity agent, as CF&I was “casting about to find desirable writers and publicity men.”2 Ultimately, this public relations campaign brought Rockefeller to Walsenburg to address offers and employee representatives of the miners. In Rockefeller’s “square deal” address, which was delivered on October 2, 1915, in Walsenburg, Colorado, Rockefeller likened the corporation to a square table, of which the four legs represented the stockholders, directors, officers, and employees, respectively. He added that “every corporation to be successful, it must be on the square – absolutely a square deal for every man in each of the four parties, which included the workers, the officers of the company, the directors of the company, and the stockholders.”3 As he spoke, he piled a number of coins on the table on three corners of the table. He then indicated that the employees take the first share of the earnings, without regard to financial risk, and he removed some of the coins from one corner. He then argued that the
officers and directors of the company then take their share, and he removed the coins from two other corners of the table. This left nothing on the table, which Rockefeller argued illustrated the fact that nothing was left to the common stockholder.

After replacing the coins on the table, Rockefeller appealed to the officers and employees that this was not a fair arrangement, in that for fourteen years the stockholders had invested $34,000,000 in the company but had not received one cent for their investment. This was not true, since the company had paid sporadic consistent dividends to stockholders since 1907, and had made millions of dollars in profits in most of the fiscal years prior to 1915. To drive home his point, however, he pointed out that the employees had been unfairly given the “dope” that the Rockefeller men in New York “were the biggest scoundrels that ever lived,” and “had taken millions of dollars out of the company,” and had oppressed the employees, “cheated them of their wages,” and “done” them “in every way they could.” He added that others had stated that he himself should be shot down “like a dog.” And the reason for the labor dispute, Rockefeller concluded, was that “the four sides of this table were not square.” He blamed the employees for this inequity, stating

Here is one of the four parties in the corporation who says, ‘I am tired of doing my share, holding up my end of the game. We wage-earners are tired of this thing, we don’t like to carry our fair share of the burden; let us try to get all we can out of the company and put in as little as we can. Let us do each day just as little work as we can and hold the job down.’

Rockefeller then bitterly criticized the union leadership that he felt was responsible for the labor dispute, stating

Now you know there are men going over this country from one end to another who are saying to the workmen of the country: ‘Your game is to get the shortest possible working day you can, to do the least possible work that you can get away with and not lose your job, and to get just as much as you can for what little you do.’ Any man who preaches this doctrine, instead of being your friend, is your deadliest enemy, because see what happens: Here is the side of labor; it says ‘We
will get out from underneath, we won’t work so hard; we will do just as little as we can.”

At this point, Rockefeller lowered one end of the table to represent the efforts of the workers, and all of the coins fell off until there was nothing left on the table. Rockefeller then concluded that only when each man connected with the company was interested, unselfishly, in what he could put into the concern, would he benefit, and that the rights of labor were a pernicious, wicked, and false doctrine. The “square deal,” therefore, according to Rockefeller, did not include increased salary and benefits to organized labor – the company could take care of its own workers. In attempting to obtain a larger share of the company’s profits, he maintained, organized labor was killing the company itself.

Ironically, that is precisely what happened to the Sociological Department’s educational programs. By 1915, despite some measure of initial progress made by the Sociological Department in providing a more “square deal” in the form of providing increased access to schooling, better educational facilities, well trained teachers, kindergarten and domestic science programs, and adult education programs to both workers and their families, the programs were virtually abandoned as company officials attempted to increase company profits and pay dividends to stockholders. The Department’s educational programs became a low priority, until finally the company had abandoned most of its industrial welfare programs and the local public school districts and the Young Men’s Christian Associations were left to pick up the pieces. In essence, in a little more than a decade, the company simply had lowered the corner of the table and swept off the coins representing the resources invested in the educational programs for workers and their families.

CF&I clothed the efforts to contain and control its workers with the rhetoric of social justice and worker welfare. Ironically, although many of the educational programs were
implemented in order to more fully assimilate and acculturate miners and steelworkers and their families and thus provide labor stability, these programs had unintended consequences because they actually did provide an increased measure of access to schooling and social commonality for children and their families in the camps. The educational programs provided by the Sociological Department provided schooling for the first time, and at an earlier age, to many children who might never have had such access to formal education.

Given the progressive educational ideas of the era, the educational programs afforded to children of miners and mill workers were not merely limited to an inculcation of industrial values regarding the social and economic purposes of education. The increased control, centralization, and efficiency of educational programs which were common in the urban areas of the eastern United States at that time certainly defined the Sociological Department’s educational work. This trend reflected the work of an influential body of schoolmen known as the “administrative progressives,” which was a term coined by historian David Tyack to refer to the progressive business elites and professional educators, including school managers and university professors, who intended to reshape the reform the public schools at the turn of the twentieth century to fit the new economic and social conditions of an urban-industrial society. The administrative progressives believed that effective political reform might require the imposition of limitations on the common suffrage, and they ridiculed the exceedingly democratic idea that all are equal and urged that schooling be adapted to social stratification. Nevertheless, it was inevitable that, with the implementation of some of the new ideas of progressive reformers in education, at least some measure of increased social justice, and, ironically, less industrial control, would result. Instead of making the workers and their families more dependent on the company for their social and economic welfare, many of those workers turned to others in their
own community for support. Ultimately, some of the children of immigrants and other children that started their education in the camp schools would continue their education through secondary school and, in some cases, through college, and become business and professional leaders in the area.

In this study, I explore the issues underlying this irony of industrial welfare and progressive public education. Specifically, I want to assess what social and economic impact the establishment of the Sociological Department’s educational programs had on the children of mine and steelworkers and their families in southern Colorado during the progressive era. The questions that drive this assessment are: How did progressive educational ideas drive the educational programs of the Sociological Department? How did these programs affect the schooling experiences of workers and their families in the camps and coal communities? How were these programs implemented, and how were they different from the schooling in the other common schools in the southern region of Colorado? And finally, what lasting effects did these programs have in the lives of the workers and their families?

In this study, I argue that the implementation of the Sociological Department’s educational programs resulted in increased access to schooling and a higher quality education for children and some adults, which resulted in an increased degree of social and economic empowerment compared to those programs offered by other comparable common schools in the region. But this came at a price. The Sociological Department’s efforts to carry out educational reforms in the coal camps were heavily guided by the efforts to assimilate and acculturate their work force, including school-age children, and train them to become well-trained and more docile menial laborers in a stratified industrial society. Nevertheless, the Sociological Department’s efforts to centralize and standardize educational programs and implement certain
progressive educational reforms resulted in some social and economic benefits for its constituents. Further, these benefits were more extensive, and more calculated to provide comprehensive schooling, than the programs in most of the county and city schools outside of the camps. Ironically, the greater the level of industrial containment and control that was sought by the company through the efforts of the Sociological Department, the greater the level of access to quality schooling and resulting social and economic empowerment for children and their parents in the camps. Contrary to the situation in many other areas of Colorado, Hispano children at least initially shared, to some extent, in the social and economic benefits provided by the Sociological Department, including a measure of increased access to higher quality schooling, and were, for a short time, subject to many of the same assumptions about assimilation and acculturation as European immigrant workers and their children.

This study is organized chronologically, and concerns several specific topics and research questions in each chapter. Chapter One establishes the context of the social and educational reforms in the progressive era, as well as the growth of CF&I into one of the largest corporations in the United States. Chapter Two explores how the social and economic ideas of the progressive era influenced the creation of the Sociological Department, and the scope and nature of the Department’s education program. Chapter Three outlines the Sociological Department’s efforts to establish new schools and public educational programs in the coal camps, and what types of increased access to education were provided for children in the camps. Chapter Four compares some of the city and county schools with those established or supported by the Sociological Department in the camps, and explores some of the issues associated with the education of Hispano children in the county schools. Chapter Five deals with the Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs, and how these programs were
aimed at acculturating and assimilating European immigrant as well as Hispano children living in the camps. Chapter Six explores some of the issues regarding the effects of diversity in the Sociological Department’s camps and educational programs, and outlines the growth of economic and labor strife within CF&I and its effect on the Department’s programs as well as the ultimate demise of the Department.

**Historiography, Critical Context, and Methodology**

There is a wealth of historical scholarship regarding the growth and development of progressive public education for children of European immigrant workers. Carl Kaestle, William Reese, David Tyack, Lawrence Cremin, Merle Curti, and other historians have completed important major studies of progressive education reform and its complex interrelationship with capital and labor in the American industrial society. These studies encompass a variety of views concerning the relationship between capital and labor and their competing interests in the public schools and education immigrant and Hispano children. Lawrence Cremin, for example, has characterized educational reforms at the turn of the century as being designed to improve the health, vocation, and quality of family and community life, and to meet the needs of various social classes. Other historians have maintained that educational development and reform during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was aimed at maintaining or improving capital’s control over labor. Merle Curti agreed that the majority of educational reforms that occurred at that time were designed to serve the interests of the owners of industrial enterprises. In this sense, educational reforms during the late nineteenth century in the public schools were attempts to prevent the “inevitable conflict between labor and capital” by creating a
malleable labor force. Curti saw public education during this time period as between calculated to train and sort workers and maintain control of labor.

The views of some historians of education during the mid-twentieth century, which have particular resonation in this study, were that capitalist interests controlled and used the public schools, beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, to reproduce the socio-economic structure of the corporate liberal state. This view held that the public schools were instruments of social control and reconciling the competing interests of capital, labor, and the public welfare, and that the public schools beginning at this time were patterned after the modern corporate factory. They also held that public schools were expanded to fill a growing social role through so-called scientific methods (particularly psychology and sociology) and were used during this time period to build vocational skills, provide vocational guidance, and increase the quality of the workforce. For example, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis argued that social discord stemmed from the integration of immigrant and rural labor into the industrial system. During these times, they argued, workers demanded more education, and progressive elements in the capitalist class acceded to the demands only insofar as they could adapt the school to their own purposes. Bowles and Gintis concluded that workers won public schooling for their children, but by controlling decision-making in education and “suppressing anti-capitalist alternatives,” the ruling class maintained control over the social relations of production while ameliorating conditions and dampening conflict. They did this through education which was calculated to result in class reproduction, and the training of laborers to perpetuate the capitalist system.

More contemporary studies regarding the education of working class immigrant children have characterized the relationship between capital and labor as they relate to public schooling as more symbiotic. Instead of ignoring or discounting or subordinating the power of the immigrant
working class, Julia Wrigley argued that it was dynamic social conflict, not simply decisions made by corporate power brokers and elite intellectuals, that shaped the public schools attended by children of immigrants and working people. Wrigley argued that the ongoing conflict, for example, between capital and labor resulted in much more than acculturation and social control. Labor forces in Chicago, according to Wrigley, pursued increased liberal education for all children as a way to increase the socio-economic standing of working people, while corporate interests supported the growth of public education, particularly in the form of vocational education, to foster social control. William Reese argued that school reform was not something forced on working class families by the elite during the progressive era, but was also a product of growing power of working class families and progressive social institutions.

In Colorado, the dynamics of capital and labor as they relate to the education of children in poor immigrant families, as well as Hispano and Mexican children, played out in unique ways. Rubén Donato has pointed out that, historically, discussions took place among educational reformers about how children from different backgrounds need to be served under the same roof. However, school opportunities differed for various ethnic and racial groups. Southern and eastern European immigrant children, for example, were seen as culturally deficient and intellectually inferior. Despite the negative experiences of these immigrants in schools, reformers made it their business to integrate them into American society. Over time, they became full-fledged Americans. Donato argues that this did not happen for Hispano and Mexican youth in Colorado, and presents the view that true assimilation for them was virtually unachievable. Donato argues that, in southern Colorado in the mid-twentieth century, when Hispanics controlled their schools, Hispano and Mexican children were greatly empowered. On the other hand, those Hispanics and Mexicans that lived and worked with no control over their
schools had no autonomy and voice, were left to fend for themselves, and were generally segregated, held to low standards, expected to leave school early, and rarely told about the benefits of a high school diploma or attending college.¹⁹

There have been a number of historical studies which have explored, at least in part, some of the issues arising from the efforts of CF&I to implement its industrial welfare programs, including education, through the Sociological Department. None of these studies, however, have closely examined the Sociological Department’s educational programs and their impact. Lee Scamehorn, for example, outlined in general some of the educational programs initiated by the Sociological Department, but did not examine them in detail other than concluding that the programs improved the quality of life in the camps.²⁰ Frank Weed acknowledged that the Sociological Department implemented educational programs, but argued that the Sociological Department’s social welfare programs as a whole simply became symbols of the stifling company control and exploitation in the coal camps.²¹ In his study of the social experiences of southern Colorado coal miners and their families, Rick Clyne explored some of the social experiences of European immigrant and Hispano families, including offering some limited views of their experiences in Sociological Department educational programs. Clyne concluded that the Sociological Department was afflicted with an “oversimplified myopic perspective” which amounted to an indictment of the social habits of European immigrants.²² In a recent history of the Colorado coalfield war, Killing for Coal, Thomas Andrews offered a more detailed socio-economic and political portrait of Colorado coal miners and the coal camps and communities, including a general description of the Sociological Department’s efforts to assimilate the coal miners through its educational programs and the social impact these programs exerted over the miners and their families. Andrews then concluded that these efforts at assimilation in the
company towns failed to “prevent solidarity and unionism from asserting themselves,” and they “left the southern coalfields more susceptible than ever to the ills they had been designed to eradicate.” Andrews argues that the workers resented CF&I’s program for containment and control, and simply wanted safety, fellowship, a higher quality of life, autonomy, dignity, and basic freedoms.

None of these studies explored the Sociological Department’s educational programs in detail, or examined the programs in terms of their context as expressions of educational reform and industrial welfare in the progressive era. Similarly, none of these studies examined the educational programs in terms of the impact on, among other things, the degree of access to education and other important aspects of living and working in the camps and the resulting level of empowerment of workers and their families. With all of its apparent faults, the Sociological Department was a manifestation of industrial and educational reform during the progressive era. This subject therefore merits a more exhaustive historical analysis.

This study is rooted in a number of basic types of primary sources, including extensive oral histories regarding the experiences of those who lived and were schooled in the camp schools which were obtained by a variety of social researchers, as well as archival documents from the State University of New York, the Rockefeller Archive Center, the Bessemer Historical Society and the CF&I Archives, the Colorado State Archives, and the Archives at the University of Colorado at Boulder. These archival materials included correspondence and survey materials regarding the activities of the Sociological Department. Other primary sources used in this the preparation of this study include congressional records and other government documents, and contemporaneous works dealing with the ideas of social reformers during the progressive era. Although the use of oral histories can raise questions regarding reliability, in part because they
reflect a certain nostalgia concerning childhood experiences, at an early stage it became very apparent that there was a certain resonance between the stories of some of the children of miners and mill workers and the claims made by CF&I concerning its educational and other industrial welfare programs. Furthermore, since many of the oral histories were based on memories of childhood schooling in a time of great upheaval and strife, and are corroborated by other available primary and secondary sources, they have greater indicia of reliability. The oral histories brought some of the ideas of progressive educational and social reformers into sharper relief, gave context to some of the claims made by CF&I on behalf of the Sociological Department, and, in general, added more depth and richness to this story.
Notes

Introduction

The Irony of Industrial Welfare


2 Rockefeller to McCormick, June 5, 1914, RG 2 OMR, Series C, Box 23, Folder 207, RAC.

3 John D. Rockefeller, “To the Employes, Address of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.,” The Colorado Industrial Plan (October 2, 1915), 34-35.

4 Ibid., 37-42.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.


9 Cremin, The Transformation of the School, viii-ix.


11 Ibid., 228.


13 Tyack, The One Best System, 7.


18 Ibid., 125.

19 Ibid., 124.


24 Ibid., 231.


26 These oral histories were compiled by historians and sociologists working in two major grant programs from the late 1960s through the early 1980s, the Eric Margolis/The Coal Project at the University of Colorado at Boulder and the Huerfano County Ethnocultural Project in Walsenburg, Colorado. These projects together included well over a hundred interviews of persons living in Huerfano and Las Animas counties, many of whom related their educational experiences as children living in the coal towns at the time the Sociological Department was actively conducting its educational programs in the schools in the coal camps and in close proximity to the mills in Pueblo.
Chapter One
Industrial Growth and Progressive Education

Introduction

As the nineteenth century came to a close, there was a widespread belief that as the nation’s economic growth increased during the early part of the industrial age the United States could achieve greater political, economic, and social harmony. There was a common perception that social and economic problems were manageable, and such issues were open to satisfactory resolution to create a better nation. At the heart of progressive reform were efforts to expand democracy, to improve the lot of the immigrant poor, to counterbalance the rise of unbridled wealth caused by the new industrialism.¹

By the 1890s, industrialization in the United States completely changed the nature of work and the culture in the workplace. As the nation’s industry increased, by the early twentieth century administrative progressives and social scientists increasingly believed the primary goal of the public schools was to transform children of immigrant families by helping them to discard their ethnic cultures in favor of “American” ideals. The growth of the study of industrial sociology resulted in a new commitment from educators, as well as the corporate interests represented by the administrative progressives, to assimilate and acculturate immigrant laborers and their children in order to foster political, social, and labor stability. This was certainly true in the southern region of Colorado, as CF&I was rapidly growing and was increasingly dependent on European immigrant and Hispano labor.
In this chapter, I will set the context of this study by examining the social and economic conditions which existed at the end of the nineteenth century, and outline some of the progressive and administrative educational reforms of the era. I will also explore some of the effects of the ideas of these reforms had on the officers of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company, and their initial influence in the creation of the Sociological Department. I argue in this chapter that the establishment of the company’s social and educational programs was a direct result of the necessity to exert a much higher degree of social control over the labor force, both to assimilate and acculturate the thousands of immigrant workers and their families and to contain the growth of organized labor. In doing so, however, the Sociological Department was influenced by many of the new social ideas of progressive educators which, ironically, would ultimately work against company goals of containment and control by helping to create a measure of equal access to higher quality schooling and empowerment for workers and their families. This empowerment would, in turn, ultimately result in less socio-economic stratification. Camp school children, particularly children of southern and eastern European immigrant and Hispano workers, would be provided, some for the first time, with access to new and relatively sophisticated educational facilities. Furthermore, they would have access to, in many cases, trained teachers with access to additional economic and professional support, a standardized curriculum which was rigorous enough to support advancement to secondary schooling, and a range of extra-curricular and other activities which would enrich their educational experiences.
In the late nineteenth century, several economic factors combined to make the Pueblo, Colorado area a center for the mining and milling of steel. In the mid-1870s, there was a resurgence of mining activities in the Colorado Territory. In turn, the Territory experienced significant population growth, which was associated with improved economic conditions. The two main population centers in the region south of Pueblo were the towns of Trinidad and Walsenburg. Both of these towns had begun as traditional plaza communities that were founded in the 1850s by Hispanos who had migrated from northern New Mexico. These towns would come to be the two main population centers anchoring the coal mining and steelwork industry in southern Colorado.²

During this time period a number of railroads were constructed in the region, including the Kansas Pacific and the Denver Pacific, linking Denver with the transcontinental rail line in Cheyenne. The Denver & Rio Grande built narrow gauge lines linking Denver and Pueblo, Leadville, and Trinidad. The Denver and South Park railroad built a line linking central mining areas to the Arkansas River valley, including Pueblo.³ The railroads had a direct impact on the economic health of the region, and great influence over manufacturing, mining, and the governments and the courts.

The growth of the railroads encouraged economic development in the Pueblo area. They opened up the region nationally, opened up development of the area’s rich natural resources, and stimulated the growth of industry in the Colorado Territory. Pueblo became a center for smelting and refining metals. After Colorado became a state, General William Jackson Palmer and his associates organized the Colorado Coal and Iron Company for the purpose of building and operating blast furnaces and rolling mills near Pueblo. Incorporated in early 1880 as part of the
Denver and Rio Grande railway, this company consolidated under single management coal lands, iron ore deposits, limestone quarries, and water resources essential for the production of iron and steel, in particular for the production of rails. For several decades the Colorado Coal and Iron Company was the principal heavy industry in the Rocky Mountain West. It was the region’s only producer of steel rails and spikes for the railroads, and also produced mine rails, nails, iron pipe, castings, and merchant iron for distribution in the region. In 1892 the Colorado Coal and Iron Company merged with its chief competitor, the Colorado Fuel Company, and became the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company.

The Colorado Fuel & Iron Company

CF&I helped to create an industrial economic base for Colorado, and attracted both capital and labor to the region. Communities were founded in the region in conjunction with mines, mills, and quarries. In turn, the industrial growth in the region encouraged the growth of agriculture and transportation. During the latter years of the nineteenth century, CF&I, which was remote from major centers of steel consumption, struggled to survive by serving markets which only infrequently required products in volume equal to the company’s capacity thus rendering the company inherently unstable.

With the formation of United States Steel at the turn of the nineteenth century, which created the billion-dollar enterprise known as the “Steel Trust,” CF&I’s control of its regional market was undermined. CF&I was stretched thin in its attempt to develop its metallurgical production capacities, and ultimately it received a massive infusion of capital from the Steel Trust. John D. Rockefeller and Jay Gould thereafter became CF&I’s most influential members on CF&I’s Board of Directors.
From 1893 to 1903, the number of men on the CF&I payroll increased from about 5,000 to more than 15,000. Approximately forty percent of the company’s employees were employed in the company steelworks in Pueblo, and the rest were in mining and production facilities throughout Colorado and adjoining states. In Colorado alone, there were 29 company settlements, of which 23 were supported by coal mines, one by an iron mine, and three by coking plants. Most of these had come into existence since 1883. Most of these coal towns were “closed,” because the corporation owned almost all of the property and all of the buildings, including the surrounding coal lands and the worker’s homes.

The expansion of CF&I’s facilities around the region also required an increase in additional support services. To the extent they were crucial to the operation of the company’s facilities, the responsibility for housing, police, fire protection, sanitation, public health, education, and recreation ultimately fell on the company, because it was in almost every instance a dominating economic force in the community. The expansion of older mines and coking plants created similar problems in previously established communities. As new workers were hired and the population in the mining communities increased, the company had to at least make some attempt to make services available.

The overwhelmingly heterogeneous composition of many of these communities also raised significant social and economic problems between 1883 and 1900. Early on, the majority of the miners and their families in the camps were of English, Welsh, or Scottish origin, and in some cases were comprised second- and third-generation families of immigrants. While each group possessed unique cultural traits, they shared a common language, religious beliefs, and values. Hispanics, including those who came from the villages around Trinidad and Walsenburg and those who migrated seasonally from northern New Mexico, also comprised a
large percentage of mine and steelwork labor in this early period. There were also some
Japanese workers. By the opening of the new century, however, immigration from southern
and eastern Europe was growing at a rapid rate. By 1900, the vast majority of the population of
the mining and milling communities were recent immigrants from these areas of Europe.

The influx of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe threatened to some extent the
integrity of the Hispano communities in the area. Prior to 1900, there were many communities
and ranches in southern Colorado which had been settled by Hispanos from New Mexico.
During that time, many of the workers in the local mines worked seasonally. These workers
came north from the plaza communities in northern New Mexico, and built their own plaza
communities in south central Colorado. By 1915, Hispano workers still were numerous,
comprising a significant portion of the labor force, along with a few recent immigrants from
Mexico in the region.

The counterweight to the growing power of the corporation during these years was the
union, and, for brief periods, the union had an enormous effect on the lives of miners and their
families. At this time labor unions in the United States were in their infancy, however, large-
scale organization of the CF&I plants and mines began in the 1890s, with the founding of the
UMWA. The fortunes of the UMWA in southern Colorado ebbed and flowed with the economic
times, and most of the time the union was a small, mildly significant part of miners’ lives. Yet
when relations between the corporation and the miners became sufficiently tense, the union
would experience rapid growth and increased power as it championed the miners’ demands for
social and economic dignity and a better future. The ebb and flow of labor strife within the
company were to have a direct and profound effect on the Sociological Department’s
implementation of its educational programs between its inception in 1901 and its curtailment in 1915.

**Social Reform in the Progressive Era**

By the 1890s, progressive social ideas began to gain attention, mostly due to the plight of the poor in the growing industrialized society and resulting social unrest. Underlying these issues were a growing sense of concern about the problems of the quickly increasing immigrant population.

At the heart of the social reforms during the progressive era was the idea of “social control.” Sociologist Edward A. Ross, in a series of articles published in the *American Journal of Sociology* between 1896 and 1898, was one of the first to advance this idea. His articles were later gathered together in his book entitled *Social Control*, which attracted a wide audience among both sociologists and educators. Ross concluded that the institutions of the family, the church, and the community were disintegrating under the pressures of the modern industrial society.

In his study of social control mechanisms, Ross referred to mass media and education as cost-effective forms of law social control. In what was to become a traditional way of defining the concept, Ross divided social control into “external” and “internal” forms, stressing that future societies would probably rely more on internal or psychological forms of control than on external forms of social manipulation. By the end of the century, as many intellectuals were aware, the “American village” as a source of social control was virtually dead. Intellectuals became increasingly distressed by the implications this passing held for the social cohesion of the nation.16
Compounding the problems associated with the growth of the industrial society was the vast influx of immigrants. What seemed most threatening to social reformers was the radical shift in the source of immigration from northern Europe to southern and eastern Europe. The new immigrant, representing a cultural background much different from former immigrant populations, was seen not only as a threat to the mores of America but often as the cause of all problems in American society.¹⁷

In 1909, while the Sociological Department was still actively pursuing its social and economic programs, a leader among the new generation of administrative progressives in education, Ellwood P. Cubberley, explained that since southern and eastern Europeans were of a different breed from their predecessors the solution was to break up their settlements and “to impart in their children, insofar as can be done, the Anglo-Saxon conceptions of righteousness, law and order, and popular government.”¹⁸ Cubberley maintained that the goal of public schooling was to serve what he referred to as “the triumph” of industrialization.

Ten years later, Cubberley, in making his case for assimilating and acculturating children of immigrants, wrote of the immigrants that had arrived in the early years of the twentieth century

These Southern and Eastern Europeans were of a very different type from the North and West Europeans who preceded them. Largely illiterate, docile, lacking in initiative, and almost wholly without the Anglo-Saxon conceptions of righteousness, liberty, law, order, public decency, and government, their coming has served to dilute tremendously our national stock and to weaken and corrupt our political life.

Cubberley pointed out that these immigrants had settled, among other places, in the mining regions of the west, and had created “serious problems in housing and living, moral and sanitary conditions, and honest and decent government,” while popular education had “everywhere been made more difficult by their presence.”¹⁹ He further
argued that “foreign manners, customs, observances, and language” had supplanted “native ways and the English speech,” and that therefore “the so called ‘melting-pot’” was overflowing. Cubberley felt that the nation had been unable to successfully assimilate the new immigrants, especially those “from the South and East of Europe,” and that therefore the national life for the prior quarter of a century, had been “afflicted with a serious case of racial indigestion.”

He concluded that the problem that was faced in the United States was that of assimilating “these thousands of foreigners into our national life and citizenship.” According to him, the consequence of the failure to accomplish this goal was to “lose our national character.”

Yet not all the social reformers of the era saw success in social control and assimilation and acculturation of immigrants, and did not refer to them as the cause of “racial indigestion.” Some reformers espoused more relativist ideas, in which the individual, not the increasingly industrialized nation, was at the center of a strong and stable democratic community. Rejecting fixed value systems, these reformers believed that ideas and beliefs about society were mere vehicles for reform, and that society could be improved if it improved the lives and social experiences of the individual.

Thus progressive reform itself was marked by irony. While reformers generally believed that individualism and socialism in its broad sense were not at odds, and that free growth and development of the individual could resolve pressing social problems, they often sought to remedy the crushing poverty and social injustice caused by the growth of the industrial society and the vast influx of European and other immigrants through increasing assimilation, acculturation, and social control. And, as progressive efforts to deal with the social problems created by the growth of industrialization increased, so did the level of social control. The goal
of some progressive reformers was to achieve the goal of a more homogenous society. These were the ideas that drove the activities of progressive social reformers and administrative progressives for several decades after the turn of the twentieth century.

*The Settlement House Movement*

Due to the disintegration of the traditional means of social support in an increasingly industrialized society in the late 1880s, progressive reformers established “settlement houses.” Settlement houses were urban centers for the disenfranchised working poor or immigrants. Settlement house workers lived among the urban populations they were trying to help, and established social programs to support immigrants, the working poor, and their families.

Educational programs were implemented as a major component of settlement house work. Settlement workers provided kindergarten and day care programs as well as domestic sciences classes in homemaking and child care. Settlement houses sponsored English language classes, lectures and discussions, vocational training, and social clubs. The settlement houses became the testing ground for progressive education ideas, or the “kindergarten for adults.”

The first settlement house in the United States was established in 1886, and the idea spread so rapidly that by 1910 there were over four hundred of them nationwide. College-educated women who were seeking to apply Christian values to the larger world but did not want a career in teaching found new career opportunities in the settlement movement as social workers. In 1889, Jane Addams opened Chicago’s Hull House, the most famous settlement house in the United States. Addams fashioned a unique educational role for the settlement house as an agency that applied social knowledge to the conduct of life. Settlement houses were like national bureaus that collected and analyzed data, interpreted social situations, and enlisted
various persons and groups to lobby for legal and other remedies or to form national organizations to assist workers and their families.  

The irony of progressive reform was clearly evident in the establishment of settlement houses. On one hand, the settlement house was a protest against a restricted view of education, and a living embodiment of an alternative view of education – one that centered in reformed conceptions of the uses of knowledge, the meaning of culture, and the nature of community. On the other hand, the key concern became the development of more effective means of social control in order to eliminate conflict and to establish the harmonious organic community. These two impulses were directly related but often at odds, and the application of methods of social control often had the opposite effect, as elements of the identity, culture, and some pre-existing social communities based on national origin or race were partially eradicated. The settlement house movement was centered on the belief that all children, especially those destined for manual labor, should understand the history and processes of industrial production so that their mental world was not restricted to their own fragment of the manufacturing process. As a result, Jane Addams consistently called for two additional years of compulsory schooling as “realistic preparation for fulfilling economic lives.” And yet, at the root of settlement work, in dealing with the irony of attempting to build a new organic industrial community by partially eradicating pre-existing social communities, was compromise. The goals of settlement workers were generally to actively encourage social mobility, even at the cost of fragmenting pre-existing communities, but at the same time attempting to foster family and neighborhood cohesiveness.
By 1900, educational programs were considered the principal engines of progressive reform in a progressive society. Many different interest groups with divergent claims about what that society ought to look like staked their claims upon education, and, in the process, politicized education. As a result, many types of education innovation were attempted, with a bewildering variety of programs and philosophies. It was clear to social reformers at this time that education had to be remodeled to deal with the results of industrialization, the growth of cities, and massive immigration. The issues driving education reform during this era were questions about whether industrial democracy should be practiced by infusing the same educational values in all students or whether vocational training would be the norm to prepare workers for the labor force. Immigration was an important issue, and the debate concerned whether to create a pluralistic society or subject immigrants and their children to “hard-edged ‘Americanization.” As Jane Addams narrowly noted, the immigrant child had no social life in any structured form, and so the child should get it in school and give it to the family. The school therefore became the connector between the immigrants and the organized society around them.

The processes of industrialization were viewed by educators as vital to education reform. John Dewey, then a professor at the University of Chicago and recognized for, among other things, his series of essays concerning his pedagogical beliefs, noted at the turn of the century that the “household and neighborhood system” as the center for industrial occupation had given way to the “factory system” and that, as a result, educators could not overlook the “factors of discipline and of character building” involved in “training in habits of order and of industry, and in the idea of responsibility, of obligation to do something, to produce something, in the world.” At the time Dewey’s greatest contact with Addams and other settlement workers, in Chicago
during the mid-1890s, Dewey observed that the school was the one form of social life which was abstracted and under control, and therefore could be experimental as a positive instrument of social engineering. Like Dewey, many settlement workers believed that the public schools could carry out settlement-initiated activities in recreation, the arts, manual training, and evening education for adults.  

To educators and social reformers of the time, this meant that immigrant and other children of working class families also required training in the proper modes of hygiene, diet, patient industry, and neat dress in order to assimilate and acculturate them to industrialized society. In addition to these factors, children of immigrants were to be taught progressive political ideals. With these views in mind, in educators believed that the primary goal of the public schools was to transform children of immigrant families by helping them to discard their ethnic cultures in order to embrace what they then saw as American ideals and habits.

But, in a larger sense, Dewey and other progressive educators also had more altruistic motives. They wanted to tap the apparently unlimited desire and interest of children “to know and to be.” They believed that the child should be immersed in schooling where he lives in a “democracy of youth,” and that a creative environment should be fashioned so that teachers could be drawing out the child’s inner capacities for self-expression, creativity, and individualism. Schooling should develop the child’s total personality. Dewey theorized that all knowledge had a social origin, and that the experiences of the child were the primary sources of learning. Society itself was dynamic and adaptive, he believed, and therefore education should reflect that adaptability. He argued that knowledge should be socially useful, and originate in the child’s interests and desires.
The common or public schools at the turn of the nineteenth century were therefore faced with a tremendous burden of not only educating vastly increasing numbers of children of working class families, but the self-imposed burden of acculturating and assimilating massive number of immigrant children in concert with other social agencies.\(^{39}\) This process was not without its socio-political ramifications, however, as the very process of acculturation and assimilation normally meant discarding old customs and values, and successful assimilation often disrupted families and sowed doubt and recrimination between the generations.\(^{40}\)

This burden was even more oppressive in rural areas like southern Colorado and other areas of the west in which mining and milling operations had, within two decades, transformed a virtual wilderness into an industrial center with a massive influx of workers and their families – many of whom were recent eastern and southern European immigrants or seasonal Hispano laborers. By 1890, over a half century had passed since the common school movement had spread across the nation; however, the spending per-pupil in rural areas lagged far behind that of their urban counterparts. Urban school boards funded students at double the per-pupil average of rural schools. In particular, one-room schoolhouses in rural areas, like those surrounding Trinidad and Walsenburg, received less of everything. They were housed in older, makeshift facilities with insufficient books, supplies, and equipment.

In these ungraded schools, teachers with little formal education coped with children and young adults simultaneously. Students attended school fewer weeks a year than their urban cousins. These schools, soon to become the object of a vigorous campaign of consolidation, were the places where most American students were taught. By 1910, rural schools still enrolled a majority of children, and while per-pupil expenditures had increased urban schools were still funded at double the per-pupil rate of rural schools.\(^{41}\) Rural areas therefore not only had the
problems associated with the education of large numbers of immigrant children, but had more needs and fewer resources with which to work.

The philosophy of education that Dewey established between 1894 and 1904 while at the University of Chicago ultimately proved to be the ideological center for much of the progressive tradition in American education. In *School and Society*, Dewey wrote that

> [i]t remains but to organize all these factors, to appreciate them in their fulness of meaning, and to put the ideas and ideals involved into complete, uncompromising possession of our school system. To do this means to make each one of our schools an embryonic community life, active with types of occupations that reflect the life of the larger society and permeated throughout with the spirit of art, history, and science. When the school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guaranty of a larger society that is worthy, lovely, and harmonious.42

Dewey summarized the traditional education at the outset of the progressive era as passive, mechanical, and uniform, in that the “center of gravity was outside the child.” He argued that his principles of education constituted a shifting of this center of gravity, and it was a “change, a revolution, not unlike that introduced by Copernicus when the astronomical center shifted from the earth to the sun.” He concluded that “[i]n this case the child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve; he is the center about which they are organized.”43 These ideas were at the center of the progressive educational movement for the next twenty years.

*The Administrative Progressives*

But whether these progressive educational ideals would be realized was in the hands of others, who were guided by principles which, in practice, had a common core but differed greatly from those outlined by Dewey. In the hands of administrative progressives and industrial leaders, the center of gravity would shift, but in new directions which Dewey had not necessarily
anticipated and did not endorse. The administrative progressives of the day adapted some of the ideas of progressive educators, but co-opted them. Ellwood Cubberley of Stanford University explicitly stated that Dewey’s liberal philosophy of education included the idea that the public school was the chief remedy for the ills of society, and that therefore Dewey had attempted to make the school “a miniature of society itself.” While this was partially accurate, Cubberley also went on to state that Dewey conceived of social efficiency, not mere knowledge, to be the product of public education. Cubberley concluded that this social efficiency was to be produced through participation in the activities of an institution of society, the school, where child were taught how to live among the complexities of modern social life. Children were to become acquainted with social institutions as well as industrial processes by studying them.44

The administrative progressive ideology, which was so influential on a generation of schoolmen, originated in the late nineteenth century as businessmen and other professional elites sought to reshape schools to fit the new economic and social conditions of an urban-industrial society. Effective political reform, they believed, might require and imposition of limitations on the common suffrage, and these administrative progressives ridiculed “the exceedingly democratic idea that all are equal,” and urged that schooling be adapted to social class stratification.45 They also were primarily concerned with challenging union power over the work force during a period of high immigration and increased demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labor.46 Manual training, centered in the public schools, promised to become the handmaiden of English and civics lessons in the efficient adjustment of first- or second-generation immigrant children to their new environment and their future in the American economy.47
The men and women who sought centralization of control and social efficiency, particularly in urban areas, wished nothing less than a fundamental change in the structure and process of decision-making in the schools. Their social perspective tended to be cosmopolitan yet paternalistic, self-consciously modern in deference to the expert and its quest for rational efficiency yet at times evangelical in its rhetorical tone. The administrative progressives were a movement with identifiable actors and coalitions, with a common ideology and platform, and they ultimately would gain substantial power over urban educational reform. Administrative progressives used corporate power structures as a model for school leadership, and worked with liberal industrialists to form Americanization classes, kindergartens, improved working conditions and health care for their workers, and provided a variety of fringe benefits calculated to enlist the loyalty and reliability of labor. Public school managers often catered to the wishes of business leaders to build new schools, improve public health, and create playgrounds and vacation schools. These progressive school leaders found business leaders their natural allies in reform. To change the schools, administrative progressives needed to concentrate power at the top so that the experts could take over.

By 1900, in the view of administrative progressives, educational programs were required to include activities which were heavily weighted in favor of domestic, civil, and preschool training. The subjects which should be taught in the public schools would now include kindergarten, manual work, domestic training, and others which prepared students more effectively for efficient participation in the work of democratic society. These subjects also included hygiene, community civics, industrial studies, manners, and thrift. In the eyes of administrative progressives, this type of public school preparation resulted in more socially efficient men and women that could take their place in the industrial life of the community.
For administrative progressives, what this meant was that not only would children be taught at a younger age and trained for life in an industrial society, but that educational programs would involve training the “foreign-born” in the principles and ideals of American democracy in order to eliminate the threat to the national character, safety, and welfare. And, according to administrative progressives, this necessitated teaching in order to make English the one common tongue.51 This, then, became the blueprint for public schooling which would be implemented by Corwin through the Sociological Department’s educational programs.

Other administrative progressives, such as Charles Eliot of Harvard University, outlined the views of administrative progressives regarding social class stratification and argued in 1908 that there were four discrete levels in American society, the lowest of which consisted of a “thick fundamental layer engaged in household work, agriculture, mining, quarrying, and forest work.” Eliot argued that each layer should be given its own “appropriate form of schooling.”52 Thus, those workers and their families engaged in household and mining work should be educated at the level at which they would work and live – as manual laborers at the lowest level of socio-economic stratification.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the administrative progressives became very cohesive and powerful. They included in their immediate association persons such as William Rainey Harper of the University of Chicago, George Strayer and Edward Thorndike of Teachers College, Columbia University, and Cubberley at Stanford University. By this time these men controlled an extensive network consisting of dozens of university leaders, powerful businessmen, school supervisors, and even the editorial boards of influential nationwide newspapers and periodicals. They could define the nature of educational problems in such a way that their remedies seemed self-evident and opposition to their reforms seemed selfish and
misguided. These elite reformers often combined paternalistic sentiment with hard-headed modern notions concerning school organization. They were powerful men, and organized schools and school districts in manner which was not consistent with the ideals of progressive education which Dewey and others had established during the prior decades.

*Industrial Welfare and Corporate Paternalism*

Industrial welfare, or industrial betterment, was a labor-management strategy at least superficially inspired by the settlement house movement and advocated by leading professional social scientists and reformers during progressive era as a way to address the problems of modern industrialization. As a national movement, it played a significant role in the transition from the old paternalistic practices of the nineteenth century to a new industrial strategy that would extend management to every level of the worker’s life, from the factory to the school to the home. The focus of industrial betterment was on improving employees’ living and working conditions by establishing welfare or sociological departments that would promote their social and physical welfare.

By the mid-1890s, progressive educational ideals were being developed simultaneously with ideas of industrial welfare. These plans were being developed in order to promote stability in the labor force, create worker loyalty, and combat union organizing and labor strikes. Industrial welfare plans called for employers to take a greater responsibility the health, education, living conditions, and moral behavior of their workers. These plans focused their intended changes on the environment outside of the workplace. While these plans were purportedly based on voluntary involvement and worker participation, the industrial welfare doctrine was frequently criticized by unions as “corporate paternalism.”
The word “paternalism” appeared frequently in materials pertaining to company towns during the progressive era. From a company’s point of view, the privilege of living in a company town depended upon an individual’s specific value, either as an employee or as a worker in some business directly contributing to the support of the work community. The company seldom expected its investment in housing and other facilities to be returned through direct income. These features, rather, were considered as extra subsidies to the employee. The company therefore felt the right to demand certain concessions from its town residents.”56 In particular, this type of industrial benevolence was certainly not seen by business as being the basis for sound business practice.57

A century earlier, European coal mine operators had pioneered exploitative company towns in which mine owners held the title to all the houses, compensated colliers in scrip, and forced mining families to trade at a company store. This system was then transplanted to the Pennsylvania coal mines and elsewhere, alongside the customary relations of production that shaped colliery work cultures. Manufacturers such as the National Cash Register Company, International Harvester, and the H.W. Heinz Company were the first to embrace industrial welfare and corporate paternalism. By the mid-1890s, other corporations in other parts of the nation had adopted these practices as well.58

CF&I was one of the first of large corporations in the United States to adopt a program of industrial welfare as a strategy to improve or control labor relations.59 Prior to 1894, Colorado coal company leaders had proven themselves to be reluctant paternalists. There is little evidence that southern Colorado’s coal companies spent money during the 1870s and 1880s on schools, churches, workmen’s clubs, or other focal points of corporate paternalism common in other coal-mining regions of the world; however, the labor strife in the Colorado coal fields in 1894
encouraged the company to consider such a plan in order to contain the spread of labor
organizing.\textsuperscript{60} Prior to the turn of the century, the CF&I had generally ignored the conditions of
the workers in the coal mining communities in the region.\textsuperscript{61}

Colorado mine operators came to embrace industrial paternalism at the same time that a
fierce nationwide strike by Eugene Debs’s American Railway Union was attempting to discredit
George Pullman’s grant experiment in paternalistic town-building on the outskirts of Chicago.\textsuperscript{62}
The strike demonstrated the potential of company towns to contain labor unrest, and the coal
company operators in Colorado determined that the best way to contain such activism was to
build and maintain closed company towns at the mines.\textsuperscript{63} In closed company towns, CF&I and
other companies could maintain almost total power over their employees as well as the
conditions under which they worked, and left the company free to operate without political,
economic, or social constraints. In particular, in closed towns the companies could carry out
mining activities without regulation, arbitrarily determine wages and working conditions, and
control every activity in the mining camps from selling liquor and groceries to selecting teachers,
ministers, election judges, and county officials.\textsuperscript{64} Teacher selection was only one of the
educational areas affected by company subsidization. In every day administration, company
officials constantly influenced decisions. Some companies were not averse to applying direct
pressure to influence education. One company asked its county superintendent of schools to
dismiss two teachers known to be union sympathizers. When the superintendent refused, the
company got the school board to remove not only the teachers by also the superintendent
himself. The dual role of teacher and employee of the company could directly and indirectly
affect the quality of education, as teachers were called on to be propagandists for the company.\textsuperscript{65}
This was the catalyst for the adoption, by CF&I, of many of the ideas of reformers during the progressive era. The company created the Sociological Department to help facilitate its program of containment and control.

**CF&I’s Paternal Control**

The living and working conditions in the CF&I mining camp communities during the early twentieth century were far from ideal at best, and, at worst, brutal. In 1914, the base rate for steelworkers in Pueblo was seventeen cents an hour, and miners averaged several dollars a day in gross pay. Miners worked long hours and under extremely unfavorable conditions, and charges for powder, materials, and medical care were deducted from a miner’s salary. In addition, the company rented the workers housing at the rate of about two dollars a room, per month, and goods at company stores were sold at a rate which guaranteed the company a twenty percent return on its investment.66

The company also routinely carried out repressive tactics to weaken the power of the workers. For example, company officials consciously mixed nationalities, so that when too many of one nationality were working in given mining district, the company would adjust the worker pool and transfer or terminate workers so that no very large percent in any mine could communicate with the others.”67 This tactic was largely unsuccessful, and the coal towns, although often dominated by particular racial or ethnic groups, remained relatively diverse.

In addition, the company often dominated local public school districts. In some places, the local school board consisted of the company superintendent and his managers. In others, local school boards consisting of company officers rigged school board elections.68 In later
years, company officials readily admitted that they dictated the selection of teachers and obtained
the dismissals of those to whom they objected.\(^6^9\)

Company officials painted quite a different picture of the living and working conditions
in the camps. The company had a paternal view of their workers and their families, and
company officials assumed that their workers felt privileged to live in the camps and that they
accepted that the camp superintendents knew what was in their best interests. Company officials
referring to the camps, for immigrant workers, as a “new and yet not altogether unfavorable
environment,” where “the European peasant finds conditions most adapted to the transplanting of
his home life and environment.” In the camps, according to the company, the immigrant laborer
was “not crowded for room,” and “he may have his little garden, and in the evening and on
holidays he can sit outdoors with his family and neighbors under as clear and blue a sky as ever
was seen in Bella Italia.”\(^7^0\)

The social and economic aims of the company, consistent with the aims of administrative
progressives in regard to schooling, were to train young people to be manual workers. The
“needs of the coal fields” were that girls had to be trained to take up their roles as wives,
mothers, and housekeepers, while boys were to be given manual and technical training that
would allow them to take up industrial work. The company’s paternal view was that the people
themselves were not capable of obtaining these important goals, and that “much of it must be
done by the great corporations controlling the coal fields,” for they had “the means and control
the situation.”\(^7^1\)
The CF&I Sociological Department

By 1901, the problems associated with the expansion of CF&I, the influx of eastern and southern European immigrant labor to the area, and the growing influence of organized labor, had raised concerns regarding the ability of the company to sustain its growth in terms of a well-trained and stable labor force. To address these concerns, on July 25, 1901, CF&I announced the establishment the Sociological Department, and named Dr. Richard Corwin, CF&I’s Chief Surgeon, as its Superintendent. Corwin had supervised the company’s industrial medicine program since 1882 and had worked to expand the medical facilities, eventually establishing a nursing school as well as Minnequa Hospital in Pueblo.

Corwin’s educational and social background made him a propitious choice to supervise the Sociological Department. Corwin was raised in Binghamton, New York, and had attended Cornell University for three years. He thereafter attended medical school at the University of Michigan, where he graduated and received his medical degree.\textsuperscript{72} He interned at St. Luke’s Hospital in Chicago, and, while there, became influenced by Jane Addams and her views on the settlement house movement as well as the views of other progressive reformers. From this movement, Corwin derived a conceptual model based on the settlement philosophy which he used to guide the Sociological Department’s program of industrial welfare work. Corwin also shared many of the ideals of progressive reformers with respect to the belief that the social “evolutionary process” would produce persons shaped by the principles of hard work, self-discipline, personal responsibility, and sobriety. The optimistic belief that education could change people for the better and that American society had always manifested constant improvement permeated all of Corwin’s thoughts and endeavors.\textsuperscript{73}
Corwin’s ideas were also tempered with those of the administrative progressives, which were also ultimately adopted by CF&I as guiding principles. The Sociological Department was therefore conceived of as an industrial welfare plan to improve the lives of miners and steel workers and their families. But it was also conceived, as a product of the ideology of the administrative progressives on Corwin, as a way to increase social control of the workers and their families to maintain the “thick fundamental layer” of workers required by an industrialized society. Corwin, therefore, was influenced by progressive educational ideas as well as the educational ideas of administrative progressives, and would initially implement the Sociological Department’s educational programs as a hybrid industrial welfare program, seeking the goals of social control and improvement, as he viewed them, as well as the goals of social efficiency and industrial training.

Corwin was also influenced by the League for Social Service, which William Tolman and Josiah Strong formed in 1898 to espouse the philosophy of industrial betterment. Strong was a leader of the Social Gospel movement, which viewed increased immigration as a threat to civil liberty and Christianity. CF&I had a commercial membership in the league and received Social Service, its monthly publication, as well as weekly bulletins and reports of sociological conditions, experiments, and reform movement from all over the world. In 1906, Strong vigorously praised the company for the appointment of Corwin as “Social Secretary” to “Americanize” the company’s men.

The timing of the announcement of the formation of the Sociological Department indicated that the decision may have been prompted, in part, by the strike of 1901, in which hundreds of coal miners ceased work in protest over the cost of compulsory medical care coverage as well as CF&I’s failure to pay them “full weight” for the coal they mined. In the
aftermath of the strike, company leaders blamed the union for undermining what the company referred to as “harmonious relations” between the company and its workers, and again refused to recognize the UMWA as a bargaining unit for the coal miners.\textsuperscript{77} The Sociological Department therefore was created, in part, to address the problems presented by labor discontent and unrest.

In general, in establishing the Sociological Department, the company officers recognized that its varied activities were supported by a work force which, because of its size, location, and composition, required special programs. In the mining camps, many of which were isolated from other population centers, the company was invariably the only employer and often the only landowner. It was, for that reason, the dominant influence that shaped the lives, habits, and attitudes of all who lived in the communities. This fact inspired Corwin, with the support of the company officers and the board, to make the enterprise a social as well as an economic force in the lives of employees and their dependents.\textsuperscript{78} Whether the Sociological Department would work through social control and containment, or work toward the growth and improvement of the social and economic conditions of the workers and their families, was yet to be determined.

\textit{Conclusion}

By the end of the nineteenth century, CF&I had become a major economic force in the western United States in the production of steel. It employed thousands of workers in its mills and mines, the majority of which were immigrants and seasonal Hispano workers. CF&I had experienced labor unrest in 1894 and again in 1901, as workers sought to better their social and economic lives. It was clear that the company, to continue to grow and prosper, would have to establish some type of program to assimilate and acculturate its growing workforce, both for the sake of industrial growth and the containment and control of organized labor. It was also clear
that social and economic conditions of the workers and their families would have to improve if the company was to continue to grow and prosper in the new industrial society.

To do so, CF&I initiated an industrial betterment, or industrial welfare program through its newly-created Sociological Department. This was conceived as a paternalistic program to improve the lives of the workers and their families, and at least initially the Superintendent of the Sociological Department, Dr. Richard Corwin, envisioned programs in which the workers and their families were offered programs similar to those offered in the settlement house movement. Corwin was ideally suited to lead the program, as he familiar with these programs as a physician working in Chicago when many of these ideas for progressive reform had been formulated and put into limited practice, and knew and admired the social scientists responsible for them. The Sociological Department was initially created to put into practice many of these ideas of progressive reform.

However, these progressive reforms were not so simple and easily capable of implementation. The purposes of such reforms, which had initially been to create a social community to improve the lives of individuals and foster social harmony, had been interpreted in many diverse ways by social scientists, industrialists, and educators. To counter, in part, the new fears that immigrants and the working poor were threatening what administrative progressives referred to as the national character, these reformers concentrated on the assimilation and acculturation of the new immigrant workers and their families in order to socially control them and create social efficiency. In doing so, some of the progressive social ideals were co-opted and manipulated to maintain the socio-economic status quo – particularly by the administrative progressives. Ironically, many of the ideas regarding progressive education were in conflict with the ideology of the administrative progressives. What was not clear, in 1901, was the extent to
which the ambitious programs and methods which the Sociological Department would employ would impact its employees and their families.
Notes

Chapter One

Industrial Growth and Progressive Education


2 Clyne, “Coal People,” 3-4.


4 Ibid., 4-5.

5 Ibid., 5.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., 149-150.

10 Ibid., 150.

11 Clyne, “Coal People,” 44.


14 Clyne, “Coal People,” 46.

15 Ibid., 8-9.


20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 341.


26 This irony has been subjected to one of the most notable debates by educational historians in the modern era. Paul Violas, in his essay “Jane Addams the New Liberalism,” in Roots of Crisis, argued that Addams ideas regarding “psycho-sociological control” manipulated the individual, with a discrete racial, cultural, and social identity, to the cause of American cultural unity. In so doing, the settlement house movement and other progressive programs were in harmony with the “profit objectives” of the corporate industrialists. Ibid., 68. Violas argues that the very heart of Jane Addams’ reform efforts through the settlement house movement was an attempt to replace the social control implicit in the village community with controls more suitable to an urban environment. Ibid., 70-71, citing Jane Addams, Jane Addams, Democracy and Social Ethics, (New York: Macmillan, 1902), 269.

Diane Ravitch, however, criticized Violas and accused him of taking many of Addams’ ideas out of context and distorting her views to support his “radical critique.” She characterized Roots of Crisis as a “frontal attack on the liberal tradition,” in which the historical analysis was geared to support the argument that American society was “racist, fundamentally materialistic, and institutionally structured to protect vested interests” and that education was intended to repress and control. Diane Ravitch, The Revisionists Revised: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977), 126-135. Ravitch argued that many of Addams’ ideas had a feminist, preservationist, and, ultimately, unifying purpose. Ibid., 134-135.

Both these critiques, however – particularly Violas’ – are rife with unabashed presentism and politicization. These studies do represent, however, the dualism inherent in the progressive ideology at the turn of the century, as filtered through the respective radical and liberal views of
the modern era. The historian must also keep in mind that much of the progressive reforms outlined by Addams and Dewey were evolved, co-opted, and even subverted by administrative progressives and welfare industrialists between the late 1880s and the 1920s. Neither Violas nor Ravitch took this into account in their respective critical analyses. What is clear, however, that based upon both critiques as well as the work of other historians of education during the era, that there was a significant relationship between ideas of social control and what Lawrence Cremin referred to as “a vast humanitarian effort to apply the promise of American life . . . to the puzzling new urban-industrial civilization that came into being during the latter part of the nineteenth century.” Cremin, The Transformation of the School, viii.


29 Carson, Settlement Folk, 118.

30 Cremin, American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 154

31 Ravitch, The Revisionists Revised, 128, citing Cremin, The Transformation of the School, x.


33 Jane Addams, Democracy and Social Ethics, 184.


35 Carson, Settlement Folk, 118-119.


38 Cremin, The Transformation of the School, 211.


40 Ibid., 228-229.


Ibid., 34.


Tyack, *The One Best System*, 127, citing Andrew S. Draper, *The Crucial Test of the Public School System* (1898), 4-5.


Ibid., 367.

Ibid., 426.


Ibid., 132-139.


59 Munsell, *From Redstone to Ludlow*, 33.


61 Ibid., 149.

62 Ibid., 196.

63 Ibid., 197-198.


67 Clyne, “Coal People,” 46.

68 Clyne, “Coal People,” 90.


71 Ibid., 11-12.


74 Weed, “The Sociological Department,” 269.


76 Scamehorn, *Pioneer Steelsmaker*, 125, 149.
77 Ibid., 126.

78 Ibid., 149.
Chapter Two

The Sociological Department

Introduction

To announce the formation of the Sociological Department, the General Manager of CF&I, Julian A. Kebler, issued a memorandum ordering that the Department would have general charge of all matters pertaining to education and sanitary conditions and any other matters which should assist in bettering the living conditions of the miners and their families. He named Corwin as the Department Superintendent. It was clear from the outset that company officials were already wary of criticisms that their actions would be seen as paternal and calculated to control the workers. The same day, company officials issued a public statement that the goal of the Sociological Department was not to exercise a “paternal control over the men,” but “to put them in the way of information that will arouse their ambition and make them desirous of doing the best they can for themselves, as well as for their employer.”1

Prior to the formation of the Sociological Department, CF&I had been engaged in very limited social or educational work in the camps. Although company officials claimed that sociological work in education had been carried out “quite extensively” by the company for many years, the only work that had been formally done was the encouragement of reading rooms, encouragement of some camp brass bands, and the creation of a small and isolated kindergarten program in 1892. The nature of this work was only sentimentally paternal, staffed with volunteers, and not officially sponsored.2 Prior to the formation of the Sociological Department, Corwin referred to the company’s activities as lacking regulation and strong “guiding hands.”3
The opening of the first kindergarten, for example, engendered some discussion among camp superintendents in several of the coal camps in the 1890s; however, the company did not officially sanction them but was merely “interested in the work.” In the late 1890s, the company began to assign physicians to the camps to insure the “cause of social betterment” in the treatment of its injured workers, and ordered its camp superintendents to “carefully watch the management of the schools.”

It wasn’t until the spring of 1901 that the “Department of Sociology” was organized as “an aid to the company,” and as a purported benefit to the employees and their families. The work of the Department was initially described as a means of educating the younger generation, or “improving the home relations” and making the workers “better citizens and more contented with their work.”

In this chapter, I will examine the extent to which the Sociological Department’s educational programs were carried out from 1901 until 1915, and outline the resources which CF&I invested in these programs. In addition, I will explore the motivations and the goals for officers of the company regarding the implementation of the programs. I argue that the relative level of resources that CF&I invested in these programs was extremely low, given the stated goals of the company and Department officials, and that the company was more interested in the superficial aspects of the programs that could be showcased both for local and national purposes and for the purposes of social control and containment of the workers and their families in the camps. To provide a meaningful level of educational opportunity to the thousands of workers and their children, and to support the grandiose claims made by the company regarding its educational programs, the company would have had to expend much more significant resources on the programs.
Nevertheless, ironically, the plans and stated goals of the Sociological Department were consistent with some of the more altruistic educational reforms proposed by sociologists, social workers, and educators. The manner in which the Sociological Department’s educational programs were initially implemented held promise for providing increased access to schooling and adult education for both the workers and their families, including children enrolled in the public schools. Many camp children were provided with access, for the first time, to free, standardized public educational programs, and excellent facilities in which to attend school. Extra-curricular programs including kindergarten and domestic education programs for both children and adults were implemented on a modest level. These programs held this promise to create commonality and community despite their focus on social control in the form of assimilation and acculturation.

Goals of the Sociological Department

One of the Sociological Department’s goals at the outset included supervision and control of the public schools in the mining camps. While the schools in the camps were funded by property tax and other revenues from the State of Colorado, because the company provided the majority of the tax revenue to fund the local school districts they exerted enormous economic and political control. In some cases, the public schools in the areas of the camps had already been locally established, but the massive influx of workers and their families demanded their expansion. Corwin wrote in the inaugural report part of the Sociological Department of the purpose was to “carry the work into the public school, not to interfere with the school but aid it.” Corwin justified this role by stating that because the company paid the “larger portion of the taxes, and in some cases nearly all,” he felt that the company “could take the liberty of
suggesting that good school buildings be erected, the best teachers chosen, and free textbooks given to pupils.” These text books would be those chosen at the company’s “solicitation” of the State Superintendent of Schools, to provide a uniform course of study so that children might not be embarrassed in school work when parents move from one to another camp.”6 What Corwin did not add was that the company’s policy at that time was to move the miners from camp to camp, in part, to foster racial, ethnic, and social division among its workers to frustrate attempts at labor organization.

While Corwin downplayed the role of the company over the expanded educational programs, the warning to local educators in the public schools that their suggestions carried weight was unmistakable. Corwin proclaimed that it was the “general policy of the Department to enter as little as possible into the affairs of the public schools when such a course was consistent with their vigorous and progressive management.” He added that the Department only asked the “privilege” of making suggestions, to “advise but never to control,” and that those suggestions had only been rejected in “one or two misguided districts.”7 The message was clear to the small, unconsolidated school districts in and surrounding the coal camps. They would have to provide common school programs which were approved by the company, since the company held the purse strings.

Moreover, Corwin’s views were consistent with the prevailing views of proponents of industrial welfare programs in that the educational programs provided by the schools had to be “progressive;” that is, not only be consistent with the goals of training for hard work, self-discipline, responsibility, and sobriety, but also to train children for their future roles as workers in an industrialized society.
Another of the goals of the Sociological Department was also to provide adult educational programs to workers and other adult residents of the coal camps and at the steelworks in Pueblo. In Corwin’s view, the company would use its power to take on a broader responsibility for providing of a healthy social and intellectual life for the workers. Under the leadership of the Sociological Department, Corwin envisioned a more systematic social advancement in all of the camps, including the introduction of “new and important features” such as “[t]raveling libraries, sewing, cooking, and night schools, gymnasiums, bath rooms for employees, with the addition of daily papers and periodical to the permanent reading rooms.” Corwin pointed out that many of the camps already had clubs, and that, in addition, now schools and “halls for entertainment” would be built. Under the Department’s leadership, the workers and their families would be offered lectures on anatomy, physiology, and hygiene, and other features not offered in the past as part of the “old and more incomplete sociology.” Corwin claimed that, after the work was initiated, the company’s would ultimately look back “with kind remembrance of the days when the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, now grown to great maturity, and an important factor in the industries of our common country, was in its babyhood, its swaddling clothes,” was “prophesying its own great future by daring to grapple the serpents, Ignorance and Vice, enemies of gods and men.”

At the end of the first year of the Sociological Department’s efforts, Corwin summed up the work in the Annual Report as successful but “experimental.” He pointed out that the programs had not met their initial goals in a number of respects, including that the Department had been largely unsuccessful in “reaching the non-speaking English people as desired,” but that the problem would be remedied when the Department had “more foreign literature” and more teachers who could speak the language of the immigrant workers and their families.
appeared to be endorsing the teaching of children and adults at least in part in their native languages, which was a tolerant attitude among the administrative progressives of the era.

Corwin then laid out an ambitious series of goals for the Sociological Department. He pointed out that the company needed more club houses, gymnasiums for young people, more extensive efforts in domestic science programs, and more efforts made to develop manual training programs for both children and adults. In particular, he advocated that the kindergarten programs be expanded, and that domestic training programs for children including stamp and penny banks to “develop economy and thrift and to who the value of money” be developed in every camp. He also indicated that a greater number of circulation libraries were needed, including a “better class of books,” and that clubs, lectures, exhibitions, and other entertainments must be encouraged. Corwin envisioned that each camp would ultimately come to be known “for doing some meritorious, special, and practice work.”

The problems with which the Sociological Department would be faced with in future years as it attempted to carry out these ambitious goals was not lost on Corwin at the end of the Department’s inaugural year. Corwin commented on the problems involved with reaching some of the Department’s goals considering the size of the company and the diversity of its workers and their families. He concluded that the tasks facing the Department presented almost insurmountable obstacles in carrying out the work except at “a ruinous expense.” The company’s far-flung camps were not concentrated, Corwin argued, like a Hull House, in which sociological work could be readily accomplished. What would be required was “a larger force of workers, a greater amount of equipment, and a manifold duplication of supplies” to reach all of the 70,000 to 80,000 persons in the camps and around the steelworks in Pueblo. It was therefore clear to Corwin at the outset that it would be virtually impossible, due to the costs
involved, to implement a plan for industrial welfare consistent with the progressive social ideas of the time and the administrative progressive goals which he had outlined for the Sociological Department.

Nevertheless, Corwin continued to extol the educational programs of the Department and argue that it must continue to seek to obtain those goals. Several months later, in a speech before the Annual Convention of the Associated Charities of Colorado delivered on March 3, 1903, Corwin outlined his views of progressive education and underlined the importance of the Department’s work in the camps and elsewhere. In doing so, he expressly endorsed the ideas of administrative progressives, and urged that education be adapted to socio-economic realities for the good of an industrial society. He pointed out that there were 13,000,000 young men between the ages of sixteen and thirty-five who had received some schooling, and, of this number, according to Corwin, only five percent would be prepared by education for their ultimate occupations. He further pointed out that only a slightly larger percentage of these young men would obtain their livelihood by means of the professions and commercial businesses and that the remainder would have to “obtain the same by means of their hands.” He argued that, instead of receiving training “where fortune overtakes them, learning it often under most unfavorable conditions, without proper instruction or intelligent instructors, usually absorbing what they can by experience and imitation of other workmen,” young men should be trained in the manual arts as an introduction to their eventual employment as workers in the industrial society. This was a direct endorsement of the views of administrative progressives that the working class should be trained to take up their socio-economic roles as menial laborers.

To illustrate his point, Corwin stated that “[i]n the kindergarten of a certain Colorado corporation” the children were doing “individual industrial work in weaving, sewing, basketry,”
which were “elementary operations essential to actual construction work,” and they had also been “studying the work of the blacksmith, the baker, the grocer, the shoemaker and the carpenter,” and were being trained in the benefits that society derived from their work. Corwin believed that nurturing children at an early age and making clear to them the benefits of “collective industrial work” was akin to planting a seed, or “germ,” that proper training would mature into a successful worker. Corwin stated that the time to train workers was in their early lives, and if the boy was properly nurtured, the man would require little attention. The carrying out of educational programs to nurture young people like plants, so that they would be controlled and bear fruit as productive citizens in the modern industrial society was a basic theme of progressive reformers of the era.

Corwin believed that the Department’s programs would constitute a “correct” type of industrial training – one that would not only equip young persons with the proper social orientation to take their place in the industrial society, but training that would ultimately make them happy and appreciative. He argued that “[n]o longer does industrial training mean driving a nail, sawing a block of wood, carving a few raised figures, or turning a cup,” but it meant doing these and other industrial tasks “much more, intelligently and conscientiously.” Expressing the progressive educational ideals of the era, he believed that to properly train young people, they “must master the arts and sciences, study governments and peoples; know their needs and appreciate their demands.” This was an echo of some of the early ideas of John Dewey, who had clearly influenced Corwin, along with the ideas of some of the administrative progressives of the era. Corwin’s ideas were similar to those of Dewey, in regard to the ambition that young people should learn about life in the larger society, but his ideas were also permeated with those of the administrative progressives in regard to his ideas of “social efficiency” and to live among the
“complexities of modern life” and strengthen the “moral aspect” of both the individual and the nation.14

Implementing these progressive ideas in education, Corwin argued, would transform industrial labor into pleasurable and fulfilling occupations, not menial work of distaste and drudgery. In his view, cooking, iron or scrubbing could “be made pleasurable,” and “laying brick, cutting stone or sweeping streets” might become a “work of love if associated with intelligence.” Corwin’s view was that

[t]he street sweeper who knows and appreciates the far-reaching effects of his work, who knows the why of his occupation, who applies his mind to doing his work better and for greater results, is a scientist and gentleman. And the woman who knows the chemistry of scrubbing, who understands the chemical action of water and soap upon the grease spot in carpet or on floor, who carries her thought into her work, is a lady and as much a scientist as the professor in his laboratory. Any and every work and occupation may be dignified and made a source of enjoyment if done scientifically and intelligently.”15

This hybrid formulation, or blending, of the ideas of progressive educators and aims of administrative progressives was at the heart of all of the Sociological Department’s educational programs.

Ultimately, the Department’s educational programs would serve as a managerial model, borrowed from the settlement house movement, for programs that had the ambitious goals of, among other things, reducing labor strife, inspiring loyalty to the company, and creating in the next generation of an improved working class.16 Industrial training, according to company officials, would encourage “skilled hands and trained minds,” and even those men who would direct great industrial enterprises should have this technical instruction. As the editor of the Sociological Department’s important weekly publication, *Camp and Plant*, gushed, “to the young man of intelligence, energy and ambition who obtains this training, the doors to progress and success stand open.”17 These goals of the Sociological Department, however, would prove
to be difficult to meet, as the financial fortunes of CF&I ebbed and flowed in the early 1900s and
this had a direct impact on the resources of the Sociological Department’s educational programs.

The other primary goal of the Sociological Department was to provide a showcase for the
company’s philanthropic work which might change the negative image of the company both
locally and nationally. To do so, CF&I initiated publication of the weekly news magazine, *Camp
and Plant*, which was published from December, 1901 through the spring of 1904. In this
publication, the company outlined its program for social betterment through industrial welfare
and promoted its accomplishments. The magazine featured many photographs and articles on
the improvements in the various camps and around the steelworks complex in Pueblo, including
reports on the company’s support of the public schools, its work in providing domestic education
programs for children and adults, and its kindergarten programs. Reports regarding sociology,
sanitation, domestic science and education were regularly included. More importantly, *Camp
and Plant* was also used as a vehicle to communicate nationally the industrial welfare goals of
the company, to convince workers that the company cared about their personal goals and
aspirations, and also to impress workers with the paternal wisdom and advice of company
officials.¹⁸

The activities of the Sociological Department in its inaugural year were extolled far
beyond all scale to its actual accomplishments, both in the local and national press. Although the
Department’s educational programs were in their infancy, the company wished to make it known
both locally and nationally what the goals of the programs were, and how much progress had
purportedly been made in carrying the industrial welfare and progressive educational programs
to workers and their families. Underlying the purported accomplishments of the Sociological
Department in *Camp and Plant*, the company’s agenda regarding acculturation, assimilation, and
social control of its workers and their families was readily apparent. Furthermore, *Camp and Plant* repeatedly stated the position of the company in regard to labor organizing and activities, and was praised by Corwin from the outset with uniting and interesting the workers and their families and making them “understand and appreciate the real meaning and worth of social betterment.”¹⁹

For example, in its inaugural year, company officers enlisted the assistance of local newspapers, such as the *Denver Times*, to communicate its message. The *Times* noted, in October, 1901 – even before *Camp and Plant* was initially published – that CF&I had perfected a fine system of benefits for its employees which would stamp it as one of the greatest philanthropic corporations of civilization. While this would not, the editor thought, eliminate the possibility of strikes or disputes, it would unquestionably raise the morals of the employees to such a great height that they would reason out their differences with their employers and would not be so easily misled by agitators.²⁰

And that was just the beginning. As *Camp and Plant* was published, it noted the network of numerous national publications which were praising the Sociological Department in general, including its educational programs, during its first three years. *The Outlook*, one the leading periodicals on social reform – and whose editorial policy was closely controlled by nationally recognized administrative progressives – stated that “[t]he sense of responsibility thus shown by this Western mining company in seeking to ameliorate the condition of its employees and to beautify their surroundings furnishes an example with Eastern operators might well emulate.”²¹ It was eventually reported, in regard to the Sociological Department’s activities in supporting the public schools, that the company, in its first two years, had built ten public school buildings and supported their programs at a cost of 24 million dollars.²² This claim had no basis whatsoever in
fact, and the company’s actual outlay for public school construction was actually less than one percent of that figure for all its years of operations combined. Nevertheless, the CF&I enjoyed a heightened national reputation for providing resources for public school education during this time period.

The national press was uniformly effusive of the efforts of CF&I in implementing its industrial welfare program for the workers and their families, including the educational programs of the Sociological Department. In the December, 1901 number of *Social Service*, CF&I’s industrial welfare program was praised for establishing a uniform course of study and providing free textbooks in all of the camps, even though the sociological work had barely begun.

Often, the goals of the Sociological Department in regard to its ambitious kindergarten and domestic sciences programs were presented as if they had already been accomplished. Department officials claimed that that the kindergartens were popular, and although “at first mothers were suspicious and questioned sending their children to the schools,” but as the programs were carried out the kindergarten rooms were more crowded and the parents were demanding new buildings for the kindergartens. Department officials claimed that mothers and fathers regularly visited the kindergartens, and that cooking and sewing classes had been regularly held. At this point, these claims were more a statement of goals than an accurate report of the working of the Sociological Department’s programs. The Department had only initiated its work in a limited number of newer camps, and the work in regard to the cooking schools had only been initiated in a preliminary way in two of the camps, Starkville and Rouse.

Furthermore, even national publications extolling CF&I’s industrial welfare programs were wary of charges of paternalistic control. According to *Social Service*, the goal of such
industrial welfare programs was not containment and control, or to serve the interests of progressive educators, but to join company officials and workers in sectarian unity:

It is hoped that education and improved environment may be the means of bringing about brotherly love and the application of the Golden Rule. That the rich and the poor, the illiterate and the educated alike may be made to realize our social conditions and to unite in an effort to help one another and conscientiously to aid in teaching, and to abide by the teachings of true Christianity, the foundation of all Sociological thought and Social Betterment in the Rockies as well as elsewhere.24

By 1904, in the wake of a strike in 1903-1904, the company was claiming that it had a kind of corporate “soul.” By that time, the Department’s rhetoric had risen to a fevered pitch, again using the Golden Rule as its theme:

[a] good number of the most successful manufacturing concerns of the United States are conducting their affairs with such scrupulous regard to moral principles, are so guided by the Golden Rule in their treatment of employes, that they may fairly be said to have souls. The number of such corporations is so rapidly increasing as to constitute a hopeful sign of the dawning of a less stormy day in the world of industry.25

This was consistent with Department’s overall campaign to portray company officials as philanthropic, socially responsible leaders of society, and the company as a paternal moral compass to guide the lives and work of its employees and their families.

In the last year of publication of Camp and Plant, the Department portrayed the company as a noble enterprise which had been victimized by labor agitators, politicians, and the average citizen, who believed that the company did not have such a conscience:

Political parties, capitalists and laborers as well as private citizens of all sorts and conditions are disturbed by the devouring rush of the twentieth century giants – the trusts and the corporations. The modern corporation is criticized most severely on the ground that it is impersonal and soulless.26

The Sociological Department attributed these views as symptomatic of the industrialization of the nation, not as a characteristic of large corporations such as CF&I. The editor of Camp and
Plant pointed out that such feelings were the result of “unjust and unhuman acts” perpetrated by “a few great corporations,” and it was those isolated acts that “caused many to feel that such aggregations of capital are soulless, undemocratic and unchristian, and hence should be slain like the devouring monsters of antiquity.” Company officials, through the vehicle of Camp and Plant, argued that CF&I could not be tarred with the same brush. The real culprit for these criticisms, argued the editor of Camp and Plant, was the industrial system itself, in which the average worker did not understand the methods of adding “efficiency and mobility to capital.” Under the new system, the personal relations which once existed between the workman and his employer had ceased, and that therefore the worker must trust in the corporate system, accept its paternalistic programs which obviously had been created for the welfare of the workers and their families.27

Ironically, it was the failure by the Sociological Department and, in a larger sense, the company itself, to provide effective financial support for its industrial welfare programs that made such an argument necessary in the first place. By 1904, after further labor strife, the company was on the defensive, as it became clear that its claims for its educational programs were not borne out by company support of the Department’s programs. The claims made by the Department at that point had taken on a strident note, and shortly thereafter the ongoing the public relations program virtually ground to a halt.

Financial Support for Educational Programs

The Sociological Department’s educational programs generally were established during the period of time from the initiation of the Department’s activities until the end of the 1903-
The company had defined education of the workers and their families as their top priority for “social betterment,” and the keynote of all of its work done through the Sociological Department. According to company officials, education was the means by which the company had sought to help the men to help themselves, but it required the cooperation of the workers and their desire for improvement in order to succeed.28

Through the Sociological Department, the company invested significant financial and other resources in helping local school districts to provide consistent educational programs for the children of the workers in the camps. The company claimed to have ordered the giving of free legal advice regarding the implementation of educational programs to the local schools, and provided large discounts on school furniture and supplies, including textbooks and other materials, through the company’s own purchasing agents. These supplies were furnished in “railcar lots” to the school districts.

In addition, and most important, the company, through the Sociological Department, provided direct financial assistance in building schools, implementing kindergarten and domestic science programs in some of the newer camps, paying salaries for teachers, and underwriting bonds for the construction of new schools.29

Company officials claimed that this assistance was freely and voluntarily given, without hope of direct repayment, in order to provide the best possible educational advantages for the children of its employees. Furthermore, company officials claimed that in no case had the company encouraged either a reduction or a waiver of school taxes, and had never charged its employees fees for the participation of their children in the public schools in the camps.30
company claimed that it was spending tens of thousands of dollars on education and sanitary improvements to the camps in order to better the working and living conditions, in addition to the public funds which were being expended for public schools. ³¹

These claims, unlike the inflated claims publicized in the regional and national press, were generally accurate. In the first several years after its formation, the Sociological Department did financially support the local public schools to a relatively substantial degree. It either underwrote or paid for new school buildings in many of the newer camps. The resources of the company, as well as the Sociological Department, were utilized to build the new Corwin School in Berwind and Tabasco, a kindergarten building in El Moro, a one-room school in Herzon, the Osgood School in Rouse, the Kebler School in Pictou, the Cass School in Primero, the Jerome School in Segundo, Harmony Hall in Starkville, and the Beaman School in Tercio.

According to company officials, in each case the Department co-operated actively with the school board, and the company was “most prompt in advancing the funds necessary to erect and furnish the building.” In other districts where the school district funds were not sufficient to meet immediate needs in the growing camps, or the local schools had no ready resources, company official maintained that the company “at once tendered the necessary money for furniture, supplies or salaries.” The school districts were either allowed or compelled to order through the company’s purchasing agent, for which the company claimed that it offered the school districts wholesale rates. ³²

The Sociological Department funded or assisted in building a number of schools in the first several years of its operations. The new schools were all built in newer camps, where the mines were expanding and the population of school-age children was rapidly increasing. The costs for supporting such schools ran from several hundred to several thousand dollars,
depending upon existing resources and facilities, and the abilities of the local school districts to assist in paying for the schools. In the short run, however, the local school districts incurred approximately $10,000 in bonded indebtedness to the company to fund the construction of these public schools during the first several years of its existence.

At the high tide of the expenditure of company funds for public school programs, the Department spent over $20,000 for new or refurbished schools. These expenditures were carried out during the first two years of the Department’s activities.

**CF&I Public School Building Program, 1901-1904**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp School and Year Built</th>
<th>Cost of School</th>
<th>Bonded Indebtedness</th>
<th>Indebtedness Paid, 1901-1904</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berwind/Tabasco (1902)</td>
<td>$4,768.38</td>
<td>$4,500.00</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Moro (1901)</td>
<td>$1,301.62</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulch (1902)</td>
<td>$688.00</td>
<td>$688.00</td>
<td>$560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herzon and Rouse (1900)</td>
<td>$3,561.30</td>
<td>$3,041.40</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictou (1902)</td>
<td>$2,981.68</td>
<td>$2,808.55</td>
<td>$163.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primero and Segundo (1902)</td>
<td>$5,775.99</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tercio (1902)</td>
<td>$4,696.67</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>$23,773.64</strong></td>
<td><strong>$11,037.95</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,223.73</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of these funds were never repaid by the local school districts, nor did the Department expect that such expenditures would be repaid. In essence, the Department was simply spending the local tax monies which had been paid by the company for its own benefit, and for the purported benefit of the camp residents.

Although the actual resources dedicated by CF&I through the Sociological Department to support public education and its own kindergarten and domestic science programs paled beside the inflated claims and reports of expenditures of millions of dollars that the company would make in the local and national press, there is no question that the Sociological Department had
engaged in a serious effort to improve the facilities for public education in the camps. Furthermore, some of the camp schools were model schools when they were built. Corwin supported the liberal approval of loans for new schools, the funding of remodeled schools, or payment of salaries when it was necessary to provide educational programs to children in the camps. After 1904, however, the Sociological Department did not issue new bonded indebtedness to support the building of schools but did encourage the building of new and modern schools for children in the camps and particularly in Pueblo.

Similarly, although the educational expenses actually incurred by the Sociological Department belied the grandiose claims made by company officials in the first years of the Department’s operations in the regional and national press, the Sociological Department did expend a significant amount of resources on the expenses of its various educational programs, as well as the expenses incurred by the local public school districts. In particular, the Department supported public school programs in the new camps which had not been organized long enough to secure funds through property tax levies, and advanced money for school buildings, the payment of teachers’ salaries, and the purchase of furniture and supplies until the local school districts were able to fund the programs.34

A summary of those expenses indicates that the total outlay for educational expenses in first eight years that these educational programs were actively administered totaled $117,170.03, with most of that being expended during the Department’s first three school years of activity from 1901 through 1904. This was at least a significant financial investment by the company in the various educational programs carried out by the Sociological Department in the first eight years of its operation. The high water mark of the Department was during the 1902-1903 school year.
### Annual Expenses for Educational Programs, 1901-1909

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Annual Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901-1902</td>
<td>$17,608.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>$27,508.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-1904</td>
<td>$23,368.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-1905</td>
<td>$10,802.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-1906</td>
<td>$11,304.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>$11,285.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-1908</td>
<td>$10,474.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-1909</td>
<td>$4,817.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total, 1901-1909</strong></td>
<td><strong>$117,170.03</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the fall of 1903 and continuing into 1904, the company was beset with increased labor activity and the UMWA called a strike. During the strike, many of the educational programs initiated by the Department were temporarily cancelled or drastically curtailed. Furthermore, and more importantly, the company experienced a change in leadership, and the new directors did not support or emphasize the sociological work which the company had undertaken. By 1909, the Department’s total financial support of educational programs was negligible.

When these expenses are broken down and a comparison is made of the general expenses of the Department, and compared to the costs of publishing *Camp and Plant*, it is clear where the company’s priorities lay.

### Annual Sociological Department General Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>General Expenses</th>
<th>Camp and Plant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901-1902</td>
<td>$6,463.03</td>
<td>$4,424.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>$7,829.56</td>
<td>$10,926.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-1904</td>
<td>$6,371.54</td>
<td>$7,375.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-1905</td>
<td>$5,406.58</td>
<td>$51.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-1906</td>
<td>$6,203.51</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>$6,383.31</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-1908</td>
<td>$5,675.91</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-1909</td>
<td>$4,062.20</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total, 1901-1909</strong></td>
<td><strong>$48,395.64</strong></td>
<td><strong>$22,777.62</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Approximately one-third of the Sociological Department’s budget for funding its educational programs during the years it was most active was dedicated to its work with public relations and communication, not directly with funding educational programs. Given the high percentage of the Sociological Department’s total funding dedicated to the publishing of *Camp and Plant*, it is clear that company officials intended, during the first several years of the Sociological Department’s activities, to rely greatly upon the information disseminated by the company to contain its workers, apply social control to their activities, to control their opinions and actions, and accomplish the company’s goals. The outlay to publish and distribute *Camp and Plant* for three years exceeded the company’s funding for construction of public schools as well as its financial support for its educational programs.

Considering the size of CF&I and the number of employees and their families that were virtually depended on the support of the company, the actual financial outlay for educational expenses to support the Department’s programs was very modest. While the company regularly grossed tens of millions of dollars each year, and registered profits of at least a million dollars annually, the Department’s budget was very limited and grossly insufficient to accomplish its stated educational goals for workers and their families.

The actual resources expended in the newer camps during the first two years of the Sociological Department’s operations make it clear that the support of these ambitious programs was a token one, at best.

### Yearly Expenses for Selected Programs, 1901-1903

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp/Year</th>
<th>Kindergartens</th>
<th>Cooking Schools</th>
<th>Reading Rooms</th>
<th>Aggregate Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starkville</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1902</td>
<td>$1,694.59</td>
<td>$62.45</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,757.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>$785.65</td>
<td>$3.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>$788.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>1901-1902</td>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>Total 1901-1902</td>
<td>Total 1902-1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Moro</td>
<td>$518.18</td>
<td>$690.03</td>
<td>$518.18</td>
<td>$690.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sopris</td>
<td>$516.61</td>
<td>$808.20</td>
<td>$21.00</td>
<td>$84.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$678.44</td>
<td>$557.10</td>
<td>$3.62</td>
<td>$24.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$548.68</td>
<td>$573.06</td>
<td>$42.67</td>
<td>$228.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$576.75</td>
<td>$892.39</td>
<td>$24.45</td>
<td>$832.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictou</td>
<td>$0.55</td>
<td>$575.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsen</td>
<td>$1.46</td>
<td>$6.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobasco</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$93.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$15.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primero</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$31.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tercio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segundo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pueblo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$47.37</td>
<td>$1,474.97$^{38}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$53.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Pueblo Normal and Industrial School | | | | | $0.00
|                 |           |           |                 | $276.07                      |
During its first two years of operations, the Sociological Department did fund the educational expenses for kindergarten programs in some of the newer camps, but many of the kindergartens were without financial support. In addition, the other educational programs such as cooking schools and reading rooms were not funded at a high level when they were funded at all. Certainly the actual levels of funding did not justify the claims made by the company, and the Department, in the national and regional press and were, in many cases, simply token efforts at funding the programs.

When the figures for educational expenses are extended through the last year of the Sociological Department’s control of the funding, the pattern of decrease in funding for educational programs is obvious. Not only were the various educational programs in the established programs in the camps no longer receiving funding, but as time went on fewer camps were receiving funding for any of their educational programs whatsoever, and the programs ultimately would be completed curtailed.

**Total Yearly Expenses for Educational Programs, 1903-1909**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>1903-04</th>
<th>1904-05</th>
<th>1905-06</th>
<th>1906-07</th>
<th>1907-08</th>
<th>1908-09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starkville</td>
<td>$755.45</td>
<td>$653.92</td>
<td>$663.76</td>
<td>$784.46</td>
<td>$367.43</td>
<td>$6.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Moro</td>
<td>$392.48</td>
<td>$62.78</td>
<td>$522.74</td>
<td>$485.95</td>
<td>$86.62</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sopris</td>
<td>$836.16</td>
<td>$762.95</td>
<td>$669.17</td>
<td>$35.23</td>
<td>$45.13</td>
<td>$0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engle</td>
<td>$862.22</td>
<td>$253.22</td>
<td>$245.48</td>
<td>$54.96</td>
<td>$297.52</td>
<td>$7.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouse</td>
<td>$760.76</td>
<td>$75.17</td>
<td>$94.36</td>
<td>$18.03</td>
<td>$20.40</td>
<td>$13.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictou</td>
<td>$647.64</td>
<td>$529.34</td>
<td>$156.34</td>
<td>$32.56</td>
<td>$28.53</td>
<td>$7.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsen</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$523.56</td>
<td>$515.38</td>
<td>$463.33</td>
<td>$304.24</td>
<td>$7.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabasco</td>
<td>$17.17</td>
<td>$3.91</td>
<td>$7.28</td>
<td>$1.41</td>
<td>$0.92</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwind</td>
<td>$258.90</td>
<td>$69.99</td>
<td>$67.53</td>
<td>$39.98</td>
<td>$21.13</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primero</td>
<td>$144.95</td>
<td>$53.27</td>
<td>$43.91</td>
<td>$35.46</td>
<td>$26.06</td>
<td>$22.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tercio</td>
<td>$31.61</td>
<td>$172.78</td>
<td>$39.30</td>
<td>$54.32</td>
<td>$53.57</td>
<td>$2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segundo</td>
<td>$139.72</td>
<td>$208.30</td>
<td>$206.16</td>
<td>$106.83</td>
<td>$279.13</td>
<td>$74.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pueblo</td>
<td>$4,073.47</td>
<td>$738.79</td>
<td>$1,154.64</td>
<td>$2,319.04</td>
<td>$200.02</td>
<td>$575.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,920.53</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,107.98</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,386.05</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,431.56</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,730.70</strong></td>
<td><strong>$711.25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the early levels of financial support enjoyed by the Department in its first two years, the total level of funding continued to drop in for the next seven years until it was virtually negligible. By the end of the 1908-1909 school year, the expenditures for support of educational programs in the camps and in Pueblo had dropped to a fraction of their original level of financial support. After 1909, the expenses incurred by the Sociological Department to support its educational programs were listed under “equipment expenses” in each camp and at the steelworks. The Sociological Department, after 1909, was no longer a significant active source of funding for any type of educational programs, either in the public schools or in company facilities.

The explanation for the availability of funding of the Sociological Department’s educational programs, and the explanation for the drastic increase and subsequent reduction in the company’s support of the Department, was tied directly to the ebb and flow of the financial fortunes and leadership of the company during the years that the Department functioned.

Immediately after the Sociological Department’s formation, the educational programs outlined by Corwin and his staff were initiated in some of the newer, growing coal camps. The population, ethnicity, and socioeconomic structure of the camps fluctuated fairly rapidly in these camps, as new mining infrastructure was built and the mines were established, were heavily worked, or were played out. The Sociological Department initially established kindergarten programs in the schools within relatively new mining areas near Trinidad, in the camps of Sopris, Primero, Segundo, Tercio, El Moro, Starkville, and Engle. The Department also established kindergarten programs in the camps of Pictou and Rouse near Walsenburg, and in the camps of Berwind and Tabasco, which were located between Walsenburg and Trinidad. During the heyday of the Department’s activities, in the spring of 1903, the Sociological Department had
a relatively large staff to oversee and implement its ambitious educational programs for the camps, which included Corwin, his assistant superintendent, Walter Morritt, and Margaret Grabill, who was the supervisor of the kindergarten programs. In addition, the Department employed two domestic science teachers who worked on an itinerant basis, initially in Sopris, Starkville, Engle, and Rouse. There were also twelve kindergarten teachers working in the camps, a principal and matron working in the newly-establish Pueblo Normal and Industrial School near the steelworks, a superintendent of clubhouse programs and two clubhouse managers, four reading room managers, and three night school teachers working in Berwind and Rouse.40

In the fall of 1903, however, the company had expanded so rapidly that it became insolvent. In order to protect significant loans to the company, George Jay Gould and John D. Rockefeller acquired a controlling interest in the company on behalf of the Rockefeller group, which controlled a vast financial empire based on the Standard Oil Trust. This had a significant effect on the burgeoning activities of the Sociological Department, since its educational programs would now be subject to the scrutiny of Rockefeller’s staff, which had control over all business and philanthropic endeavors carried out in areas controlled by its enterprises. Rockefeller employed Frederick T. Gates, who was the secretary of the Baptist Education Society, to oversee his interests in all such programs. Gates quickly assumed as well the task of looking after philanthropic and some business investments. Assisted by a small staff, he screened applications for aid and offered expert advice on philanthropic and financial transactions. John D. Rockefeller’s son, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., assisted Gates in providing the elder Rockefeller with sound advice on business and philanthropic ventures. John Jr., as he was known to family members and close friends, took charge of his father’s famed New York offices
at 26 Broadway, and gradually assumed responsibility for all business activities. By 1911, after his father’s withdrawal from all active business activities, his son had already taken on the task of directing the family’s investments. This was crucial to the educational programs initiated by the Department, because now not only were there serious financial constraints on the company’s sociological work, but such work would be scrutinized carefully under the Rockefeller Committee’s leadership.

The financial health of the company was unstable between 1903 and 1907. In 1903, the Rockefeller group hired Frank J. Hearne to manage the company. Hearne was a trained mining engineer who had managed iron concerns in West Virginia, and was brought out of semi-retirement to improve the financial condition of CF&I, which had experienced a short-lived labor strike at the end of 1903 and into early 1904. Under his direction, the company’s gross earnings jumped from $16.7 million in 1903 to $23.8 million in 1907; however, the company’s profits had dipped slightly during that time to just over one million dollars a year.

With the change in the company’s financial status as well as its management between 1903 and 1907, the ambitious scope of the Sociological Department’s educational programs began to erode. Corwin noted, in his annual report to Hearne in 1904, that “despite the strike all the schools conducted their work as usual.” But it was clear that the 1903-1904 strike and its financial impact had also had a significant effect on the Department’s work. Because the camps had been under guard during the strike, it was necessary for mothers who lived outside the camps, or who had been forced to leave because their husbands had joined the strike, had to bring their children to the camp’s guarded boundary lines and had to place them in the hands of the guards, who, according to Department officials, “saw them safely to the schools.” Corwin claimed that this showed that, despite the labor “agitation,” that “neither fear, ignorance nor
prejudice existed to the detriment of the children.”43 It became clear to company officials after the strike of 1903-1904 that social programs, in themselves, were not enough to shield their workers from labor organization or shield the company from concerted union activity.44 Furthermore, the company no longer funded the publication and distribution of the Department’s publication, *Camp and Plant*, after the 1903-1904 school year, which had been the centerpiece of its sociological work.

In 1907, the company’s management changed again after Hearne suffered a fatal heart attack. Gould picked Jesse F. Welborn, who had managed the company’s sales division, to manage the company as President. He was experienced and popular within the company’s managers and supervisors. However, shortly after he was selected, Gould was forced to sell his interests in the company, and Gates, on behalf of the Rockefeller group, picked a Rockefeller insider, Lamont Bowers, to run the company as a consultant.45 By the end of the 1906-1907 school year, while the kindergarten programs and the programs at the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School remained in place, the other Department programs had been drastically curtailed, and no Department staff remained to serve the domestic science, social, and night school programs in the camps.46

In his annual report to Welborn in 1908, Corwin reported that “the general financial conditions this year have not entirely overlooked Colorado and they have had their effect upon the character and the quantity of our work.”47 In the report for the 1907-1908 school year, company officials concluded that the work of the Department in providing good sanitary and educational conditions was “coming to fruition,” and that the goals that the Department had “become matter of course,” leaving the Department “free to work in other directions.” At that time, the medical facilities in Pueblo were expanding.
Corwin was almost apologetic as he reported the lack of progress of the Department in the camps:

The long established work of the Department such as the kindergartens, clubs, libraries and entertainments is much the same from year to year, and, as it is an old story, will receive but passing mention in this report. In fact it has been our purpose this year to reduce the size and expense of the report as much as possible.\textsuperscript{48}

Essentially, Corwin was declaring the company’s sociological work complete – although in fact it had been drastically reduced far short of its stated goals. At the end of the 1907-1908 school year, even some of the kindergarten programs had been eliminated.\textsuperscript{49} Certainly the educational work of the Department, far from coming to fruition, had been static or losing ground for several years.

Lamont Bowers was Gates’ uncle. Because Gates was aware that Rockefeller wanted trusted lieutenants at the helm of all his enterprises, Gates exercised his influence with Rockefeller who appointed Bowers to the post in order to make CF&I more profitable again so that dividends could be paid to stockholders. According to Bowers, Welborn was a man of some talent and good intentions, but was not the person to rescue the company from the financial perils that confronted it. Between October 1907 and May 1908, Bowers was named, in succession, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of CF&I. Ultimately, his power over the company was absolute.

Bowers was a successful businessman from Binghamton, New York, where his family had originally settled in the early 1800s. He attended a business academy for a short time and ran a wholesale grocery business in Binghamton. In the 1870s, he moved his business interests to Omaha, Nebraska, and there conducted the real estate and farm implement business that would make him wealthy. In 1878 he returned to New York and established a company which made
roofing material, and continued to work in real estate. By 1892 his uncle, Gates, had been hired by Rockefeller to manage all his philanthropic interests, including endowing the University of Chicago. Through Gates’ influence, Bowers was brought in to manage the Bessemer Steamship Company. After successfully managing that company for ten years, and rising in the Rockefeller enterprises, Bowers returned home to Binghamton. In 1907, Bowers’ wife became ill and was advised by her physicians to seek a drier climate in Colorado’s Rocky Mountains. It was at this time that Gates asked Bowers to inspect CF&I, which led, in turn, to Bowers being asked to take the helm of the company.50

As he took control of CF&I, Bowers made it clear that he alone represented the Rockefellers. As chief executive officer from 1908 to early 1915, Bowers was determined to make the corporation profitable and to pay dividends to stockholders. After Bowers’ initial review of the company’s financial condition, he reported to Gates that CF&I was “a partially developed business just stout enough to creep.”51 Accordingly, in CF&I’s Denver office, at his direction, one-third of the employees were let go, and some jobs were eliminated in nearly all departments throughout the enterprise. Both the sociological and medical programs were trimmed or curtailed. Improvements, with few exceptions, were shelved, and marginal operations were shut down. Even Corwin, who had enjoyed a five-year employment contract, became an employee who was terminable at will at short notice, and had his own salary drastically reduced.

Under Bowers’ leadership, CF&I management became increasingly ruthless, both in business and with the working and living conditions in the camps. Less than two years after taking the helm of the company, Bowers reduced the wages of the steelworkers in Pueblo by ten percent. Bowers reported to Rockefeller that there would be no trouble or violence to the
company’s “sympathies,” since two-thirds of the workers in the steelworks were “not Americans or American citizens by adoption” but were in the United States simply to sell their labor “in the highest market in the world.” Bowers maintained that when these workers had “a few hundred dollars to their credit” in foreign banks, they would go back home “to enjoy their bread and beer.” Bowers believed that a “large amount” of the wages paid to workers were simply exchanged for foreign currency and sent back to support the families of workers in foreign countries. Bowers concluded:

I always regret cutting the wages of laborers who have families to support and are trying to pay for homes and educate their children but considering these foreigners who do not intend to make American their home, and who live like rats in order to save money, I do not feel that we ought to maintain high wages in order to increase their income and shorten their stay in this country.\(^52\)

It was clear, at this point, that the company’s paternal policies, whether successful or not, whether altruistic or not, were at an end. The company now was unapologetic about the goals of producing profits for the company and paying dividends to stockholders at virtually any social or economic cost to its employees.

Less than two years later, it was clear that Bowers ruthless leadership was approved of at 26 Broadway. In the wake of the Starkville Mine Disaster, in which 76 miners lost their lives in an explosion of coal dust in a mine outside of Trinidad because of the company’s failure to provide sufficient ventilation, Bowers reported that the company had earned, for the first time since he took the reins, a significant increase in company profits in 1910. The following year he was congratulated by Rockefeller’s business manager that CF&I was earning a year’s worth of dividends for the company every sixty days – and if he didn’t have “any more blow ups” he would “do even better than that.” By 1912, the company’s annual profit was almost two million dollars. Despite the increased company profits, Rockefeller, as well as Bowers, was increasingly
blamed for the company’s inadequate safety record including a significant number of deaths from a number of serious mine explosions in the camps which resulted in significant loss of life. It didn’t matter, though – Bowers was clearly carrying out the wishes of 26 Broadway in mining the company for increased profits for investors, and, as a result, his position was increasingly secure.53

In short, Bowers’ efforts did result in some financial success for CF&I. Gross earnings ranged from $20 to $24 million in the years from 1908 through 1913, before falling precipitously because of the 1913-1914 strike by the UMWA. In general, Bowers was determined, energetic, and was an “iron-fisted” leader of the company. He was fiercely intolerant of people who questioned his policies, whether they were within or outside of the company. Although in the short run he restored the corporation’s capacity for making substantial annual profits and paying dividends, in the long run he undermined the very goals he had set for himself and for the enterprise. In particular, his absolute intolerance for labor organizations eventually led to his ouster in the wake of the violence of the strike of 1913-1914. Bowers could not tolerate any interaction with labor leadership, or his employees’ interaction with labor organizations, and he refused to acknowledge their legitimacy or bargain with them in any way. His stubborn refusal to negotiate with the UMWA was not only an important cause of the coal miners’ strike of 1913-1914, but also one of the reasons why the strike degenerated into the extreme violence that eventually forced Bowers to give up, contrary to his wishes, all affiliation with the fuel company in 1915.54

Under Bowers’ leadership, the Sociological Department’s educational programs, as well as some of the company’s other industrial sociology programs, were virtually abandoned as “unnecessary frills.”55 By the end of 1908-1909 school year, while the schools built during the
first three years of the Department’s work were still in use in the public school districts in the
camps, the Department had not funded or underwritten any new school construction for six years
-- even though they had been requested to do so by local school district superintendents. The
Department’s kindergarten programs had been greatly reduced and were carried on only in five
camps, Segundo, Primero, Pictou, Rouse, and Starkville. The programs in adult and domestic
education, other than some limited night school classes in Pueblo, were no longer functioning.
Corwin’s experiment in industrial sociology and progressive education had ended by the time the
UMWA called the miners out on strike in 1913.

Conclusion

The Sociological Department was created as an industrial welfare program for workers
and their families. Ironically, while it was ambitious and designed to benefit both workers and
their children and provide much-needed educational and social resources to better the lives of the
workers, it was also intended to impose a much higher degree of socio-economic and political
control over them.

The Sociological Department had several goals. First and foremost, the Department was
created to orchestrate the supervision and control of local public school educational programs
and unify the program of study. The Department had the goal of offering domestic science
programs to adults and children in the camps, including industrial training to prepare the workers
and their children for their roles as workers. A large part of this program included educational
programs which were designed to assimilate immigrants and acculturate them as industrial
workers. The Department was also intended to carry out a program of communication on a
regional and national level, to educate and inform both its workers and public opinion regarding
the activities of large industrial corporations, and create a positive image for such corporations and minimize the potential for labor organization and strife. The Sociological Department was also created to obtain and maintain social control over its workers and their families in order to insure efficient, productive, and profitable industrial activity.

Although the Sociological Department’s goals were comprehensive and ambitious, the company invested only a small portion of its overall budget in its educational programs. The majority of the Department’s funding was spent on spreading the message of industrial welfare. The company, through the Department, wanted to convince the workers, their families, and the public that the company’s officers acted only through their paternal interests in providing programs for social betterment in the mine and mill communities. Through these programs, many of the social and economic problems of the workers would be resolved, according to Department officials, in the best interests of all.

Nevertheless, ironically, the plans and stated goals of the Sociological Department were consistent, to a certain degree, with the more altruistic educational reforms proposed by sociologists, social workers, and educators in the progressive era. The manner in which the Sociological Department’s educational programs were initially implemented held promise for providing educational opportunities for both the workers and their families, including children enrolled in the public schools, despite their focus on social control and maintaining class stratification. Under the Department’s leadership, the company built schools, insured access to schooling to many of the children of its workers, and initiated domestic science and kindergarten programs for a significant number of the workers and their families. Initially, the Department made it clear that it also wanted to increase access to education by hiring teachers who could speak the native languages of their students in the camps and utilize teaching materials in other
languages. It was only when it became clear to company officials that the Sociological Department was failing to obtain its lofty goals, the costs of the programs were so high that they were interfering with the ability of the company to pay dividends to its stockholders, and that the company could not maintain containment and control of its workers through the Department’s programs, that the educational programs were curtailed.
Chapter Two

The Sociological Department

1 “Plans to Better Condition,” *Pueblo Chieftain*, July 25, 1901, 16.

2 As an example of the “sociological work” that the company had been carrying out prior to 1901, Dr. Corwin reported in 1901 that

   As early as 1883, Mr. A.H. Danforth, General Manager of the Colorado Coal and Iron Company, remarked to the members of a very young brass band, composed of coal miners at Crested Butte, when they serenaded him at the Elk Mountain Hotel, “Gentlemen, not only do you take elements from the earth, but out of elements taken from the earth you make music.’ There was some foundation for the remark. The band had never before been together, for some members it was their first effort in public; the leader did nobly and the rest manfully followed. The snow was many feet deep and the crisp air, at an altitude of nearly two miles above the sea, had its effect upon the instruments; some of the horns became clogged with ice and valves stuck and refused to move, but the brave fellows played on and we listened; Nature as usual, finally asserted herself, froze the instruments and restored peace and quiet. The member of the band received congratulations, which they deserved, and something more substantial, which they desired, to help them in their worthy and interesting work. Later in the season when the elements were more considerate, the twenty feet of snow had disappeared, and the trees and flowers were rejoicing winter was over, we again listened to the same band, but they, too, had changed; we soon forgot our first sad experience and listed with pleasure to real music which these miners dug up from their souls.


5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., 6.


10 Ibid.


13 Ibid., 220, 226.

14 Ibid., 221.

15 Ibid., 224.


26 Ibid., 333.

27 Ibid., 333-334.


29 Ibid., 558.

30 Ibid., 558-559.


33 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 557-571. This and other tables utilize the CF&I fiscal year, which ran from July 1 through June 30, which also generally constituted the company’s designation of the school year for its programs.


35 The Sociological Department’s fiscal year ran from July 1 through June 30. Ledger, Sociological Department, 1901-1909, Ledger Room, Bessemer Historical Society Archives.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 This figure represents the cost of opening the Minnequa Reading Room at the Old Hospital in Pueblo as well as other facilities.

39 Ledger, Sociological Department, 1901-1909.


41 Scamehorn, Mill and Mine, 23-25.

42 Ibid., 25.


44 Munsell, From Redstone to Ludlow, 103.


51 Bowers to Gates, May 30, 1907, Box 27, Folder 80, SUNY.

52 Bowers to Rockefeller, April 12, 1909, Box 28, Folder 96, SUNY.

53 Bowers to M.B. Streeter, November 28, 1910, Box 27, Folder 84; M.B. Streeter to Bowers, November 12, 1911, Box 27, Folder 85, SUNY; Welborn to Bowers, August 24, 1912, Box 27, Folder 86, SUNY.

54 Scamehorn, *Mill and Mine*, 31, 36-37. Bowers resigned from CF&I as of January 1, 1915, by sending a telegram to Welborn which stated “[t]hat I may give my time to the personal affairs of Mr. Rockefeller in an advisory position, I present my resignation as an officer of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Co and its subsidiary companies, remaining a director, effective January first 1915.” Bowers to Welborn, December 29, 1014, Box 27, Folder 88, SUNY.


Chapter Three

The All-Good Schools

Introduction

Clarence Cordova was born in 1889, the child of a miner that worked in the mining camp of Pryor, which was located south of Walsenburg in the rocky foothills in coal mining country of Huerfano County. He attended primary school in an old church building which had been used by the local school district in what was known at the time as “Old Rouse,” which was close to Pryor. He attended school in the old church until he reached the seventh grade, when his father moved to work at the CF&I camp in what was formerly known as Santa Clara, but became to be known as the mining camp of Rouse.

In June, 1900, at a cost of less than $2,000, the company moved the school by horse and wagon from Old Rouse and rebuilt it in Rouse, which was approximately four miles south of Old Rouse and six miles south of Walsenburg. Old Rouse was originally a traditional plaza community. When Clarence entered school in Rouse, the new school, called the Osgood School, was in operation. The Osgood School was a neat, wood-frame, two-story school with four rooms and ornamental trim. It had a principal, two teachers, and a kindergarten program which was supported by the Sociological Department. There were over a hundred students in attendance during the year that Clarence finished eighth grade, probably in 1903, and he would have been one of less than a half-dozen students to finish primary school. At the time, according to Clarence, only the families that “had money” sent their children to high school, and to do so they had to send them to board in Trinidad or Walsenburg and attend the county high schools.
After Clarence graduated from primary school, his father encouraged him to work in the mines. He had no real options other than employment, and he went to work underground in a CF&I mine near Pryor, which was just south of Rouse, at the age of fourteen in late 1903. He returned to the Osgood School in Rouse to get married in 1911, because, like many Hispanos in the area, he was Catholic and his church services had also been held in the Osgood School for years.²

When Clarence began to attend school, his teacher was the wife of the company Superintendent of the camp, Mrs. Parrett. Clarence recalled that the hiring of the teachers was the responsibility of the company superintendents in the coal camps:
The supers used to hire the teachers. They used to pick out the teachers. If they
didn’t like a teacher, they wouldn’t be there long. They would fire her and get
somebody else.

Clarence also recalled, of his two years in the Osgood School in Rouse:

Oh, there was good schools. That school they had at Rouse, they moved it from
Old Rouse. It was a big school, there was 500 kids in there. They called it All
Good School.

According to Clarence, the camp schools, including his school, “had some of the best teachers.”
Seventy-five years later, he still remembered that his first teachers, Mrs. Capps and Miss Porter,
were some of the best teachers he ever had. He felt that, in retrospect, the teachers he had in the
camps were good teachers.3

When the Sociological Department was formed in 1901, CF&I had only been involved in
common or public school education in a very limited way. Other than encouraging some
kindergarten programs on a volunteer basis in several of the camps, and encouraging the
expansion of other schools in the mining camps and communities, the company’s interests did
not include significant support of the public schools. Beginning in 1900, however, the company
took a more active role in building, maintaining, centralizing, standardizing, supervising, and
even controlling the public school programs in the camps and in Pueblo, particularly in the newer
and larger camps which were being established at that time.

In this chapter, I will examine the efforts of the Sociological Department to support,
expand, and control public school education in some of the newer and larger camps. I argue that
through the establishment of programs in many of these camp schools, the support of public
school teachers, the support of construction and support of school facilities, the support of
standardization of the curriculum, and the involvement in the organization and administration of
the schools the Department had a significant impact on the availability and quality of education
for children in these camps. Although the Sociological Department’s public school programs were relatively limited, particularly given its ambitious industrial welfare goals and the size of the company’s operations in southern Colorado, they did create opportunities for access to relatively high quality public schooling for many children, such as Clarence Cordova, who might not otherwise have had such opportunities. The Sociological Department insured a higher degree of access to schooling for children in the newer camps, sometimes through the early secondary grades. The Department provided state-of-the-art facilities in several of the newer camp schools. It provided guidance and support for teaching training, free housing for some teachers in the camp schools, and provided support for reform and standardization of the curriculum. While the programs, as well as the curriculum, were geared to the industrial goals of the company, which included reducing labor strife and fostering loyalty to the company, the Department’s educational work did create significant educational benefits for both children and adults in these camps.

Because the children of immigrant families were concentrated in heavily industrialized areas, and because of their broad racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity and their homogenous socio-economic characteristics, the children in the camps were subject to many of the same assumptions regarding schooling as children from more industrialized urban areas in the eastern United States. Much of the ideology of the administrative progressives, including Corwin and the Department staff, particularly regarding assimilation and acculturation of immigrant children and social control and stratification in such industrialized areas, was therefore also applicable to the children of the company’s workers in some of the camp schools.

Although children in the coal camps did not, as a rule, progress beyond the primary grades, as the work of the Sociological Department was carried forward by educators eventually
some children in many of the coal camps did progress through secondary grades, and some went on to college.\textsuperscript{4} To a certain degree, the teachers in the Sociological Department’s programs provided educational experiences for children which were consistent with the more altruistic principles of progressive educators, and achieved much more than industrial training. Many of the children in the camps, when they looked back at their schooling experiences in the coal camp schools from an adult perspective, reported that they respected their teachers, attended school with children from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds, and felt that their schooling experiences were valuable to them later in life.

\textit{Cooperation, Not Control}

In the early years of the company’s activities in southern Colorado, it virtually ignored the establishment of public schools in the camps. Many of the camps did not have schools, and even if they did have schools they were almost exclusively ungraded, one-room schools with limited resources and very limited attendance. Usually all of the students in a rural school district were taught in the same room by a single teacher. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was becoming clear to company officials that the establishment of schools was a necessary part of building new mines and camps. In particular, after the strike of 1894, it became clear that to effectively implement its program of social control and containment, it was essential that the company involve itself in the public school programs in the camps.

Since the company owned most, if not all, of the property in the newer and larger camps, it wielded an enormous influence on the organization, leadership, teaching, and administration of the local schools. Aside from issues of control and containment, the company also had good reasons for taking an interest in the public schools. After 1894, many of workers and their
families took great pride in their schools as the center of community life in the coal camps. The schools were important not only as educational institutions but also as centers of community life.”

When new mines were opened, the mining camps quickly grew around the mines on company property. It was a relatively easy matter to take a hand in directing and controlling the schools as they were built and opened. Local governments in the area in which new camps were established were often were not enthusiastic about opening new schools in new mining camps, since building schools and supporting teaching staff was a significant investment. To counter criticism that new mining development required the establishment of new schools, the company pledged to support building and hiring teachers. Similarly, to counter criticism that company control had the potential to adversely affect the schools, company officials pointed out that it was the state, not the company, that was in charge of the administering the public schools in the camps. While this partly true, since much of the funding of the camp schools was derived from, among other sources, state tax monies, the schools themselves were administered locally and were subject to the influence of camp superintendents. This system caused resentment on the part of some parents of children in the camps, who sometimes saw themselves as being powerless to choose their teachers or their school leaders, which in turn caused discontent with their living and working conditions and led to later labor strife.

Nevertheless, the Sociological Department publicized its support of public school programs using the theme of “cooperation, not control.” The Department repeatedly argued that local school districts routinely consulted Department officials, and that it was the general policy of the company to “enter as little as possible into the affairs of the public schools when such a course was consistent with their vigorous and progressive management.” Company officials
pointed out that the company paid a large share of property taxes in the camps, in some cases “up to 95% of the total,” and for that reason had earned the “privilege of making suggestions” regarding the schools – which were almost always implemented by local school districts. Company officials argued that they had “always striven to co-operate with an advised with school boards, but never to control them.” This was a theme that was repeated often by Sociological Department and company officials over the next decade. The Department’s publications often reiterated that the schools in the camps were public schools, and were “under the authority and direction of state and county school superintendents, and that all the camp schools included programs for all eight grades, and some camps had programs for kindergarten and secondary students. In this way, company officials attempted to counter criticism that the company’s paternal oversight of the schools was simply another way in which the company controlled the lives of the workers and their families.

In some cases, the Sociological Department’s involvement with hiring and training teachers was more overt. In Department publications, it was repeatedly stated the best teachers had been selected for the schools, and these teachers were sometimes recruited and offered training in sociological methods at the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School which the Department subsidized. The Department often touted the teachers which were selected to work in the camp schools, and particularly in its kindergarten programs, “as earnest a body of workers as one could find anywhere,” and that many of the teachers were college and normal school graduates. Company officials argued that only well-trained administrators and teachers were selected, since not only did they have to teach, but they had to foster good relationships between the school and the workers’ homes. Furthermore, company officials argued that the school staff
in the camps compared favorably to that in other coal-producing counties in Colorado, was higher paid, and was more efficient than those in adjoining western states.\textsuperscript{12}

This purported spirit of cooperation, not control, was carried out through the company’s support of local school boards in establishing teachers’ houses, and assisting in “parent meetings” in local schools to share issues of concern with the parents in the camps. Company officials made it clear that the teachers in the coal camp schools had been selected and secured by the company at the request of local district boards of education.\textsuperscript{13} Company officials also claimed that the company provided legal advice to local school districts and encouraged the adoption of a “free and uniform system of text books,” and in every case the “suggestions of the Department met with a hearty response.”\textsuperscript{14} In the view of company officials, such a response was one which was compliant with the company’s aims for its educational programs.

\textit{Teachers’ Houses}

The Sociological Department, as part of its program for public schools, made efforts to provide teachers with living quarters in the camps. Housing for teachers working in the camp schools had always been a problem. With the advent of the company’s program to build and rent houses to the workers and their families in the camps, housing for teachers and school staff was available at virtually no cost to the company. Since the company had built and owned blocks of houses in the camps, it was a simple matter to absorb the cost of allowing a local teacher to live in one of the houses. Also, if the company provided housing, it would make working in one of the camp schools more attractive to teacher candidates.

But the teachers’ houses served a more important function. If the local teachers lived in one of the houses in the camps, it made the teacher’s house a center for social work as well. By
living in a house within the camp, teachers were able to act as social settlement workers and provide a meeting place for mothers and establish an example of what the company believed was a model for proper housekeeping. In this sense, the teachers’ houses served a particular sociological purpose. In some cases, the local teacher lived in part of the house and the company rented the house to a miner’s family. Teachers were required to furnish their rooms using a limited budget, and showing that furnishings could be established in a thrifty, “thoroughly practical,” and “sanitary” manner. In Segundo, for example, the local teacher’s house came to be known as the Casa de las Maestras, the “teachers’ home,” and the furnishings were provided free of charge to the teacher to be used an example of how the company’s homes could be cheaply and attractively furnished. By the end of 1905, teachers’ houses were in place for kindergarten teachers in many of the newer or fast-growing camps, including in Berwind and Tobasco, Primero, Segundo, Engle, Rouse, Pictou, Sopris, Tercio, and El Moro. Department officials touted these houses are being “centers of social work and especially for the domestic science work,” and added that “so practical has this plan proven that several of the school boards have adopted it and furnished houses in similar manner for the public school teachers.”

*Teachers and Curriculum in the Camp Schools*

By the turn of the century, the ideas of progressive reformers had started to permeate the training of urban educators, particularly in smaller, private schools. Based on the work in Europe of Friedrich Froebel and Johann Pestlozzi, the ideas regarding the “new” child-centered education promulgated by Edward Sheldon, Francis Parker, and John Dewey had begun to take hold on a national level. Although rote drill was still the basic form of instruction in the classroom, the trend had begun to shift from the teacher as drill-master to the teacher as overseer.
Teachers were now trained to also consider and concentrate on a child’s experiences, perceptions and language, and direct instruction instead of control it.\textsuperscript{20}

In rural areas, however, particularly in small one-room school houses, many of the teachers were virtually untrained. These teachers were expected to teach a variety of subjects to a wide variety of students of differing ages and skill levels. Textbooks were the teachers’ primary tool for teaching and the students’ main source of knowledge. Published courses of study determined for teachers what was to be taught to the children, and the order in which subjects were to be taught.\textsuperscript{21} A more common-sense version of child-centered teaching was in practice in these smaller, rural schools, which included peer teaching, individual attention from teachers based on the skill level of the students, and lessons drawn from the community. In this way, relatively untrained teachers were compelled to put into practice many of the new ideas of progressive reformers -- although by necessity, not pedagogical choice.

The teachers employed in the camp schools, either by local school districts who were often under the influence of the local mine superintendents or directly by the Department officials in regard to the kindergarten programs, were uniformly Anglo. In 1903, for example, at the height of the Sociological Department’s involvement in public school education, it employed 26 educators, most of whom were women, and all were White.\textsuperscript{22} In 1903, the public schools located in camp communities employed 79 principals and teachers, two of whom were Hispano teachers who worked in two one-room schools in Starkville which taught in both Spanish and English.\textsuperscript{23} The remainder of these 79 public school teachers were White, and with the exception of a number of male school principals, were women.\textsuperscript{24}

In the camp schools, the Sociological Department made an early commitment to insure that the curriculum was uniform and adequate for children in the camps. The Department made
progress in its early years in standardizing the curriculum in the primary grades for all of the coal camp schools. At Corwin’s insistence, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction supplied uniform courses of study which were adopted throughout the mining camps. Because of this system, children purportedly encountered fewer problems of adjustment to the academic program if their parents either chose to move or were compelled by the company to move from one camp community to another.

According to Department officials, the reasons that the camp schools adopted a standardized curriculum is that parents would not purchase books for a student if the family expected to be moved to another camp in a short time, and because of attendance problems. Company officials routinely assigned miners to other camps, either as the mining activity fluctuated or union organizers began making progress with miners at the camps. Parents would not invest their meager funds in books for students if the books could only be used for a short time. In addition, if parents could not afford books, and the children did not have books for schools, parents would not encourage their students to attend. If the curriculum was standardized and the textbooks were provided free of charge, Department officials reasoned, the books could be used in other camps with camp schools and it would insure much greater attendance in the camp schools. This was particularly true since many of the families of worker in the camps were large, and it was a hardship to purchase books for all the children. In the inaugural year of the Sociological Department’s work in the camp schools, the Department’s staff and the teachers in the camp schools were “almost of a unit in favor of the plan,” and that the school boards in at least fourteen of the camp schools were “falling in line a rapidly as the law will permit them to change to a new set of text books.”
At the time that Department officials were advocating a standardized curriculum, the course of study recommended for Colorado schools by the State Superintendent of Education, Helen L. Grenfell, included Milne’s *Arithmetic*, Cyr’s *Reader*, Hoenshal’s *Grammar*, The *American Word Book*, Frye’s *Geography*, Davis’ *Physical Geography*, Montgomery’s *History of United States*, Hutchinson’s *Physiology*, Roudebush’s *Writing Book*, and Wilson’s *Nature Study for Elementary Schools*. Many of these studies were graded and therefore were applicable to a wide range of students, particularly in small rural school districts. The state curriculum was easily adapted in the camp schools, and required the purchase by local school districts or parents of a condensed set of relatively small and affordable books.

For example, Metcalf & Bright’s *Language Exercises* were in standard use in the coal camp schools. This work was adapted for younger students, and it included exercises in both speaking English and writing. The exercises were designed, according to the authors, to be challenging enough to encourage critical thinking but be “so simple that any teacher of ordinary ability will find no difficulty in using them.” The study included exercises related to the structure of English grammar, memory exercises, poetry exercises, exercises in composition, pronunciation, and letter writing, and spelling exercises. The examples and subject matter for the exercises were adapted from scenes of both rural and urban American life, as well as scientific topics. For example, one the study depicted an American flag, with a note to the teacher that “a flag should hang before the class during the lesson.” The caption of the illustration asked the students to answer the questions or topics listed:

The shape of the flag. The colors in it. Its different parts. What is the field? Its color. The number and color of the stripes. The number and color of the stars. Does the number of stripes ever change? Why? Does the number of stars ever change? Why? How many stars were on the flag at first? Find out other facts connected with the history of our flag. Do you think there will be still more stars? Has the flag any use? Where is it used? What names are given to it? Has your
schoolhouse a flag? If so, on what days should it be raised? How can you honor Our Flag?31

Many of these exercises consisted of language exercises but also included cultural and political assumptions regarding family, foods, scientific beliefs, dress, manners, hygiene, and patriotism.

Such assumptions were consistent throughout the standardized curriculum in the camp schools, through the higher primary grades. In Book Seven of the *Cyr Reader*, which was directed toward seventh graders, the readings included a story about the Battle of Manila Bay, which had taken place several years before, and the complete version of Julia Ward Howe’s “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” along with a short biography of Howe.32 The *Cyr Reader* at this level also provided readings which provided example concerning the proper attitude toward the importance of industrial labor. In a reading entitled “Honest Work,” the values of administrative progressives regarding the importance of industrial work, the proper perceptions of industrial work, and the requirement of serving the industrial needs of society were clearly evident:

> Men said the old smith was foolishly careful, as he wrought on the great chain he was making in his dingy shop in the heart of the great city. But he heeded not their words, and only wrought with greater painstaking. Line after link he fashioned and welded and finished, and at last the great chain was completed.

> Years passed. One night there was a terrible storm, and the ship was in sore peril of being dashed upon the rocks. Anchor after anchor was dropped, but none of them held. The cables were broken like threads. At last the mighty sheet anchor was cast into the sea, and the old chain quickly uncoiled and ran out till it grew taut. All watched to see if it would bear the awful strain. It sang in the wild storm as the vessel’s weight surged upon it. It was a moment of intense anxiety. The ship with its cargo and of thousand lives depended upon this one chain. What now if the old smith had wrought carelessly even one link of his chain! But he had put honesty and truth and invincible strength into every part of it; it stood the test, holding the ship in safety until the storm was over.33

At the seventh grade level, the *Cyr Reader* also included patriotic readings concerning the history of the American flag and the signing of the Declaration of Independence.34
These assumptions were even more pronounced in the geography curriculum endorsed for use in the camp schools. The assumptions implicit in this text clearly supported the socio-economic and political assumptions underlying the Department’s efforts in the camp schools, the company industrial goals, and the ideology of the administrative progressives. Frye’s *Elements of Geography* was designed to “fit the special needs of the schools that lose many of their pupils after one or two years of geography study.” Accordingly, it was “best suited to the fourth and fifth, or to the fifth and sixth, grades or years,” and “led directly to the “larger geography.” The goals for the study were that it should inform every American pupil “about his own country,” especially its commerce and “related industries leading to commerce.” In the words of the study, “[m]ore stress than usual is laid on this subject, because of its influence on national life.” The text covered, among other subjects, the importance of the mining of coal and the milling of iron, steel, gold, and silver. It also covered the importance of commerce and industrial growth. Frye’s *Elements of Geography* was particularly concerned with outlining the racial and ethnic differences between peoples. The text referred to how “queer” a village in the Congo was, and how villagers did not have books or schools. Similarly, the text referred to Native Americans as “dusky savages” and pointed out that there were few of them remaining.

The standardized curriculum in many of the camp schools extended beyond the textbooks that were used by the students. The Sociological Department also provided circulating art collections for the use of the public schools. The collections consisted of 360 large photographs, divided into sets of twelve, each set representing some popular European artist or school or European or North American national type of painting or sculpture. To facilitate the work of the teacher in explaining and interpreting the pictures, a short description and interpretation of each, together with a brief survey of the artist or school or type, was prepared, typewritten, and
attached to the back of the photograph. The Department directed the teachers to hang the photographs “about the walls of the school room in full view of the pupils, to be taken down and interpreted at such times as best suit the teacher’s schedule.” Each month the sets are changed, traveling from camp to camp. Department officials intended that, by making these photographs available, that children in the camps might “more readily grasp the general characteristics common to the pictures of the set, and by having before him each day representations of the world’s highest art, may acquire the beginnings of a love for it and a refinement, not only of taste, but of life and character.”

No examples were included which were not European or “American” in origin. Camp school children were also encouraged by the Department to “raise money for libraries and for interior decoration of their schools.”

Department Camp School Facilities

In the Annual Report published by the Sociological Department at the end of the 1904-1905 school year, the Department reported that while “the children of school age do not all attend school is not due to any lack of facilities in the mining camps, for as a rule generous provision has been made.” Instead, according to Department officials, the fault was “very largely with indifference foreign parents.” While it was true that school attendance did not include all the children in the camps, it was also true that, generally, the school facilities in the newer and larger coal camps were excellent.

In the initial years of the Sociological Department’s operation, the Department built or assisted in the financing for many new school buildings. In the first several years alone, the Department was instrumental in the construction of seven new, relatively modern and well-designed schools. The Department also assisted in converting houses into schools in some of the
camps for the use of the public schools, and remodeled and updated several other one-room schools for the use of the local public school or the Department’s own kindergarten programs. Many of these new schools were four-room buildings with running water and electricity, and removable partitions between the rooms to allow for flexible or open class and social work. Their construction was supervised by the Sociological Department Supervisor of Construction.

The new schools buildings, although differing in size and what the Department called “non-essentials” such as “pitch and style of roof and minor ornamentation,” were nearly all of the same design. The schools generally consisted of a vestibule or coat room at the entrance to the school which usually measured 16x18 feet, which also contained the stairway to the second floor in the two-story camp schools. The vestibule opened to the classrooms by means of swinging doors, and each classroom was approximately 30x33 feet. The classrooms were designed to accommodate approximately 50 students each, giving each student, as Department officials pointed out, approximately twenty square feet of floor space each. The ceilings were eleven feet high, and, in two-story schools, the ceilings in the upper floor were ten feet high. Each floor had six windows, with a total glass exposure equal to one-fifth of the floor space on each floor. The front of each of the classrooms was purposely left free of windows “so that the eye neither of teacher nor pupil need be injured by directly facing the light.” Rear exits on both floors served as safeguards against fire.42 Between the school rooms, sometimes on the first floor, sometimes on the second, a special folding partition was hung on a track concealed in a drop-partition, so that the classrooms could be combined for school or community programs which required more space. Four ventilator registers were placed in the corners of each room, and their flues connected with a ventilator stack in the center of the roof. The buildings were, in general, fairly plain but extremely serviceable and far superior to the one-room schools in most
rural areas surrounding the camps. The Sociological Department also took the initiative to provide playground equipment for some schools. By the end of the 1903-1904 school year, the Department had erected playgrounds for the camp schools in Pictou, Primero, and Segundo. Department officials, with some justification, took credit for the construction and establishment of these new schools, and claimed that they were to be the models for all the future schools in the coal camps.

Department Support and Establishment of Coal Camp Schools

The Sociological Department’s supervision, construction, and control of public school programs was limited, in general, to the newer and larger coal camps in the two main coal-producing mining areas of southern Colorado near Trinidad and Walsenburg. In camps where the Department was active, the schools were greatly improved.

Pictou was a mining camp located just outside of Walsenburg, over a series of low hills northwest of town called “the hogback.” When the Sociological Department was formed by the company, the mines around Pictou had been in operation since 1887. The Kebler School was built in Pictou in 1902 to serve the children of the miners working in the surrounding mines, and was financed and built on one of the standard Sociological Department plans, the four-room school plan, which was utilized in other camp schools. It opened on September 8, 1902, with an enrollment of 135 students. The Sociological Department’s kindergarten class opened on September 22, 1902, and it had an enrollment of 32 students.

During the Kebler School’s second year of operation, the 1902-1903 school year, the top floor of the school was used for kindergarten programs, which were under the control of the Sociological Department and were attended by 35 students. The kindergarten room had a stage.
which could also be used as a lecture hall for school and community events. The remaining three classrooms were located on the first floor, and there were 140 students enrolled in the school. In December, 1903, the school offered educational programs for all of the primary grades, and also offered a ninth grade program. The programs were supervised by a principal and two teachers in addition to the kindergarten teacher, who was employed directly by the Sociological Department.48 The Kebler School also housed a night school for adults, which was directed by the school principal.49

By all accounts, the Kebler School in Pictou was one of the better public schools in Huerfano County. Alfred Owens was born in 1893, and moved to Pictou in 1902. He attended the Kebler School during the first several years of its operation. According to Owens, the educational program was rigorous at the school, and the teachers were strict about spelling, knowing long division, and memorizing multiplication tables.50 Owens, who was Black, wanted to go to work in the mines and left school after he completed fifth grade at the age of 14. At the time, he “just wanted to work,” and that “he didn’t learn too much because he didn’t go to school long.”51 This was a common experience for young men of his age.52

Many of the camp children were very poor and had to work to support their families even while they were attending school. Yvonne Picket was born in Pictou and completed the primary grades at the Kebler School. She went on to attend high school in Walsenburg, although she eventually had to drop out because her family was poor and she needed to work to help support them. Her brothers left school to work in the mines at the age of ten, and their family was so poor that she picked coal out of the slag tailings after school to save to heat their house in the winter.53
Other camp children were more affluent, and, due to the proximity of the Kebler School in Pictou to Walsenburg, were able to attend and complete high school. One such student, Martha Todd, was born in 1904 and attended the Kebler School. Her father was a mine foreman, and her family was therefore more financially secure than many of the miners’ families. She attended several camp schools, starting and finishing her primary schooling in Pictou. Because her father was a foreman, her family was moved to other nearby camps and she attended the nearby camp schools in Walsen and Cameron as well as the Kebler School in Pictou.

According to Todd, the academic program at the Kebler School was very rigorous and prepared her well for secondary schooling. She believed that the Kebler School was very strict, had a dress code in place, and she had some good teachers at the school. The Kebler School was a fully graded school, with two or three grades in each room with their own teacher. Todd started school at the Kebler School, and attended lectures in the upper hall of the school. Even though, according to Todd, she was “not a brilliant student,” she went on to finish high school in four years, “which so many didn’t do,” walking the two miles to the high school in Walsenburg at first because there was no bus available. In her final year at the Kebler School, her class had six students, and she was the only one to go on to high school. This was clearly an extremely low percentage of primary school graduates, given the total number of students attending the school during this time period.

When Todd’s family moved to Cameron for a year, which was a smaller camp in the Walsenburg area, the camp school was decidedly inferior to the Kebler School. The school there had been used for a boarding house, and the company simply removed the walls and made one big room. Like many small camp schools and rural county schools in the region, the schoolroom was heated with a pot-bellied stove that the teacher had to keep, along with some of the older
boys in the class. The year that Todd attended school in the Cameron camp, the school didn’t
start until late in September. She also attended the camp school in Walsen.57

According to Todd, many of the families in the coal camps in which she lived were large.
This caused many children to leave work and start work as soon as possible:

There was no child labor laws in those days and the boys were taken into the
mines, eleven, twelve, thirteen years old. And the girls, just as soon as they were
able to take care of a baby were kept home. They didn’t get to go to school very
much. The girls could help Momma wash the clothes. And I have to say this, the
c coal miners as a rule, all had big families. The family of five was a small family.
I’ve heard of families of 12 to 15 children. And of course just as soon as the girls
would reach an age where they could get away from home they would go into the
boarding houses to work.58

In her final year in school, in 1920, the school district built a new high school in Walsenburg.
The new school facility was much improved over the old Walsenburg High School, which had
been housed in a local armory, and that the students loved the new school and took care of it.59
She finally was bused to school during her last year. Her high school class had three girls and
three boys, but she was the only girl that finished school because her classmates were married
before they finished high school. Todd went on to attend college in Greeley at the Colorado
Teacher’s College, and she passed the state examination and became a schoolteacher herself.60

Walsen was another camp on the west side of the town of Walsenburg, two miles south
of Pictou. Because of its close proximity to the new school in Pictou, many students like Martha
Todd attended schools in both camps. The Walsen camp was older, as were the nearby mine
workings, but the camp was still growing. In the spring of 1902, the mines in the area employed
approximately 300 men, of which, among thirteen different “nationalities,” 60 were Italians, 45
were “Negroes,” 32 were Japanese, 44 were from Scotland, Wales, or England, and 23 were
what Department officials referred to as Mexicans, although these were Hispano workers who
either were seasonal employees or had come from other areas in the Cucharas Valley to work in
the mines, since Mexican immigrants in the area were few at that time. In addition, there were 45 of what Department officials referred to as native-born Americans working in the mines in the area.  

According to Frances Nelson, who grew up in Walsenburg and went on to become a teacher and school administrator in later years, the general relations between the Hispano families and the European immigrants that had arrived during the previous twenty years were good. She never felt that the Hispano families, who by and large had settled near Walsenburg from northern New Mexico, were any different. They were all just a part of the “big family in Walsenburg.” Nelson did not believe that there were any Mexican immigrants living in the Cucharas Valley in the early years, that all of the Spanish speaking residents were Hispanos. 

Nelson was certainly correct. According to school census records from southern Colorado during the 1920s, when many of the children enrolled in camp schools were either finishing school or starting families of their own, a very high percentage of the area residents were Hispanos, not Mexican immigrants. In Primero and Segundo, for example, which were newer, larger camps with Department-supported schools, approximately twenty percent of the children in school were Hispano, as opposed to less than one percent that were children of Mexican immigrants. 

A two-room public school had been established in Walsen in 1892, which had a single entry door for students and a school bell over the door. In 1902, the school enrolled approximately 30 students. The school building was so small that the students attended school in split-shifts, with half of the students coming to school in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. The school offered a course of instruction only in the primary grades. In 1902, the Sociological Department was assisting in the financing and construction of a new addition on the
school to accommodate the growing numbers of children in the area, which would also include a kindergarten program.65

Despite the proximity of the camp schools in Pictou and Walsen to the county high school in Walsenburg, students were generally not expected to progress to high school during these early years. Minnie Grace Branch, who grew up in the Walsenburg area and attended both the camp school in Pictou as well as the camp school in Walsen, stated that most of the kids did not continue school, but if they did they had to come into Walsenburg if they wanted to go further than eighth grade. According to Branch,

[m]ost of them didn’t. See that’s a long time ago. That would be 75, 76 years ago. The young men, they just figured that’s sissy. They had one young man that went, another one did go, but he didn’t get very far, and the other went, the girls some of the girls came in, but that’s all.66

Branch was the daughter of a mine inspector, who had been a miner in Wales. Her family was relatively affluent, compared to the other families in the camps, and she did attend high school. When she attended high school, her father was working in the mines around Toltec, which was also outside Walsenburg. Some students walked to high school in Walsenburg, which was over two miles away, when the weather was good. If the weather was stormy, “one of the fathers would bring them in, and another would come and take them home.”67 Branch agreed that the Kebler School in Pictou was a good school, had good teachers, and had a good kindergarten program for children.68 Branch also became a teacher after she completed her high school education at Walsenburg High School. She took a state certificate examination and then over a number of school terms, attended the Colorado State Teacher’s College in Greeley. She returned to Huerfano County to teach school in a camp school in Ravenwood, and then at the Hill School in Walsenburg. In all, she taught in Huerfano County for 38 years.69
Other children educated in the camp schools went on to complete their secondary education and college. Vinzie Scarfiotti and Ann Orr were sisters, born in 1899 and 1905, respectively. Their father was an immigrant from Italy that had entered the United States through Ellis Island, and then came to Colorado and worked in the coal mines around Walsen. When the girls were older, he moved the family into Walsenburg and opened a business. Both of the girls graduated from the St. Mary’s School after attending school in the primary grades at the Washington School and the Hill School in Walsenburg. Their brothers finished high school, and one of their brothers went to college and ultimately became a lawyer.\(^{70}\)

Other children did not complete their primary education in the camp schools around Walsenburg, and their experiences belie some of the Department’s rhetoric. Alfonso Pineda was born in 1898 in Cameron, which was west of Walsen. Pineda’s family moved to the Walsenburg area from San Luis before the coal camp was built. The first schoolhouse and church were built in the Walsen area before the town of Walsenburg was settled. After the company acquired the coal land in the region, the company moved the Pinedas and other Hispano settlers from the Walsen area, took over the houses that had been built there, and painted the houses in the community red. After that, the community was called Red Camp, and many of the workers in the mines, particularly Black families, lived there. Pineda did attend school and finished the second grade. He then began to work in the mines in the area at the age of ten in 1908, even though there was a relatively well-funded camp school in the area, and he had to work in the mines at an early age to help support his family. When his father recovered from his injuries, Pineda remembered, his father told him, “Sonny, I want you to go back to school now.” Pineda told his father that he was too far behind in school, and the other students his age were far ahead of him, and that he was going to go on working.\(^{71}\)
The population of workers and families in the Walsen camp, as well as the other newer and larger camps in general, were very diverse. In 1902, the workers in the mines were comprised of 60 Italians, 47 “native-born Americans,” 45 “Negroes,” 32 Japanese, 21 Slavs, 23 “Mexicans,” who were actually Hispanics, and the remaining 62 were immigrants from northern Europe. According to Department officials, at the time there was “no more quiet or happy coal camp in southern Colorado.” By 1915, the population of workers in the camp in 1915 had almost doubled, as the mines had been greatly expanded, but the majority of the miners were single men or married men whose families were still in southern Europe. Most of the miners were Italian or Greek immigrants, but two percent of the miners were Black and thirteen percent were Hispanics. By 1915, the Walsen school was still housed in a large one-room building and had a total of 138 students in eight grades. Of these, only eight students were in the eighth grade – six boys and two girls. The attendance in the first five grades was higher. The school was “free to all of the children of the camp regardless of race or color.” The school ran for nine months each year, and was part of a three-school district in the area. There was only one teacher in the school, who earned $65 per month, and one principal to supervise all three schools, who earned $90 per month.

Rouse was a newer camp south of Walsenburg. At the time Clarence Cordova was a child and moved to Rouse from Old Rouse to attend the “All Good School,” the camp was flourishing. Mining operations had been conducted in Old Rouse since the mid-1870s, but in 1899 an old claim further south in Santa Clara was expanded and the camp of Rouse was moved to that location. The company was instrumental in financing and constructing new schools in Rouse and Herzon in 1900, and when the Sociological Department was formed it took over some of the educational programs in these schools. The school in Rouse, the Osgood School, had a
kindergarten program which was fully funded by the Sociological Department by 1903 and enrolled between thirty and fifty student during its first two years of operations. In 1903, the school had between 109 and 116 students, only four of which had progressed to the eighth grade during that year.

The Osgood School was a fairly large, two-story school with a large cupola with a bell. There were several entrances and the school had large windows and a stone foundation. The Sociological Department touted the Osgood School as one of the best in the state, and boasted that it had two teachers and a principal, and one of the teachers was qualified to teach in the secondary grades. As with other camp schools, however, the Osgood School often experienced a high degree of staff turnover, and by 1904 all of the teachers and the principal had changed in the school. Only the Department’s kindergarten program in Rouse was relatively stable, and employed the same teacher during the first several years.

Anna Lucero, who was born in 1898 and attended the Osgood School for one year, stated that it was a bigger school that the schools she attended in Walsenburg, and that a lot of students went to that school as well as the school in Walsen. Don Mitchell, who was born in Rouse and grew up and attended school in the camps, went on to attend the Hill School in Walsenberg, to which he walked “no matter what the weather” because none of the students missed school. He completed high school there before he went to work in the Walsen mine at the age of 18 in 1917. Minnie Ugolini, who was born in 1903, attended the Osgood School until the strike of 1913-1914, when her father moved out of the camp and became a farm hand instead of going to the tent colony at Ludlow. Minnie ultimately attended high school through tenth grade.

Many of the camp children in the Rouse area had social and economic difficulty moving on to attend the county high school, even if they did have the opportunity to attend a newer,
larger public school in the camps. Susie Somsky, who attended the camp schools at an early age, was forcibly removed with her family from the camp at the age of seven because of the strike of 1913-1914, and her family relocated to Walsenburg. By 1918, her mother had died and her father had been injured, and she had to stay home to help take care of her seven younger siblings. She stated that there were great difficulties for students in the camps to go on to attend the county high school in Walsenburg:

Well, you know, the girls, the only kind of work they had, you know, nobody really had education. ‘Cause we only went to 8th grade, then you had to get a bus or something to go to Walsenburg. A lot of those people were poor they couldn’t afford it. Well, the boys would go work at the mine ‘cause that’s all they know, they could get a job in Walsenburg, and they’d work for families but they’d live there with them. And when you was 18 years old they thought well have to get married, already.82

In 1915, there were 210 students enrolled at the Osgood School, which at that time served both Rouse and the new mining camp at Lester, one mile away. Of those students, only six were enrolled in eighth grade, two boys and four girls. The vast majority of the miners and their families in Rouse were immigrants from southern Europe, and roughly one-fifth of the miners were Hispanos. As in other camps, many of the miners were single; however, the percentage of Hispano miners that were single was lower, indicating that they had families in the area.83 There were, however, unlike some of the county schools in the area, four teachers to serve this student population, and there were plans to extend the curriculum to include a ninth- and tenth-grade program.84

The establishment of the coal camp schools by the Sociological Department in the coal camps close to Trinidad in Las Animas County followed a similar pattern to those in Huerfano County. Berwind and Tobasco were two camps within a mile of each other 17 miles northwest of Trinidad. The Sociological Department financed and constructed the Corwin School between
the two camps in 1902. The Corwin School followed the model plan for a four-room school, as many of the other schools built by the Sociological Department in its first years of operation. In 1903, the Corwin School had an “advanced department” taught by the principal, a “primary department” taught by a teacher, and a kindergarten program taught by a second teacher. Unlike in many other camps at this time, the Sociological Department did not pay the kindergarten teacher’s salary.

The Corwin School was overcrowded from its first year of operation. By 1903, there were 98 students enrolled in the school, 48 of which were enrolled in the kindergarten program which took up the entire second floor of the school. The Corwin School’s facility, which was similar to those new schools in other camps, was electrically lighted, had steam-heat, and had drinking fountains. The school itself was an attractive wood-framed building built on the site of an old goat farm in the canyon between the camps. By 1915, the Sociological Department had also built a stone wall to enclose the school and a small playground for the children at the school as in two other of the camp schools in the region.

Berwind and Tabasco were located relatively far from Trinidad and up in an isolated canyon, and children in those camps did not have realistic options to attend either of the county high schools unless they boarded in Trinidad or Walsenburg. As a result, the opportunities beyond primary schooling were limited. John Tomsic was born in 1904, and lived in Berwind. He attended school through eighth grade, and he started working in the mines at the age of 14. There were no other options. According to Tomsic, if a young person was not in school they just “moped around,” so they were “better off getting a job and going to work.” According to Tomsic, the camp school didn’t just try to train children to be miners or tell them that they were going to be miners.
Although the school teachers may not have expressly told the children they would be miners, certainly the options for work in the camp were very limited if a young person did not want to be a miner or a housekeeper due to the very isolation of the camp. Victor Bazanele, who was born in 1892 and went to work in the mines in Tabasco in 1906, felt that his options were non-existent:

But for education, no, no way. Because the schools were a company’s owned schools, company’s owned people, company owned you know there was a lot of people that had, had their way of life. They noticed it they got out of here. But I never did have the chance.93

It is not clear, however, whether Bazanele attended the Corwin School while growing up in Tabasco, or whether, for whatever reason, he was deprived of his chance to do so or his parents made the decision that he would not attend. Bazanele did, however, articulate a criticism that many social reformers would make about the company’s control of the camps and the effect on the schools in the wake of the labor unrest both in 1903-1904 and 1913-1914. The company’s socio-economic control of the camps was so significant that its efforts on behalf of the public schools were seen merely as a way to limit the opportunities of children, not expand them.

By 1915, the Corwin School had educational programs for grades one through nine. As in many of the other camps, roughly 80 percent of the population of Berwind and Tabasco were immigrant miners from southern or eastern Europe, particularly Austrians and northern Italians. There were also a significant number of Hispano workers who lived in the area.94 Fewer of the miners were northern European immigrants or what Department officials referred to as “native-born Americans.” Although the enrollment in the lower primary grades had remained high, with 46 students enrolled in first grade and 34 students enrolled in second grade, the enrollment numbers for each grade decreased significantly with age.95 In the final year of the Sociological Department’s activities, only five students were attending the ninth grade classes held at the
Corwin School, and only seven students were enrolled in the last two primary grades. The Corwin School had developed a ninth grade program not as an introduction to high school work, but “to meet the needs of boys who have graduated from the grammar grades and yet are too young to being to work.” Nevertheless, the Corwin School employed four teachers during the 1914-1915 school year, at an average salary of $70 per month.

The other public schools which were initially established, either through financing, construction, or financial support, through the work of the Sociological Department were those located around Trinidad or up the valley of the Purgatoire River west of Trinidad. The camps at El Moro and Engle were the oldest of the camps, but the schools in these camps were relatively active in providing educational programs for children as well as adults. Sopris was a community in its own right, with an expanding company complex. Primero, Segundo, and Tercio were all newer camps at the time the Sociological Department was formed, and each of the public schools in these camps benefited from the Department’s support.

The mining camp of El Moro was located several miles northeast of Trinidad, and was originally developed as a railroad town on the Denver & Rio Grande railroad. In the late 1870s, the first coke ovens were completed and the town grew into a coking center for the surrounding mining camps. It was one of the oldest company communities, but one of the first towns in which the company initiated a kindergarten program. In 1901, the Sociological Department constructed a small brick one-room schoolhouse, which was utilized by both the kindergarten program and the public schools, and planted dozens of trees around the school. Since the town was usually covered with soot and cinders due to the dozens of coking ovens close by, the school was a haven in the midst of the town’s “cinder pavements.” In 1902, the school had 40 students in varying grades, and 14 kindergarten students.
Engle was another of the older camps in the Trinidad area. It was located two miles southeast of Trinidad and five miles from El Moro. In 1902, the miners in Engle included 140 Italians, 94 Hispanics, 64 Slavs, and 60 “English-speaking” men. Most of these miners were “floating,” that is, single men or families which moved, or were moved, from camp to camp. The Sociological Department built the school in Engle from two camp houses. The school was built by removing their roofs, and consolidating them into one building to which a cupola with a bell was added to the roof on the second story. There were 59 children enrolled in the Department-sponsored kindergarten program in 1903, which another 130 students divided into six grades.

Sopris was another older mining community, several miles west of Trinidad, which was founded in 1887 and also was a center for the coking of coal. The public school building at the time the Sociological Department initiated its programs for the support of the public schools was a large, relatively new two-story multi-room brick building. The Sopris School was large, with over 140 students enrolled in eight grades. The kindergarten program in Sopris, which had been initiated in the camp prior to 1901, had 30 students in 1903. The kindergarten class grew quickly, and in 1903 the Sociological Department rented rooms in the local Methodist church to hold classes.

Sopris was unique in that it was an incorporated town. As a result, unlike the families of almost all of the other camps, most of the company employees living in the camp owned their own homes. The vast majority of the company employees, by 1915, were immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, and about one-tenth of the employees were Hispanics.

The public school program in Sopris, unlike those in some of the mining camps, was very successful during the first two decades of the twentieth century. By 1915, the local school
district was building an additional school on the school premises which was to house the school district’s domestic and manual education programs, and would be called the Domestic Science and Manual Training Building. At that time the school enrolled 174 students, with roughly twenty percent of the students enrolled in the higher primary grades which was unusual for coal camp schools. Further, the school district, in the 1914-1915 school year, was paying the tuition of eleven students to attend the county high school in Trinidad at a total cost of $550. This had not been done at any of the other camp schools. The school district also paid its principal and teachers relatively well, with the principal receiving $1200 for the school year and the teachers receiving an average of $80 per month.106

Dr. Peter Roberts, who did a survey of the social conditions for the Young Men’s Christian Association in 1915, attributed the success of the Sopris School and its programs “principally to the men in charge and the capable corps of teachers.”107 In particular, he singled out the school principal, Mr. Morand, and praised his efforts in building the school’s programs and enrollment.108

In 1901, when the Sociological Department was formed, Primero was one of the three newer camps in the Purgatoire valley seventeen miles west of Trinidad. The coal lands in this valley were acquired by the company from the Maxwell Land Grant concession.109 The Cass School in Primero was financed and constructed by the Sociological Department and was opened on April 2, 1902.110 Initially, the Sociological Department also funded the purchase of textbooks to be provided free of charge to the students at the Cass School, and paid the salaries of its teachers during its inaugural year. In 1903, the Cass School enrolled 58 students in eight grades, along with 21 students in the kindergarten program. The Sociological Department funded the kindergarten program costs, just as in other camp schools.111 The vast majority of the miners
and their families in Primero, as in the other camps, were immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and Hispanics living in the region. In 1915, these groups made up over eighty percent of the workforce in Primero. The Cass School did not enjoy the same success as the school in Sopris. Although it had a high percentage of enrollment in the lower grades in 1915, given the population in Primero, there were only sixteen students enrolled in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades and there was no record of any students progressing to the county high school in Trinidad.\textsuperscript{112}

The Cass School, Primero\textsuperscript{113} Courtesy of CF&I Archives

The Jerome School in Segundo, just southeast of Primero in the Purgatoire Valley, was financed and built by the Sociological Department at the same time as the Cass School. The Jerome School was completed in early October, 1902. As with the Cass School, the Sociological Department initially advanced funds to pay for teachers’ salaries as well as textbooks to be provided free to students in the Jerome School’s inaugural year.\textsuperscript{114} The Jerome School also was
a two-story multi-roomed building, with a large stage on the first floor which was used by the kindergarten program which was also sponsored and funded by the Department. Prior to the construction of the Jerome School, the public school was held in a six-room company house that had the walls and partitions removed to make a large school room. In 1903, the Jerome School enrolled 100 students in the primary grades, and 30 students in the kindergarten program. The expenses of the kindergarten program were met by the Sociological Department.

As in the other camps in the Trinidad area, the population of Segundo by 1915 was comprised almost completely of immigrants from Italy and Hispanics from the region. Together these two groups accounted for approximately eighty percent of the camp’s residents. The Jerome School, in 1915, had 134 students, most of which were grouped in the first two grades and the kindergarten. Although the Jerome School enrolled students in all eight grades, there were only two students enrolled in the eighth grade in 1915, and, as with the Cass School, no students went on to board at the county high school in Trinidad.

Finally, the Sociological Department financed and construction one more school in its early years of operation, the Beaman School in Tercio. Tercio was a mining camp farther up the Purgatoire Valley, at the terminus of the rail line. The Department built the Beaman School in September, 1902. The Beaman School enrolled 21 students in the kindergarten program, 49 students in the first through the fifth grades. The expenses of the kindergarten program were paid by the Department. Ann Laney, whose father was a miner in the coal mines around Tercio, stated that the students who lived as far up the valley as Tercio were bused to the high school in Trinidad – but not until the 1920s.

Kate Livoda, who grew up in Trinidad and Tercio and eventually married one of the famed UMWA organizers, Mike Livoda, described growing up and attending school in Tercio.
Her family was poor, both parents and four siblings living in the same room. She would have to walk several miles to school with other camp children. When she attended school, the camp superintendent’s children always sat in the front of the classroom, and she and her friends had to sit in the back. She was ridiculed as a “miner’s kid” when other children saw her coming to school with her lunch in a bucket. She eventually moved with her family to Walsenburg, where her father worked as a janitor at the school. She attended school until she was seventeen in Walsenburg, and then went to work for the phone company. Kate Livoda’s family lived in relative poverty because her father was paid in scrip, and even when he received his pay they had to buy everything at the company store and her family was therefore “always in the red.” Like other poor camp children, Kate Livoda had to carry a bucket and a shovel around the camps and along the railroad tracks, scrounging coal to burn to keep warm in the winter. Overall, by 1915, the schools in which the Sociological Department played a direct role in establishing were doing fairly well “under many handicaps.” The number of students graduating from the primary grades in these schools compared favorably to the record of other mining camps in other states, with almost double the average graduating from those similar camp schools in Pennsylvania. This may be attributed to the Department’s focus on encouraging school attendance, and providing better school facilities and teaching staff for its larger camps. However, the percentage of those graduating was still very low. In general, compulsory attendance was not well enforced in these or the other camps at any time.

Conclusion

The Sociological Department’s establishment and support of the public schools in some of the newer and more populous camps had a significant impact on the quality of and access to
schooling of children in these camps. The Department’s schools were larger, with increased and superior facilities for education compared to the one-room schools which preceded them. Without the Department’s work in these camps, many children would not have had access to a primary school education. All of these camps offered instruction in the primary grades, with at least two the schools offering programs in grades nine and ten. This access to schooling extended universally to students in the camps, regardless of race or ethnicity for those families who chose to encourage or require their children to attend. Since the vast majority of children in these camps were the children of immigrants from southern or eastern Europe or were Hispanos, this was unusual for this era. The schools supported by the Department also had more and better-paid teachers, paid administrators to not only teach but direct the educational program, and generally provided teachers’ houses and textbooks free of charge to teachers and students alike.

However, these camps schools differed little from their counterparts in other smaller camps, or in the county schools in the region, in that many students did not progress beyond the initial primary grades. This was due, in part, to the lack of emphasis on the importance of education in the camps, but mostly due to the economic realities that many of the children went to work in the mines or in domestic jobs at an early age and did not have the options to pursue education through high school. While the Department-supported schools had a higher rate of primary school graduates that those in other camps, both regionally and nationally, the percentages were extremely low despite the quality of the camp schools. In general, unless the camp school was in close proximity to the county high schools in Trinidad or Walsenburg, the student’s family had resources to board a child in these communities, or a student was fortunate enough to earn a scholarship to attend the county high school in Trinidad, there was little chance for these children to pursue a high school education.
And yet, regardless of the level of education which they attained, those who attended these camp schools felt that the quality of educational programs provided in these schools was good, and in many cases they supported their belief with specific examples regarding the quality of individual teachers or the rigor of the academic program. The number of students attending school in the new camps schools was relatively high, at least in the lower grades. The educational program was, in fact, relatively rigorous, and some students went on to graduate from the county high schools. The camp schools, if attended through the primary grades, seemed to provide a relatively good foundation for secondary education even though few students were able to attend secondary school.

The Sociological Department also had a significant effect on the educational programs offered in the camp schools. Through the efforts of the Department, the curriculum in many of the camp schools was standardized and free textbooks were provided. While these efforts were certainly efforts to insure access to educational materials and insure more uniform enrollment and attendance at these camp schools, ironically, these efforts made it more possible to maintain schooling programs for children whose parents were moved from camp to camp to, among other things, quell labor organization and concerted activity. Although the standardized curriculum itself often exhibited the assumptions of administrative progressives regarding assimilation and acculturation, as well as social stratification of working class students in the industrial age, the curriculum nevertheless was comprehensive and standardization provided at least a common frame of reference for schooling in the camps and a basis for advanced education for the students if they had the resources or opportunity to attend high school or college. Although the achievements of these camp schools did not equal the Department’s high-flown rhetoric, they did make a difference in providing education to the children of the families in the camps.
Notes

Chapter Three

The All Good Schools


2 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview with Clarence Cordova (undated), 1-2, 10-11. This interview was done by a volunteer, and neither the transcript nor the audio recording are dated. One of Clarence’s younger family members was present for the interview. This interview probably took place in late 1979, when many of the Project’s interviews were conducted, and when Cordova was approximately 90 years old.

3 Ibid., 10-11.

4 Tom Luketich, a miner who was educated in a coal camp school in Pennsylvania, stated that these guys who were foremen education their kids and they ran the town. They were the bosses in the mine; they were on the council. The company run the town. The foremen were the only guys with any type of education. Then as the union come in and people started making a little more money, these “Hunkies” got a little smarter. They started to educate their kids. They started sending their children to college.

John Bodnar, *Workers World: Kinship, Community, and Protest in an Industrial Society, 1900-1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 102. The oral histories underlying this study are also replete with recollections of students from the camp schools who progressed through high school and attended college.


8 John Thomas Hogle, *The Rockefeller Plan: Workers, Managers and the Struggle Over Unionism in Colorado Fuel and Iron, 1915-1942* (University of Colorado Doctoral dissertation, 1992), 30. It is clear that there was a considerable about of political leverage exercised in regard to local school board elections. In 1910, a local banker in Walsenburg had written to Bowers complaining that the well-beloved camp physician, Dr. Baird, had once again been elected to the school board after Bowers had promised that he would fire Baird if he ran again. Bowers, as usual, tartly responded tartly that he made no such promise to him or anyone else in the camps regarding school board elections. Sammis to Bowers, May 4, 1910; Bowers to Sammis, May 5, 1910. Box 27, File 84. SUNY. Nevertheless, it was common for the company to control hiring and elections for schools in the camps.


11 Brandes, American Welfare Capitalism, 55.

12 CF&I, Annual Report, 1904-1905, 16.

13 CF&I, Annual Report, 1901-1902, 32


15 Corwin to F. J. Hearne, Annual Report, 1904-1905, 7.

16 CF&I, Annual Report, 1902-1903, 12.


19 In an article published in Camp and Plant, company officials that even the most “degenerate” children could be “reclaimed” through progressive methods of education. The editors reported that on February 16, 1902, E.G. Lancaster, a Professor at Colorado College, announced to the annual convention of the Colorado State Federation of Associated Charities, that Pestalozzi proved beyond any possible doubt that even the worst children may be reclaimed. With him to love them it would be possible to reclaim all of them, but most of them may be reclaimed by any good person whose heart is in the work.


21 Cuban, How Teachers Taught, 31.


23 These two schools were small and located in areas of Starkville, which had a population of over 3,000 in 1905, which were predominantly Hispano. The members of the school boards constituted to serve these two unconsolidated schools were also predominantly Hispano, some of which served for years. Without question, the Hispanics in this part of Starkville had a certain
degree of autonomy and control over their schools, which was quite unusual in this relatively urban setting.

24 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 557-569.

25 Scamehorn, Pioneer Steelmaker in the West, 151-152.


27 Ibid., 26-27.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., 27


31 Ibid., 38-39.


33 Ibid., 171.

34 Ibid, 184, 206.

35 Alexis E. Frye, Elements of Geography (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1903), ii.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 75-78.

38 Ibid., 37-38


40 Ibid., 33.


43 Ibid.


48 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 563-564.


50 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Alfred Owens (July 24, 1979), 7.

51 The Coal Project, Interview of Alfred Owens (February 5, 1978), transcript no. 02058-3, 32-33.

52 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Mickey Judiscak (May 22, 1980).


54 The Coal Project, Interview of Martha Todd (August 22, 1978), transcript no. 02068-1, 4.

55 The Coal Project, Interview of Martha Todd, transcript no. 08228-1, 33.

56 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Martha Todd (April 16, 1980), 7.

57 Ibid., 11.

58 The Coal Project, Interview of Martha Todd, transcript no. 02058-4, 16.

59 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Martha Todd (April 16, 1980), 7-8.

60 Ibid., 12-13.

61 Ibid., 266.

62 The Coal Project, Interview of Frances Nelson (October 17, 1979), 14.

63 Ibid., 15.

64 School Census List No. 3, School District No. 68 (1920), Agency 9, Box 13080, COArchives. Hispano children were classified by the nativity of their parents, and interchangeably referred to as “Spanish, Colo.,” “N. Mex.,” and “Spanish, U.S.” In addition, it is likely than some Hispano families were also classified as native Coloradoans, as “nativity” often referred to the community
or camp in which the parents were born. If their Hispanic heritage were not as obvious to school district officials, it is likely that many Hispanics might have been “misclassified” in this way. It is also important to note that, in many camp communities, even after 1920 school district officials persisted in referring to Hispanics as Mexicans, probably due to the fact that Hispanics were still marginalized in some communities and treated as if they were foreigners in their own nation. By the 1930s, this practice was coming to an end, increasingly because there were growing numbers of Mexican immigrants which could more easily be distinguished from Hispanic families who had lived the area for generations, although, in some communities, this resulted in further marginalization of Hispanics. Donato, *Mexicans and Hispanics*, 70-71.

65 CF&I, “Walsen and Robinson Mines,” 266.

66 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Minnie Grace Branch (January 1, 1980), 6.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid., 13-23.

70 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Vinzie Scarfiotti and Ann Orr (January 16, 1980), 5-6.

71 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Alfonso Pineda (undated), 4.

72 CF&I, “Walsen and Robinson Mines,” 266.

73 Ibid., 270.

74 Peter Roberts, *Report upon the Possible Service by the Young Men’s Christian Association in the Mining Communities of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company*, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, 2 OMR, Series C, Box 18, Folder 156 (1915), RAC, 29.


76 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 565-566.


79 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Anna Lucero (November 28, 1978), 12.
80 Ibid.; Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Donald Mitchell (December 10, 1979), 7.

81 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Minnie Ugolini and Arthur Bellotti (December 13, 1979), 1-4.

82 The Coal Project, Interview of Susie Somsky (February 2, 1984), 4.


84 Ibid.


86 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 559-560.


88 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools, 559.


90 The Coal Project, Interview of John and Caroline Tomsic (April 28, 1978), transcript no. 04288-2, 3.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.


95 Ibid., 21.

96 Ibid.


98 Ibid., 412; CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 561.

100 Ibid., 461.

101 CF&I, ”Excellent Public Schools,” 561.


103 Ibid., 567.

104 CF&I, ”Excellent Public Schools,” 567.

105 Roberts, YMCA Report, 12.

106 Ibid., 14.

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid., 44.


111 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 565.

112 Roberts, YMCA Report, 4.


114 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 566.


116 Ibid.

117 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 566.

118 Roberts, YMCA Report, 6.

119 Ibid., 8.

120 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 568.
121 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Ann Laney and Walt Laney, and Jake and Cora Hribar (undated), 9.

122 The Coal Project, Interview of Kate Livoda (September 20, 1980), 31, 60-61.

123 Ibid., 34, 45-46.

124 Roberts, YMCA Report, 43-44.

125 Ibid., 44.
Chapter Four

County Schools, City Schools

Introduction

The vast majority of the schools in Las Animas or Huerfano counties surrounding the communities of Trinidad and Walsenburg in 1903 were quite different than those schools established or supported by the Sociological Department. Most of the county schools were one-room village schools which were located in small houses or in other small buildings. These schools were often staffed by a single teacher who taught all grades and ages of students in the same room. These school programs were limited to several months due to attendance or the demands of work for the older children.

In these county schools, the quality of the facility, the training and support of the teaching staff, and the unavailability of a standardized curriculum made it much more difficult to provide access to schooling for students in rural areas. Furthermore, there were no domestic science or manual training programs in these county schools, nor any kindergarten programs. When compared to the schools in the newer and larger camps supported by the Sociological Department, the county schools generally had inferior facilities, poorly trained teachers, and these schools enrolled a lower percentage of students from the surrounding area.

These county schools were not subject to the program of assimilation and acculturation which officials of the Sociological Department had made explicit in the camp school educational programs. Students in the more isolated areas of Huerfano and Las Animas counties enjoyed a degree of relative autonomy in the way schools were established and supervised. Often local
officials, community leaders, and parents of students enrolled in the county schools had more control over the educational programs offered by the schools, including the language spoken in the schools and the cultural assumptions that were made by the teachers. The county schools which were located outside of the camp communities were generally outside of the sphere of influence of the company officials and camp superintendents. As a result, they were not generally subject to the same level of paternalistic supervision which usually was carried out in the interests of social control and efficiency to meet the company’s industrial imperatives.

In Pueblo, the Sociological Department was active in assisting the city school district, School District No. 20, with financial and other support for its schools, and the Department also established the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School as a professional training facility for teachers working in the camps and in Pueblo. At the time that the Sociological Department ceased most of its educational programs after 1909, there were also plans for modernized city schools in place. The Department’s ambitions eventually outstripped the funding for educational programs available from the company, and the plans for the model schools were never carried out.

In this chapter, I will explore the differences between the schools financed, constructed, and supported by the Sociological Department and their counterparts in rural parts of Las Animas and Huerfano counties, including the establishment of schools in which the educational program was delivered partially or completely in the Spanish language by Hispano teachers. I will also explain the extent to which the Sociological Department assisted in the establishment and development of domestic and manual training programs in some of the city schools in Pueblo as well as the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School. Further, I will outline the Sociological Department’s efforts to put in place a model school plan for larger city schools,
which would include a branch for industrial training. I argue in this chapter that the rural county schools generally had inferior school facilities and more poorly trained teachers than those financed, constructed, and supported by the Sociological Department. Further, the county schools provided a lesser degree of access to education for many of the children in the camps and in the rural areas in Las Animas and Huerfano counties. On the other hand, since some of these county schools were so much smaller and not subject to the increased level of scrutiny and control that the Sociological Department exerted in some of its schools in the larger and newer coal camps, they retained a certain degree of autonomy and control over their educational programs. In other larger county schools, which provided at least an appreciable degree of graded schooling with adequate school facilities and a competent teacher, the access to schooling and the potential for continued secondary education for their students was similar to that achieved in the camp schools supported by the Sociological Department. Finally, I argue that the Department’s professional training programs for teachers increased the quality of preparation for teachers, and included, for the first time, guidance and support in regard to domestic and manual training and other types of educational programs which were consistent with the company’s industrial goals.

The “Rural School Problem”

In 1900, rural schools were under criticism by educational reformers in the United States. These schools were marked by non-graded primary education, instruction of younger children by older children, flexible or intermittent scheduling, and a lack of bureaucratic buffers between teachers and their patrons or constituents. Rural schools were also marked by poor facilities, including “buildings not fit for cattle,” heated by pot-bellied stoves and with splintered desks,
and classroom discipline meted out with a birch rod.\footnote{1} Furthermore, the meagerness of formal schooling in rural areas seriously handicapped youth who migrated to a complex urban-industrial society.\footnote{2}

Leading schoolmen began to argue that a community dominated by a provincial form of education could no longer equip youth to deal either with the changing demands of agriculture itself or with the complex nature of citizenship in a technological urban society. As they advocated for changes in the rural schools to remedy these problems, they only saw the deficiencies, but not the virtues, of the one-room school. And, furthermore, they sought greater power and status for themselves.\footnote{3}

Rural schooling at the turn of the century, however, still reflected what progressive reformers called the “organic” or village community. The child acquired his values and skills from his family and from neighbors of all ages and conditions. The rural schools provided some measure of “book learning,” but there strength was a vocational curriculum of local farm, ranch, or business work, and their civic and moral instruction came mostly in church, at home, or around the village. A child growing up in the community could see an organically related and integrated system of human relationships.\footnote{4} And yet the same factors that could make small rural schools part of an organic community could also create discord in the community. Sometimes such schools were subject to social and political division, often concerning the appointment of teachers, the direction of a school’s patrons, or the type of religious instruction offered by the school.

Administrative progressives mounted an attack on the “rural school problem” by criticizing the curriculum, the haphazard selection of teachers, the problems with attendance and scheduling, and the problems with school facilities in the context of the complex new industrial
society. Cubberley, speaking for a generation of administrative progressives, referred to such rural schools as educational institutions in “a state of arrested development,” burdened by educational traditions, and lacking in effective supervision. What was wrong with rural education, according to Cubberley, was that rural communities wanted to run their schools and did not know what was good for them in a changing and increasingly complex new industrial society.

The tension between community control of rural schools and the efforts professional educators to reform these schools mirrored the tension between the philanthropic ideas of progressive reformers and those ideas of social efficiency and industrial training advocated by administrative progressives. In rural areas, in which the village community was still functioning, the schools served as an integrating force, to some degree uniting rural school constituents and empowering them to control their own schools and direct the educational experiences of their children. However, the “community” control of local rural schools often did little to prepare children for life in an increasingly complex industrial society which was intersected with even the most remote rural communities. The transfer of power from rural school constituents to teaching professionals advocated by administrative progressives, and the resulting efforts to consolidate and standardize schooling for rural children, were at the heart of the efforts of the Sociological Department to “modernize” the schools in the camps and elsewhere in southern Colorado.

*Education in County Schools, Huerfano and Las Animas Counties*

Frances Nelson, who was the county superintendent of schools in Huerfano County for 27 years from the 1930s through the 1950s, and who first taught in the rural schools in the
county in 1923, remembered that in the early days in the county that there were few rural schools at all. Instead, the rural ranchers and homesteaders would have private teachers come to the houses to teach the children. The teachers were simply local people who could read and write, and often they hadn’t gone to school themselves. Children were often taught at home in the region, and often in Spanish:

I know that the first teachers that my father used to tell us about came to the house and taught them Spanish. My mother never did learn to read and write Spanish, until she was married. She learned from my dad. She did say she went to an English-speaking school in Las Animas County, so at the time that she was a young, they must have had schools. But in the early, early days I have heard people say that they had private schools in the home and that the family had to board the teacher, and I suppose pay her or him from their own funds, whatever kind they had, whether it was in currency of any type of money, or probably in produce from the farm.8

According to Nelson, some of the early rural schools were sometimes supported by local taxation, but there were schools which were independently established by local residents for the education of their own children. Most rural schools, whether publicly supported or privately established, were generally one-room and two-room schools.9 When there was no established school, the teacher went around from home to home. Nelson’s father was the first child in the family to receive any schooling, and it was from a private tutor who taught in English but also taught her father to speak Spanish.10 The early teachers in the area were not trained or certified teachers, they just knew how to read and write and they taught the children what they knew.11 Nelson concluded that the opportunities for education were not as great, because the children did not have access to books, libraries, and good facilities for education, and the teachers were not well-trained.12

In general, the facilities and access to education at these rural schools were often inadequate. Most schools were one-room buildings with a pot-belly stove placed strategically to
keep everyone warm. The lower grades sat in the front rows and the advanced ones toward the back of the classroom. The students’ education depended almost entirely on the quality of the teacher that he or she was likely to have for a number of years. A good teacher, who could encourage, inspire, and direct students, could be effective, while a teacher who could not do those things could spell disaster for a child’s education. Teachers were quite often not well prepared in terms of education and training. One of the difficulties faced by children in the early days was the unavailability of formal schooling, and, even if it was available, it required the children to travel by foot or on horseback relatively long distances to attend school.

On the other hand, there often was a close working relationship between the community, teachers, and students in rural schools. The community school board, elected in many small school districts, selected teachers, prepared budgets, and supervised the local schools. One-room schools not only provided personal involvement by parents in the school, but also served as a meeting place and center of social and political activities for the community. In those schools, the community was well integrated. In other rural schools, however, the community was neither as well-supported nor as supportive. In some cases, parents in rural areas did not consider education important. The chores on the ranches and farms often took precedence, and as a result, children often attended school only three months out of the year and when the weather was at its worst. Children were often encouraged or compelled to work on the farm or ranch and sometimes did not receive any formal schooling at all.

Lupe and Anna Pino’s experiences with schooling illustrate some of the issues with education in rural areas of southern Colorado in the early 1900s, particularly for Hispano children. Lupe and Anna were both born in 1900. Lupe Pino attended a one-room school in Badito, small Colorado village near Gardner, which nevertheless offered educational programs in
grades one through nine. Lupe Pino’s experience is representative of many of the children who were schooled in rural areas:

[T]he school was just one big room and all the classes were in there. One teacher, and there was about 15-20 at the most that ever went to school, all in one room, and we’d study all the subjects. One teacher taught all the subjects.17

Lupe attended school through the sixth grade, when he was 14, and then went to work on a local farm. After his family moved to Walsenburg, he went to work the mines at the age of sixteen. Anna Pino attended school in Walsenburg, at St. Mary’s, and then attended two years at the county high school.18 The rural schools, like the one attended by Lupe Pino, were small, and the graded curriculum was irrelevant since there was almost always a single teacher, and that teacher was responsible for teaching all ages, grade levels, and subjects. When the student lived in or close to Walsenburg or Trinidad they had more options for primary education and, in some instances, access to county high school programs.

Other schools in Huerfano County area also offered primary schooling to children of mine workers as well as local farmers and ranchers during the early 1900s, but the school sessions were not free and the school facilities and programs were very limited. The school session in La Veta, which was located about twenty miles southwest of Walsenburg, held school sessions from September to February. The teacher at the La Veta School earned about $25 per month when school was in session. After the regular term ended, the “subscription” session opened for an additional three-month term. Parents who could afford it paid a fee for this session directly to the teacher, who offered discounts for families with more than one student. During the summer, another special school session was held during the summer, until the regular term started again in the fall.19 Evelyn Walker, who grew up in La Veta and whose father was on the school board in the town from 1907 until 1913 and later would serve as a school superintendent,
stated that the La Veta School during this time period was “just a one-room school, where the teachers had all grades.” There were only about twenty students in the La Veta School during the regular session.20

Many of the rural schools also only provided schooling on an intermittent basis, when there was a teacher available and enough students to provide programs, and even when school was in session it was difficult for a single teacher to teach all age groups of students, as well as all the grade levels. Alton Tirey, who started in a county school in 1912 and attended it until he went to high school in Walsenburg, was taught by a single teacher for all eight grades, and there were between 40 or 50 students in his school.21 In the rural school he attended, some of the students in higher grades were already 15 or 16 years old, and “were men really, they weren’t in school maybe four of five months out of the year, and the rest of the time they were either helping with the fall crops or spring planting.” As a result, they didn’t get a whole lot of schooling except from November until March.”22

In the rural schools, the sheer number of students in one large class also encouraged the students to take an active role in facilitating the teaching of other students, both in terms of rote learning and tutoring. In Tirey’s school, “upper classmen would help teach the lower classmen.” When the students got to the point where they could “read a little bit,” the students would go to a more advanced student and “try to copy after someone.” The teacher would also call each grade up to the front, and they had a long bench, called the recitation seat. The student would sit down, and the teacher would call on them to spell or do arithmetic. According to Tirey, the learning and exercises were all oral, and “year after year listening to these recitations and the repetition of these classes was advanced learning of schooling.”23
The quality of the schooling children received in these schools was also often directly related to the quality of the teacher. When Jack Hribar attended a county school on the Huerfano River from 1908 on, his school “didn’t have good teacher.” He stated that a lot of teachers did not want to work in a country school. According to Hribar, “[i]f you happened to have a good teacher, it was all right,” but “if you didn’t have a good teacher, you didn’t learn much.”

The distance which a student had to travel and the weather also determined the level of attendance at the rural county schools. According to Alton Tirey, students often had to walk miles to school, or had to use horses. His family lived outside of Gardner, and in those days the closest school to their farm was the Malachite School, which was in the country. When he attended school there, a “Mexican boy” went to school with him who walked five miles to school “rain, shine, or snow” and “sometimes his feet would be almost sticking out of his shoes, but he was rugged.”

According to Tirey, his first school, which he began attending during the Christmas holidays in 1912, was an adobe building, and he walked to school all the time, unless the weather was extremely cold, when his uncle used to come and pick him up by horseback and take him home. Tirey attended high school in Walsenburg. His mother stayed with him for two years, and he worked before and after school to support them while he attended school. At the time, there were hundreds of miners and their families working all around Walsenburg, and that many of them attended the early grades in high school, although not many of them stayed to graduate.

In rural areas, children and young adults frequently were taken out of school to work on the ranches. According to Estella Pacheco, students in the area in which she lived were often taken out of school to help with lambing and with planting. Because the older students often
missed school, they were allowed to continue to attend schools on a seasonal basis to try to finish their primary schooling, until the teachers complained about having to teach older students:

They enrolled people over twenty years of age so that they may be learning. They were there just in the way because all they would do is mess around. Finally, the teacher complained to the board members and they dropped them. [Before that] they were forced to go. But like they were forced they didn’t learn anything and they withdrew them.\(^29\)

It was not unusual in the county schools for students to continue to attend on a seasonal basis until they were old enough to go to work full-time, or completed their primary schooling if they had the encouragement and support of their families.

*Hispano Children in the County Schools*

Spanish exploration of what would become southern Colorado began in the late sixteenth century. The Humaña-Bonilla and Juan de Zaldívar expeditions entered the Purgatoire Valley near Trinidad and named the river, and also explored what is now the San Luis Valley in south central Colorado. Juan de Oñate, New Mexico’s first Spanish governor, authorized many expeditions to south central Colorado and beyond. During the next two centuries, Spanish territorial control was not permanent, and there were several re-conquests of New Mexico, including what is now southern Colorado, to wrest control from Apache and Commanche tribes living in the area. In 1704, Juan de Ulibarrí, with forty Hispano volunteers and 100 Pueblo allies, pursued the Apaches down the Arkansas in what is now Pueblo County and claimed the area for Spain.

Permanent settlements of Hispanos in southern Colorado dated from the early nineteenth century, when traders arrived in southern Colorado. At that time, the traders hired hundreds of Hispano workers who migrated from northern New Mexico. By 1850, there were approximately
60,000 Hispanics living in the New Mexico territories, many of which had migrated to and were living in southern Colorado. The town of Trinidad was established by a number of Hispano families led by Felipe Baca as a trading and commercial venture in 1862. Walsenburg was originally a traditional plaza village known as La Plaza de los Leones, named for Don Miguel Antonio Leon, an early settler. By 1867, the village was renamed by Fred Walsen, who came to the area from Fort Garland and established a general store and trading post on the Cucharas River on the trail between Pueblo and Trinidad. By 1901, Walsenburg had a population of approximately 1,500 persons, many of whom were Hispanics. Walsen first developed the mines in the area, and eventually sold his mining interests to the company.

After decades of permanent settlement, by 1901 the Hispanics in southern Colorado had established a strong tradition of religious faith, mutual assistance, civic activism, and local participatory democracy. When the Sociological Department initiated its educational programs in some of the newer mining camps, many of the families living in rural parts of Huerfano and Las Animas counties were Hispano, as were many of the students attending the rural public schools.

For Hispanic children attending rural county schools in the early 1900s, the language permitted, used, or taught in the schools had an enormous impact on whether they remained and progressed in school. Jose and Estella Pacheco grew up in the La Veta area. Their families had both come from Taos, New Mexico, and their families ranched in the Cucharas Valley. However, men from both their families had worked seasonally in the mines as well. They attended small county schools in the area. Jose had to read in English in school, and translate into Spanish as he progressed.
Estella, when she first started in a rural school, only knew how to speak Spanish, and the first teachers she had, who were Anglos, would hit students when they spoke their native language and they were forced to speak English. Estella believed that the Anglo teachers would hit them because the teachers thought when the children were speaking in Spanish in school that they were talking about them, and she would “get real mad.” When the children played, they always spoke Spanish outside of the hearing of their teachers. After Estella learned a little English, she would interpret for the younger students who would run away from the Anglo teachers.

In small rural schools in areas in which Hispano ranchers and farmers lived, they sometimes exercised a degree of autonomy and control over their schools. In these schools, sometimes Hispano teachers were hired and allowed to teach in Spanish as well as English. When this occurred, Hispano students were more successful in staying in school and progressing through the primary grades. Estella, after several years of Anglo teachers, had a Spanish-speaking teacher named Eliseo Lucero. Lucero had come to Huerfano County from Taos, New Mexico. Lucero defended Estella when she spoke Spanish. Lucero started the students in learning how to read by using Spanish, and Estella corresponded with Lucero for years after the teacher left the school.

Estella had several male and female Hispano teachers in her later years, who, “by God’s mercy,” encouraged the students to learn to read Spanish and English. One of her teachers was named Dorothy Martinez. According to Pacheco, Martinez had helped her continue in school by convincing her father that it was important for her to get an education, and that she wasn’t too far behind to complete her studies:

[H]er name was Dorothy Martinez. She’s the one that helped me. She told my father, look you will not be supporting this girl all the days of your life. If
something should happen one of these days and you leave, if she’s still small, how is she going to support herself? She had no education. Not even enough to be an interpreter, to become something, she said. You must let her. This year you must give her. She is behind four years and this year you must let me have her completely for the whole semester.40

After her father allowed her to continue in school, Pacheco completed two or three grades during each school year. She finished the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades in a single school year.41

In the La Veta School in the early 1900s, there was a high degree of integration. Evelyn Walker’s family lived in La Veta and she attended school there. According to Walker, most of the students at the La Veta School were Hispano children to whom she referred as “pure Spanish” who families were early settlers in the area. She felt that the Hispanics in La Veta had a high standard of living and were “very trustworthy and honest.” Most of the Anglo and Hispano residents of La Veta were “fast friends” and the families had intermarried for generations.42 In other areas where there were high numbers of Hispano students, schools might have one English-speaking teacher and one who also could speak Spanish.43 In later years, however, as the industrial activities in the area increased and the public schools in La Veta were expanded. Then Hispano students were expected to speak only English in school and there was often not as much interaction between Anglo and Hispano students in the school.44 But in the early 1900s, it was not unusual for students to speak both Spanish and English in the schools in rural areas of Huerfano County, including in La Veta.

Many Hispano children, however, did not have the advantages of a rural village school which had bilingual teachers which valued learning to do lessons and write in Spanish as well as learn to speak and write English. When this occurred, the Hispano children in rural areas were often embittered by their educational experiences and left to go to work at an early age. Pedro Castro was born in 1894 in the country outside of Gardner, which was an area of ranches that
had long been established by Hispanics north of La Veta and northwest of Walsenburg. Castro’s family had come to the Cucharas Valley from New Mexico years before, and the men in his family worked as both miners for the coal companies and as ranchers. In the early 1900s he went to school in a camp school, in Walsen, when his father was working in the mines, and also in rural schools in the area at both Toltec and in Farisita. According to Castro, his schooling was difficult because “one went to the school, but didn’t learn anything.” The lessons were all in English, and students had to first learn English to do them. Because the teachers didn’t know any Spanish, and the lessons were not translated, it was difficult for him to learn.

As with other Hispano students, when Castro did have a teacher who was bilingual, he progressed more rapidly. During his final years of schooling, in the Farisita School northwest of Walsenburg, Castro had a teacher named Juan Valdez, and Valdez would translate the lessons and as a result he would “raise” a student into a higher grade. But if the teacher did not know Spanish, the lessons would not be understood. Castro’s final year of schooling in the rural school in Farisita was difficult for another reason, however. He was still in the seventh grade, but because he had started school late and he was hampered by his inability to speak in English during his early school years he was already twenty years old. At that point, he decided to leave school for good and go to work.

Hispano students often took advantage of interpreters in schools in which the lessons were only taught in English. Sometimes these interpreters were Anglo students who had grown up in the area, and knew some Spanish, and were willing to help their classmates. Often Spanish-speaking students took family members or friends to school to interpret for them until they learned English well enough to progress on their own. Jeanette Thach, who would go on to become a teacher in Huerfano County, stated that when she attended the Malachite School, there
was a single Anglo teacher taught both Anglo and Hispano children, but that there were many problems with bilingual schooling:

The Spanish had some trouble learning but sometimes they took an interpreter. Well, one child in the school who knew a little bit of Spanish and a little bit of English would be the interpreter. I was one. I did it for the teacher. I mean they would have to have a good English teacher and children in Spanish couldn’t learn from an English speaking teacher unless the English speaking teacher knew Spanish. That didn’t happen too often. They had a hard time communicating between the children and teacher. The law didn’t allow me to speak to those children on the school grounds in Spanish and then I broke all the laws. I was dying to teach and I wanted children to really learn so if someone wanted to report me as teaching by Spanish in the school room they could just come and haul me off if they wanted to. That was the only way that I could make children know.49

Thach went on to graduate from high school and completed training as a teacher, and taught in the rural schools in Talpa and Farisita for over a decade beginning in 1929 until she had her own children.50

Sometimes, in schools in which the majority of children were Spanish-speaking and when the local school district had hired a teacher who taught in Spanish and English, it was the Anglo children that were compelled to learn to communicate in a second language. Sylvia Paffenhauser’s family came to Huerfano County in 1908 and homesteaded near La Veta. Her father was also a miner and worked in many of the camps in Huerfano County, but the family remained on the family property in La Veta, which was a predominantly Spanish-speaking community at that time. She attended a school in which the predominant language was Spanish, and because she only could speak Italian she was required to learn Spanish to communicate and socialize with other children.51

In many rural areas of Huerfano and Las Animas counties, the classes in the schools were taught by Anglo teachers who did not know Spanish. Many Hispano children, when they entered school, did not know any English, and since it was generally not permitted to speak Spanish in
many schools, they were at a severe disadvantage. Some Hispano children were punished for speaking Spanish, even though their school may have been composed predominantly of Spanish speaking children. Some Anglo teachers thought that students spoke Spanish to ridicule or make fun of them.

Not all Anglo teachers, however, reacted in a hostile fashion to the speaking of Spanish in school. Some were tolerant or compassionate toward and understanding of the Hispano’s language and culture.\textsuperscript{52} Frances Nelson maintained that Spanish was never taught in the schools. According to her, beginning in the early 1900s “the teachers tried to keep the children from talking Spanish on the playground,” and that “everybody had to learn English.”\textsuperscript{53} As a teacher, in 1923, Nelson was approached by a parent who requested that Spanish be taught as well as English, and she refused to do it because teaching was required to be done in English even though she knew Spanish and could have complied with the request.\textsuperscript{54} The parent who had requested that he teach in Spanish was a relatively wealthy sheep rancher, who then went on to support the Spanish school in Gardner, and brought in and hired teachers to teach the Hispano children in Spanish.\textsuperscript{55}

Even when Hispano community leaders established schools in which teachers taught in the native language of the students, these schools were usually faced with the same problems as the Anglo rural schools. There was not a lot of support for education in these areas, students had difficulty attending on a regular basis, and the quality of the teachers was inconsistent. Other than the benefits of teaching and learning in the students’ native language, the Spanish schools had little more to recommend them than the other rural county schools.

For example, the Spanish school in Gardner, which had been established in the 1880s, was active intermittently well into the 1920s. Adam Maldonado, whose family came from Taos,
homesteaded in Gardner. His family had originally come from Spain in 1668. His father
Amarante had attended the Spanish school through fourth grade. According to Maldonado, the
Spanish school in Gardner started when they simply chose a place to have school, selected a
teacher, and started to teach the students. He related how the teachers in the Spanish school
sometimes did not have any formal teacher training, but that they were nevertheless capable of
teaching the children. Maldonado’s grandmother first provided the books in Spanish for the
school, and his grandmother taught him to speak and read in Spanish. The school had lessons in
the first four grades. Eloyda Cisneros, whose family migrated from Mexico, was born in 1901
and attended the Spanish school in Gardner. According to Cisneros, however, the Spanish
school was “no better than the school in Mexico,” and that “the students didn’t learn much.”

While county school districts employed predominantly male Anglo school administrators
and predominantly female Anglo teachers during the early 1900s, there were two public schools
in Starkville that had Spanish-speaking teachers. Starkville was a large mining community south
of Trinidad, and many of the Hispano workers and their families lived in segregated
neighborhoods which the company referred to as Mexican neighborhoods. These two schools
were referred to as “Spanish schools” by company officials. The students in these two schools
were predominantly Hispano, and the local school officials were also Hispanics. These schools
also employed Hispano teachers to run the schools. One Spanish school, in the northern
neighborhoods of Starkville, was a two-room school. This school had over a hundred students in
the first and second grades, and 54 students in grades three through eight, in 1903. The other
Spanish school, in the southern Starkville neighborhoods, was a one-room school which enrolled
a total of 65 students. Fifty of these students were attending in the first three grades, and only
three of these students were in eighth grade in 1903. To contrast, the central school in Starkville
had almost no Hispano students, and was attended predominantly by children of Italian immigrant workers. The central school was larger, and staffed by a principal and two other teachers. This school enrolled 131 students, of which 45 were in first grade. All of these schools had similar issues regarding the education of non-English speaking children in a community which was more urban than rural. These schools were also very much under the influence, as any schools in a predominantly CF&I community, of company officials.

In general, despite increasing social pressure to prohibit the speaking of Spanish in the county schools, the influx of vast number of immigrants, and the increasingly industrialized social and economic conditions that were changing the agrarian ways of life in southern Colorado, Hispanos did retain some measure of autonomy and control over their schools in the area prior to 1920. Often this was the result of the leadership of Hispano community leaders who wanted to establish Spanish schools. Less often, local Hispano leaders were able to hire Hispano teachers who could teach in Spanish as well as English in order to make schooling more effective and meaningful for Hispano children who were native Spanish speakers. This usually occurred in areas in which there was a traditionally high degree of social and economic interaction between Anglos and Hispanos, along with a certain degree of cultural respect. In areas in which neighborhoods had a higher degree of segregation, such as in Starkville, the speaking and teaching of Spanish in the county schools was a matter of necessity which was less objectionable to Anglo community leaders and educators because it was isolated in nature. As the communities of southern Colorado became increasingly industrialized in the 1920s, however, and a wave of Mexican immigrants began to arrive, Hispanos were increasingly isolated and marginalized, and it became more difficult for Hispanos to establish any level of autonomy in the public schools in the region.
County Schools in the Coal Communities

In addition to the rural schools in Huerfano and Las Animas counties, there were a number of county schools located in CF&I coal camps and communities in southern Colorado which were outside of the Sociological Department’s direct sphere of influence. Many of these coal communities were large, with hundreds, and, in some cases, thousands of residents, and the schools in these were often correspondingly large with graded primary school programs housed in multi-room schools. The facilities and access to schooling for children of the company’s workers in these schools often were similar to those in schools directed financed, constructed, and supported by the Sociological Department. In other coal camps outside of the Department’s influence in older coal camps, the schools were small, and their educational programs were extremely limited.

None of the schools in the coal producing areas of Fremont County, west of Pueblo and southeast of Canon City, were financed or constructed by the Sociological Department, and with one exception no Department programs were active there. However, this area had a number of large camps and coal communities, and some fairly large public schools, by 1903. The largest of the schools, in Brookside, which was west of Pueblo up the Arkansas River Valley, consisted of three school buildings located within several miles of each other. One of these schools was a two-room two-story school. The Brookside School enrolled 126 students in grades one through nine, and included a high school program for students in the final grade. In Coal Creek, several miles to the east, there was a large school with five teachers, and 170 students enrolled in grades one through nine. In Williamsburg, a coal camp just south of Canon City, there were 168 students enrolled in eight grades. Similarly, in Rockvale, which was close by, the school was a
six-room school which enrolled over 200 students in grades one through nine. None of these schools had kindergarten programs, although one such program run by the Sociological Department ran during a single school year, 1901-1902. The following year, the Rockvale kindergarten program was curtailed and kindergarten room was used for the primary grades due to the overcrowding in the school.64

Other coal companies also controlled coal camps in Huerfano and Las Animas counties. County schools in those coal camps were also large. Beatrice Nogare was born about 1906 and started attending the camp schools in Hastings and Delagua in 1911. These camps were close to the CF&I camps in Berwind and Tobasco, but were controlled by another coal company. Nogare remembered that there were a lot of students attending the schools in the camps when she started school, and then, when her parents moved to the Ludlow tent colony during the strike in 1913, she attended school there as well. When the teacher in the tent colony school heard that the militia was going to burn down the school, the teacher sent the kids to hide in a nearby arroyo. After the strike, she attended school in the Delagua only through grade four.65

The public schools in Starkville were established in the late nineteenth century. By 1900, the population of Starkville was over 3,000. Coal had first been mined in the Starkville area in 1895, and by 1900 the mines and coking ovens in and around the community employed more than 650 workers. Hundreds of children attended the community’s schools.66 The school programs in Starkville were very similar to those in the camps which were supported by the Sociological Department. In 1902, Starkville had three schools which provided programs for grades one through eight, and six teachers. The central school was a stone building with three rooms. The Sociological Department touted the central school’s library, which it supported. The library consisted of two sets of encyclopedias, 120 books, and a full selection of eleven
periodicals which included *Harper’s*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Scientific American*. Department officials also pointed out that the principal and the teachers had been employed at the school for years, and that, in 1901, the school had sent seven of its graduates on to attend Trinidad High School. The other two schools were the two smaller Spanish schools located on the north and south sides of Starkville, respectively. Those two schools employed Hispano teachers, and were controlled by local Hispano community leaders, including members and officers of the local boards of education.

Although the public schools in Starkville were already well established by 1901, the Sociological Department was extremely active there because the original kindergarten programs had been initiated in the community. The Department sponsored a large kindergarten as well as
numerous domestic and adult education programs in the community, and these programs had close ties to the local school district.

But the schools in smaller coal communities not directly supported by the Sociological Department in Huerfano and Las Animas counties were neither large nor well supported in the Department’s early years. In Cuatro, for example, which was a new camp up the Purgatoire Valley from Tercio, the children had to be driven to school in Tercio as there was no school. To do this, the Sociological Department made arrangements to transport roughly a dozen students to school in Tercio by means of a “company rig” driven by a company employee. In Herzon, south of Walsenburg, although the Sociological Department had advanced the funds to build a small one-room school, its programs were not supported as well as some of the other schools in the area. In Herzon, one teacher taught 25 students in five grades, and the Sociological Department did not extend financial support to the school.

By 1915, the local school districts serving coal mining camps and communities had expanded, although the Sociological Department was no longer actively financing or supporting these educational programs. In the Trinidad area, there were several public schools for primary grades only. In Morley, there was a school in which 120 students were enrolled. Three teachers were employed in this school, and the school’s single room was equipped with dividers to separate the students into classes. In this school, over half the students were in first grade in 1915, and the educational program consisted almost solely of the teaching of English. There were few students in the upper grades, and no students had gone on to high school in Trinidad from Morley. An effort had been made in 1915 to provide a ninth grade program of study for one student, but, in general, the boy graduates of the Morley school “had nothing to do but loaf” until they reached their sixteenth year, when they could begin to work. Nearer to Trinidad,
there was a new school to serve the children of the miners in Frederick or Valdez, in which 120 students were enrolled in eight grades. There were a higher percentage of students enrolled in the higher grades at this school.72 Near Walsenburg, in the new camp in Ideal, there was a new school to replace a small school which had held sessions in one of the company houses. There were 25 students enrolled in school, and one student had progressed through the eighth grade.73

Manual Training

The Sociological Department took an active role in encouraging teachers to become familiar with and attempt to implement manual and domestic training methods, processes, and goals in their own teaching in the camp schools. The ideas of the administrative progressives, which were so compelling to Corwin, were heavily weighted in favor of industrial education. According to Corwin, this type of education would permit students learn to take their place in the industrial life of the larger community by being trained in their own appropriate form of schooling. In Camp and Plant, the Department relentlessly touted the benefits of industrial and manual training for all schools.

Other than by disseminating Corwin’s ideas, the Department utilized the endorsement of the Superintendent of School District No. 20 in Pueblo, J. F. Keating. Not only was Keating in charge of the Pueblo city school district, which included, in 1903, four schools, but he was also employed directly by the Department as the Principal, beginning in 1902, of the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School.74 Keating then became a tireless advocate of manual and industrial training in the public schools. In 1902, he wrote, in Camp and Plant, that

[p]eople used to think that our public schools should teach only reading, writing, and arithmetic. Of course this assumed that all practical things would have to be learned somewhere else. In most of the cities of our country all this has changed, now the hand as well as the mind is encouraged to work. Manual training of
some sort is now demanded by the people. The cities are meeting the demand fairly well. Why should not manual training have a place in all our country and village schools?75

Keating was expressing the views of administrative progressives that practical subjects be taught to students, as an appropriate level of education, to students who were expected to become industrial workers. Keating then noted that he had “recently visited” some of the country schools, and observed that the students were not engaged in appropriate forms of learning since the teachers’ methods ignored industrial and manual training. He observed that “the children were active, energetic and when out of work, restless, taxing the attention of energies of their teachers,” and questioned why the teachers in these schools should not give such students the opportunity to employ these students in more active pursuits, including sewing and carpentry. In this way, the boys would receive invaluable training, and thrift and taste would be afforded to the girls.76

Quite often public school teachers would be targeted by the Sociological Department in order to encourage the teaching of industrial and manual subjects in the schools. In *Camp and Plant*, Corwin and Keating ran a series of articles, entitled “Hints from Prominent Educators,” which were directed at public school teachers. These hints touted the benefits of manual training programs as well as the benefits which would be derived from teachers applying manual pursuits to their own teaching. For example, Keating pointed out in *Camp and Plant* that while most of the teachers in the public schools were “well enough prepared in the particular branches to teach the average child fairly well,” but that in the “management of school property and in the study of school economics” they are without training. Keating then went on to recommend that teachers should manufacture and supply their own teaching materials by using a small portion of each monthly salary to equip a tool chest as well as accumulate boxes for the “profitable busy work”
of the students. Keating also recommended that each teacher should include, among the “working tools” of their profession, “some practical books upon various phases of Manual Training.” These would include books on wood carving, woodworking, basket-making, boys’ books of “investigations,” and other resources.

Teachers employed in the public school who would not accept the challenges of incorporating and industrial and manual training methods in their classes, or integrating such practices in their own preparation for teaching, were vilified in *Camp and Plant*. There was no doubt that the Department clearly was mandating the use of such methods and practices in the public schools. In another feature in “Hints from Prominent Educators,” Department officials endorsed the views of Joseph Francis Daniels, the librarian of the Colorado State Agricultural College, who recommended that teachers carry out their own bookbinding to create printed materials in their schools. Daniels stated that teachers thought that bookbinding was difficult to learn, “although they have never tried the trick.” Daniels believed it was easy, and it was only teachers that did not “like to learn new things which are not required in the teaching contract” that would reject it. These teachers, it was pointed out in *Camp and Plant*, “know their rights” and were “lawyers enough when it comes to asserting them and hugging them.” In short, the Department’s teachers, and those subject to the influence of the company superintendents in the camp schools, were virtually compelled to adopt manual training methods and practices in the new industrial era.

*City Schools and the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School*

The children of the workers at the steelworks in Pueblo attended school in one of four primary schools by 1904. These schools were large, and were located within a mile from the
entrance to the steelworks. One of these schools, the Minnequa School, was a large, two-story brick building with numerous classrooms which was located near the new Minnequa Hospital.\footnote{81} The Sociological Department was very active in regard to encouraging manual training and domestic science education in these schools.

The Department also created the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School in the Old Hospital, after the company began construction of the new Minnequa Hospital. According to Department officials, this school was an outgrowth of the needs of public school teachers in southern Colorado and the counties around Pueblo.\footnote{82} The purpose of the school was to provide, for the Department, “an institution where its teachers and workers may receive suitable instruction and training during portion of the long summer vacation.”\footnote{83} According to Department officials, the reason for providing such a program was because “[n]o instructor in any branch of work can afford to pass through this long interval without ‘brushing up,’ or without taking advance work, thereby raising how own standard of efficiency and fitting himself for better work in his profession.”\footnote{84}
The Pueblo Normal and Industrial School afforded a six-week course of study over the summer, with Professor Keating in charge, and subjects for teacher training included lectures in pedagogy, including psychology, elementary sciences, primary methods, common branches of study, languages, kindergarten methods, and industrial training. These lectures were held in the part of the School known as the Casa Vivienda, which also housed an education library and museum. Teachers attending the school for training could stay at the school and eat meals “at rates as low or lower than those usually prevailing at similar institutions.” In addition to teacher training courses, teachers could take ceramic design and art, hygiene, Spanish, cooking, sewing, lace making, clay modeling, vocal music, piano, violin, mandolin, guitar, and dancing. The Department also sponsored an evening educational program for company employees at the steelworks which met at the School.
The educational programs that the Department sponsored at the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School were consistent with its purpose as a center for industrial education. Through the programs offered at the School, teachers would be trained to more effectively carry out the Department’s goals of providing domestic science and manual training programs, as well as more effectively preparing children for the future in an industrial society.

Corwin’s Plan for Modern School Facilities

Finally, as the funding of the Sociological Department waned, Corwin became interested in planning for future modern schools which would also support the progressive educational goals of the Department. Initially in 1908, Corwin developed a plan for the modern school which could be efficiently implemented if the public schools, in his view, had the vision to take his advice. In 1909, he published, through the Sociological Department’s Annual Report, a comprehensive plan for such a model public school.90 The Department touted this plan as the ultimate expression of the Department’s goals for education, including that the schools “take the place of the town hall,” as a social center. In such a school, church services, political gatherings, social functions such as weddings and funerals, dances, and other activities could be held. Such a school would be an essential part of a “thorough-going school system,” and could be called “The Workingman’s College.” Corwin made it clear that the two-story country school house could no longer effectively carry out these functions.91
Corwin provided a detailed outline of the principles of his model school plan. Corwin asserted that “[t]he first object of a school building is understood to be educational, but there is another object to be considered before education, namely, health,” and that “the modern school building is the one that affords the best educational facilities.” To realize this object, Corwin proposed that public schools be constructed and used as modular buildings on one story. The central building was to be a hall, but could also be utilized as a classroom facility until more buildings in the modular school were completed. The hall, according to Corwin, was the essential part of an effective public school building. As school attendance increased, the other building modules could be created to the right and the left of the central building.

Corwin asserted that his model school plan had a number of advantages. The number of school buildings and rooms could be created to meet the demands of growth in the community. In his view, the “many-room” building was usually ahead or behind the needs of the district. With his plan, there would never be overcrowding since the growth needs of the district could be
met with the construction of another building to accommodate the additional students. Corwin added that “[t]he plan here suggested is not intended to be the least expensive possible, but is recommended for adoption in prosperous districts where money is not the first consideration.”

Corwin’s views regarding educational efficiency were clearly driving his suggestions for a model school. He believed that education must reflect the progressive view that social improvement was inevitable, but that it could not be achieved without domestic and industrial training. Accordingly, his school was a center in which all social activity could be carried out, and many improvements were designed to increase the ability of educators to provide practical types of education in a modern school plant. For example, in addition to its modular design, the model school would provide the ability to “fumigate” one room of the school without interfering with work in another classroom, and that it provided a physical facility which was a “time-saver in getting children from the play-ground into the class-room” because each group of students could be quickly and promptly admitted to the building without waiting for others to form lines and pass. Further, his model school would also provide lavatories for each classroom, where they are under the direct supervision of the teacher of the room.

The central hall in Corwin’s model school would provide an ideal place to conduct adult education classes. Corwin believed that “[e]very settlement or district needs such a place for the grown-ups as well as the pupils,” where adults could go to school to learn the educational needs of the school and for adult instruction. Corwin argued that “so rapid and so many are the changes in school work of to-day that a general leaves parents far behind and ignorant of school work unless they make special and continuous effort to keep abreast of school evolution.” At his model school, equipped with a central hall for social activities, both young people and adults would be afforded a place for “adult instruction” as well as “meetings, clubs, and societies.”
central hall would also afford parents a place where those who were interested in school work
could gather to discuss school matters and other problems of importance to the school district.
Corwin also believed that such a hall was the ideal place to hold kindergarten classes. 100

Corwin also proposed that his modular design could be adapted for the new high schools,
which he envisioned as having both domestic science and manual training departments. To carry
this out, Corwin proposed a number of principles to guide school districts in adapting his model
plans for high schools. Corwin proposed that a high school have three buildings – one for
literary work, one for the heating plant, manual training and domestic science departments, and
the science lab, and one for the library and the central hall. 101

In his practical fashion, Corwin dared school districts to utilize his model plans, even
though it was clear to him by this point that the Sociological Department would no longer be
financing, constructing, and supporting such schools. Corwin argued that “[i]f the district has
not the money to install the entire plant at once, it can complete a portion at a time, which is far
better than erecting part of a building and leaving an unsightly and unfinished portion for years,
waiting for funds, and in the end having a patch-work structure, which, when completed, rarely
looks well on account of having been constructed at different periods.” 102 Corwin urged school
districts to “get out of a rut” and build his model schools. 103 This was to be the Department’s
last effort to create efficient, modern schools for the industrial age, and was the embodiment of
Corwin’s own administrative progressive views.

Conclusion

The Sociological Department’s support of the public schools in some of the newer, larger
coal camps clearly did make a difference to students in terms of their overall higher access to
schooling, the quality of educational facilities, and the availability of kindergarten, domestic, and manual educational programs. The rural county schools in southern Colorado were generally inferior in many ways to the newer, modern schools which the Department had financed, constructed, and closely supervised.

Prior to the turn of the twentieth century, children in rural areas in southern Colorado rarely had any formal schooling. Often, schooling occurred in the home, and the teaching was conducted by persons who may or may not have received a formal education or any teacher training. When schooling did occur, it more often than not was limited to learning how to read and write. In general, parents did not value formal education very highly, although there were exceptions to this in which local ranchers or community leaders may have tried to establish effective local schools.

When schools were established in Huerfano and Las Animas counties, they were almost always one-room ungraded schools, attended by children of all ages grouped into a single class under a single teacher. The curriculum was not standardized, and books and materials were limited. These rural county schools often held limited school sessions, sometimes as short as two months in length, and even when longer sessions were held students often missed school to work on the ranches and farms in the area. When they did attend, there were students of all ages, from first graders to twenty-year olds, which made it even more difficult for students to obtain an education. The older students often felt out of place, which simply reinforced the values of their parents that education was not as important as their work on ranches or farms. This made completion of primary schooling even more difficult. Sometimes, even when parents were supportive, the young people simply wanted to leave school and go to work – whether it was in the mines, in domestic jobs, or on ranches and farms in the area. Even when rural county
schools were well established, with adequate facilities and a trained teacher, the distance that students had to travel in some areas to attend created additional hardships for students. Similarly, the availability of books, either in English or in Spanish, created problems for teachers in these schools.

In schools in which prohibition on speaking Spanish was imposed, either by a local school district or a county school teacher, it created hardships for Hispano students. In some cases, at best, these issues made it impossible for Hispano children to continue to attend school or compelled them to attend school into their adult years to complete their primary schooling. At worst, the Hispano children were marginalized and carried the damage from such schooling throughout their lives. In schools in which Hispano children were allowed to speak and read in Spanish because they had Hispano teachers or had either adult or student interpreters assist them, they were more successful. Even in these cases, Hispano children still fought against marginalization and had difficulty completing their primary schooling. In rural Spanish schools, the programs were very limited, although such schools were not subject to the pervasive programs for assimilation and acculturation which were practiced by educators in the newer camp schools supported by the Sociological Department.

In the county schools which were located in other coal camps, or in communities which were dominated by coal mining, the educational programs were similar to those supported by the Sociological Department. These schools, however, did not have kindergarten or other programs which supported the public school program, and often had fewer teachers, poor or overcrowded facilities, and fewer students completed their primary schooling.

In Pueblo, the Sociological Department initiated teacher training programs in a variety of subjects, including manual and domestic education, for the teachers in southern Colorado. This
was a new approach to training for teachers, which was inspired by the Department’s educational and industrial goals. The Department also proposed plans for new model schools which were consistent with the company’s industrial goals.

Overall, the comparison between the county schools and those schools supported by the Sociological Department illustrated the tension between the organic communities in rural areas of the county and those in the growing industrialized regions which were subject to company influence. In the more urban camps and communities near the mining and milling industries, the schools were undergoing rapid change, including increased growth, centralization, bureaucratization, and control by professional educators. The increasingly technological, industrialized society was rapidly changing the nature of schooling in these areas. Certainly, by comparison, the rural county schools were doing little to prepare students to migrate to industrialized areas. The county schools, however, did in some cases retain a higher level of local control, and with that they still retained a certain cultural richness and were part of a more integrated system of education within the community.
Notes

Chapter Four

County Schools, City Schools

1 Tyack, *The One Best System*, 14. In one of the more noteworthy quotes by historians of education, David Tyack evoked a passage in Edward Eggleston’s novel *The Hoosier School-Master* to stand for a teacher’s stand against the ignorant “tribe of barbarians and hypocrites” which controlled rural schools at the turn of the century:

  “Want to be a school-master, do you? Well, what would you do in Flat Crick deestrick, I’d like to know? Why, the boys have driv off the last two, and licked the one afore them like blazes.” Tyack used this an example of “community control” of education in rural schools.

Ibid., 13.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.


5 Ibid., 21.


7 Tyack, *The One Best System*, 21.

8 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Frances Nelson (September 26, 1979), 1.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., 1-2.

11 Ibid., 3.

12 Ibid., 3, 9.


14 Ibid., 7-8.
15 Ibid., 8.

16 Ibid.

17 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Lupe and Anna Pino (June 20, 1979), 14.

18 Ibid.

19 Nancy Christofferson, La Veta: The First 40 Years (2001) 41.

20 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Evelyn Walker (undated), 4.

21 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Alton and Mary Tirey, 10-11.

22 Ibid., 8.

23 Ibid., 10.

24 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Jake Hribar, 9.

25 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Alton and Mary Tirey (undated), 8.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid., 10-11.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., 16.


31 de Baca, “Introduction,” xv.

32 Nasario Garcia, Hispanic Heritage in Huerfano County, Colorado, 2.

33 The Colorado Fuel & Iron Co., “Walsen and Robinson Mines,” Camp and Plant, Vol. I, No. 17, (April 5, 1902), 265-267, 272. This article, like many in Camp and Plant which featured coal camps, was also published in the same number in Italian, Spanish, and German.

34 Ibid.; Deutsch, No Separate Refuge, 26.

35 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Jose Evan Pacheco and Estella Vigil Pacheco (undated), 5-6.
36 Ibid., 13-14.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid., 13.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., 15-16.
41 Ibid.
42 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Evelyn Walker, 4.
43 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Oren and Ethel Benson (May 31, 1979), 4.
44 Ibid.
45 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Pedro Castro (June 2, 1979), 1, 4.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid., 6.
49 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Jeanette Thach (July, 1979), 11-12.
50 Ibid.
51 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Sylvia Paffenhauser (May, 1979), 7.
53 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Frances Nelson, 2.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
56 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Adam Maldonado, (July 19, 1979), 2-3.
57 Ibid., 3, 6. Later, according to Maldonado, when his grandmother died, one of his cousins burned the school’s Spanish books. Ibid., 6.
58 Ibid., 6.

59 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Eloyda Cisneros (July 19, 1980), 2.


61 School Census List No. 2, School District No. 53 (1922), Agency 15, Box 11889, CO Archives; School Census List No. 1, School District No. 56 (1929), Agency 15, Box 11889, CO Archives. This census reports in the 1920s indicated that approximately sixty percent of the students in School District No. 53 were Hispano, and approximately thirty-five percent of the students in School District No. 56 were Hispano. These students would have been enrolled as young students in 1915.


63 Ibid. In 1920, only three of 122 students enrolled at the central Starkville school were Hispano children. School Census List No. 2, School District No. 30 (1924), Agency 9, Box 13077, CO Archives.

64 CF&I, "Excellent Public Schools," 560-562.

65 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Beatrice Nogare (undated), 8, 14.


67 Ibid., 363.

68 Ibid.


70 Roberts, YMCA Report, 17.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., 11.

73 Ibid., 32.

74 CF&I, Annual Report, 1902-1903, 2.

76 Ibid.


78 Ibid.


80 Ibid.

81 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 563.


83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.


91 Ibid., 27-28.

92 Ibid., 38.

93 Ibid., 30.

94 Ibid., 31.

95 Ibid.
96 Ibid.

97 Ibid., 35.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid., 42.

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid., 45.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid., 33.
Chapter Five

Child Gardening

Introduction

In the immediate aftermath of the Colorado coal strike of 1913-1914, Lamont Bowers wrote to John D. Rockefeller expressing admiration for the work of some of the volunteers who assisted in initiating kindergarten work in some of the camps. He explained to Rockefeller that the wife of a former President of the company, Mrs. J. A. Kebler, was a “woman of broad sympathies,” and she “spent much of her time in going unostentatiously from camp to camp, and personally helping along” the kindergarten work.1 Bowers explained to Rockefeller that the Department had been conducting this work, which was “at its height” in 1903 when the UMWA called a strike. In 1903, the Department’s kindergarten programs were supervised by Mrs. Margaret Grabill, who supervised the Sociological Department’s kindergarten work throughout its active years. In 1903, the Sociological Department’s kindergarten staff included fourteen kindergarten and domestic science teachers, all of which were women. After the strike was called it “interfered seriously with the work and interest” in the Sociological Department. In Bowers’ words,

[l]ater state and county politicians took a hand and claimed that no company could do this work in an uninterested manner, and that the company was ‘educating’ its people for its own selfish ends. It was called paternalistic.2

Bowers deeply resented the criticism of the company’s sociological efforts, and he generally respected the efforts of the employees of the Sociological Department, although he paradoxically did not believe in devoting additional company funds to support the programs. Bowers added
that, despite the efforts of those that sought to limit the company’s influence in the lives of its workers and their families, that “[t]he Sociological Department did not suffer a sudden demise” but, “in a curtailed form,” it still existed in 1914.³

Bowers’ comments illustrated the tension between the educational ideas of progressive reformers and those of the administrative progressives, played out in the context of the Department’s most ambitious educational programs, the kindergarten and domestic education programs. On one hand, the goals of progressive education were essentially philanthropic, in that they involved establishing an organic, democratic community and improving the lives and social experiences of individuals to foster social stability. The Sociological Department’s stated goals for its kindergarten and domestic education programs were that the physical, mental, and spiritual qualities of children were to be nurtured and developed in a harmonious community of children, as training for their participation in the larger society of adults. On the other hand, the goals of the administrative progressives, as an overlay to those of progressive reformers, were to impart “American” conceptions of law and order, popular government, and cultural values in order to foster social efficiency and class stratification. The Sociological Department’s stated goals for its kindergarten and domestic education programs were also, therefore, to prepare children, and sometimes their parents, for efficient participation in the industrial work of society. The tension arose when the Department’s stated philanthropic ends were at odds with its focus on assimilation and acculturation for children in the camps. Ultimately, this tension was only resolved when the Department relinquished control over the kindergartens and other educational programs to the local school districts and the Young Men’s Christian Association in 1915.

In this chapter, I will explore the nature and scope of the Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic educational programs. Specifically, I explore to what extent the
Department’s programs were rooted in the national progressive movement in education, as well as what the Department’s goals were for its programs. Further, I will outline the manner in which the Department established its kindergarten and domestic education programs in the camps and in the public schools in Pueblo, and examine their level of impact, both to provide educational programs to children and adults and to assimilate and acculturate the children of southern and eastern European immigrants and Hispanos in the area. I argue that although the Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs were somewhat consistent with progressive ideas in education and were essentially philanthropic in nature, they were implemented in a manner calculated to control the company’s workers through assimilation and acculturation. As a result, they were not wholly successful. Ironically, while these programs were heavily assimilationist, they did provide schooling to children at an earlier age, at the time when children usually did not finish their primary schooling, and provide richer educational experiences for children, their parents, and their teachers which, but for the Department, would not have been offered at all. Ultimately, it was the company’s lack of financial support for the Sociological Department’s work, and the Department’s inability to continue to support these programs, that ended most of the kindergarten and domestic education programs in the camps and in Pueblo.

Americanization and Social Class Reproduction

Socio-economic stratification was at the heart of the tension between progressive educational ideals and the ideals of administrative progressives in the early 1900s. The goals of administrative progressives went far beyond creating a new industrial community and stabilizing the social and economic lives of immigrants. Educators in modern school districts would also
now take on the task of defining “American” values, and ultimately supplanting those languages, cultural traits, and modes of behavior of immigrant parents which were seen as inferior. To “Americanize,” in the view of Cubberley and other administrative progressives, was to divest the immigrant of all ethnic character and to inculcate the dominant Anglo-Saxon morality, which was the “true, historic America, the America worth preserving.” There was no room in America, according to administrative progressives, for “hyphenated Americans.”

In terms of educational programs, the goals of administrative progressives to Americanize immigrants went far deeper than assimilationist practices such as patriotic exercises, the speaking of English in school, and the imposition of a curriculum which was heavily weighted with traditional “American” subjects and ideas. To fully Americanize the vast numbers of immigrant children, educators would have to resort to abnormally comprehensive efforts to educate both the children and their families. In this way, a bridge would be built between the Americanized child and the foreign parent, so that the parent could cross to the “American” side. The rhetoric of Americanization during the progressive era was messianic, a mixture of fear outweighed by hope, of a desire for social control under the terms dictated by educators. The progressive ideas of the time included that education would solve every problem in the national life, and that the nation had right to demand intelligence and virtue of every citizen and to obtain these by force if necessary.

There was a complex relationship between the ideas of progressive educators and administrative progressives in regard to social mobility. Progressive reformers saw the lack of assimilation of immigrant laborers and their families as the main barrier to upward socio-economic mobility, while administrative progressives viewed more hard-edged Americanization as the only way to insure social efficiency and ongoing socio-economic class reproduction to
serve the interests of an increasingly industrial society. This was a fundamental disconnect between the goals of educators, and increased the tension between those pursuing social justice and those pursuing social efficiency. Those pursuing social efficiency were committed to the idea that schooling in an industrial society had to reproduce socio-economic stratification in order to preserve the industrial system itself. Schools, in the view of administrative progressives, existed to strengthen existing social structures and socio-economic stratification.

During the progressive era, the growth of industrialization and heavy immigration were at the heart of the desire on the part of administrative progressives to initiate domestic, manual, and industrial education programs. Their argument generally was that traditional schooling was both insufficiently practical and not appropriate for less able or less academic children, mostly children of immigrants. In their view, such educational programs would instill in them attitudes and skills appropriate for their manual working-class status. In the view of schoolmen, the formation of attitudes and skills appropriate to maintain the social order was crucial in the industrial age. This was the impetus for the support of kindergarten, domestic education, and manual training programs in the progressive era.

*The Kindergarten Movement*

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, kindergarten programs were increasingly created and implemented in the American public schools. The reformers who created kindergartens believed they should be distinctive institutions, antidotes to the faults of public schools rather than simply new rungs on the existing ladder of grades in elementary schools. Kindergartens were intended to shape the philosophy and practice in the schools in which they were introduced. In general, kindergartens were an urban phenomenon, and became a “social
mission of child saving.” Often kindergartens became a bridge between home and school, and children in them were instructed in the “ABCs of cleanliness, citizenship, and proper child-raising.”

The progressive educators who advocated for kindergarten programs were not always in agreement with administrative progressive leadership in larger urban school districts. In general, educational reformers during the nineteenth century who advocated for kindergarten programs within existing schools were highly critical of the traditional school curriculum. Elizabeth Peabody, the originator and advocate of the kindergarten concept and the first kindergarten program in 1860, believed that teachers of young children should treat them as a society, or republic of children, where they should achieve social and intellectual development through organized games, music, gardening, art work, socialized play, and gymnastics – “not by sitting silently at bolted-down desks until called on to do rote recitations.” These ideas were wholly consistent with those of progressive reformers who believed that schools should exist as organic communities, fostering the experiences of children as the primary sources of learning.

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, educational philanthropists concluded that kindergartens “would also benefit the children of urban poor as a kind of ‘preventative charity’ to counteract the pauperism and vice that awaited them otherwise.” Already hard-pressed to provide classrooms for the onrush of immigrant children, administrative progressives were ambivalent about adding another level of schooling, while others were enthusiastic about what the kindergarten program could do for schools and for American society. In 1903, William T. Harris, the United States Commissioner of Education, argued that kindergartens were essential to the “salvation” of the three “weakling classes of society – the thriftless, the immoral, and the unintelligent” – who could be redeemed by the “powerful system of nurture” in the kindergarten.
which teachers self-respect, perseverance, moral ideas, and industry.” In this way, kindergartens would provide compensatory socialization.16

The tension between the ideals of progressive educators and administrative progressives was much in evidence. The underlying ideas behind the implementation of kindergarten programs were consistent with the ideas of progressive educators in the early part of the twentieth century, and were increasingly viewed by educators as vital ideas which grew from a profound philosophy of education.17 Kindergarten programs were intended for pre-school children to nurture directed self-activity and focus upon educational, social, and moral ends.18 Education at the kindergarten level was to be determined by the child’s interests and desires, and intelligently directed in order to encourage the child’s inborn capacities.19 Kindergarten programs for young children were directed through nature study, school gardening, songs, art, and recreational play.20 After the turn of the century, there was increasing recognition that a child’s intellectual activity and imagination were active much earlier than the age in which the child was admitted to primary school, perhaps as early as birth. A child’s early years, particularly from age three through age seven, were recognized as the time when the child began to form the germs of fundamental ideas.21

These progressive ideas about the importance of kindergarten were also carried over into the ideology of the administrative progressives. If the growth of the child’s intellectual abilities and imagination did begin at an early age, then it was also important to begin public schooling at an earlier age in order to forge an earlier persuasive interpreter of the teaching function and the greater community to the mothers and fathers in the home. In this way, the important ideas of education, of the conception of life in its totality as a great educational opportunity, and of schools and technical training as simply processes in this larger human culture, could be more
efficiently implemented. The administrative progressives, in this way, co-opted the progressive views of kindergarten advocates and transformed them into an early program for the movement toward social efficiency, with the establishment of English as the common language.

Enrollment in kindergarten programs in urban areas continued to expand during the early years of the twentieth century. In 1900, only about seven percent of five-year olds were enrolled in kindergarten, but by 1920, twenty percent were enrolled in them. By 1920, administrative progressives were convinced of the value of kindergarten programs in the public schools, and had made efforts to introduce some of the principles of kindergarten programs, including music, games, and play, into the upper grades in order to promote social, moral, and educational values.

Goals of the Sociological Department’s Kindergarten Program

Kindergartens began as an urban phenomenon, so it was unusual for these programs to be established in what essentially were rural areas of southern Colorado. The education of large numbers of immigrant and other non-English speaking children in the camps, however, raised many of the same issues as the education of large groups of immigrant children in eastern cities. Furthermore, the company’s interests in establishing social control and containment in the camps made educational programs which had previously only been initiated in urban schools in the eastern United States attractive to company officials.

Corwin was quick to point out, at the outset of the efforts of the Sociological Department to implement progressive kindergarten programs in some of the camps, that these efforts were not new. In its inaugural annual report, the Department touted the company’s support of
kindergarten programs by pointing out that it had supported such programs as early as 1892 in the camps in Sopris, Old Rouse, and other camps. Department officials also pointed out in the report that the company had provided guidance for these programs, provided funds for salaries and supplies when the camp schools “were unable to meet their obligations, and that such support was unheard of in the mining communities and camps in Colorado.”

By 1903, at the height of the Sociological Department’s kindergarten work, the Department supported kindergartens in the public schools or in separate kindergarten schools in Sopris, Rouse, Starkville, Engleville, El Moro, Pictou, Primero, Segundo, Terico, and Berwind and Tabasco. There were also small kindergartens in several mountain communities, and there was a new kindergarten being established in Walsen. In 1903, the Department had been paying the salaries of kindergarten teachers or loaning the money to local school districts to do so, and paying some of the operating expenses of the kindergarten programs.

The Department’s early goals were consistent with the ideas of the progressive reformers of the era. In 1902, Department officials stated that the goals of the program were to develop the physical, mental, and spiritual “selves” of the child, to establish the first step in the process of education, and be the “stepping stone” between the home and the school.

Corwin, as the Superintendent of the Department, adopted these ideas, along with the principles of social efficiency which were at the center of the progressive ideology of the administrative progressives. Corwin argued that kindergarten programs were the most important of the sociological programs which could be initiated by the Department, and served as the “master key” for social betterment for workers and their families through early education of children:

Sociology is not a passing fancy or a matter of sentiment. It is a science and a necessity. It is in an exolutionary stage and a thing to be carefully worked out in
its many phases. No set rules can be made or followed; each place has its own peculiar conditions and must be met differently; even that which has succeeded one season or year meets with failure the next. The effect of social betterment may be seen at once, but its greatest good comes later. It is difficult to change the ways and manners of adults; their habits have been formed and are not easily altered. With age comes indifference, a desire to be let alone and a loss of ambition; but not so is it with the young. Children are tractable, easily managed and molded, have no set ways to correct and recast; hence the importance of the kindergarten.  

Corwin’s view of kindergarten was solidly based in the idea that social betterment programs increased social efficiency, particularly with young children who were more tractable. Corwin believed that, to properly teach and train young students, a teacher was required to study the individual child and learn its peculiarities. Department officials, under Corwin’s direction, believed that kindergarten instruction could serve as “natural training,” for later citizenship, in that the kindergarten students would unconsciously test the theories of life through problems which would arise as soon as the children had the opportunity to solve problems for themselves. Corwin thereafter made the opening and implementation of kindergartens programs one of the Sociological Department’s top priorities.

One of the primary goals of the Department in regard to its kindergartens was to assimilate and acculturate immigrants. Corwin made this clear from the outset of the work of the Sociological Department:

The kindergarten has had far more success than any other institution in dealing with our foreign people. By careful and tactful visitation and invitation the kindergartner dispels suspicion and secures the patronage of all nationalities – Mexicans, Italians, Austrians and Poles, as well as English and Americans. In the kindergarten, too, the language difficulties, so troublesome in all other branches, seem to be but a comparatively small obstacle.  

Corwin believed he had a mandate to empower the Sociological Department to teach good manners and habits, and intervene successfully where otherwise immigrant parents would fail. Through the kindergartens, Corwin wanted the Department to begin shaping the next generation
of miners and “miner wives.” The goal was to instill in the children a much stronger and more uniform sense of “American” values than those held by these immigrant parents.”

Department officials and employees were thoroughly committed to Corwin’s administrative progressive views, and implemented them in a way that they believed would result in a “strong, refined, shapely character” in children that would carry them over the obstacles of environment and their families and “inculcate the true democratic spirit.”

These ideas were widely adopted and supported by company officials as well. The ideology of the administrative progressives was well adapted to insure the efficiency of company activities and the tractability of both children and their parents. In 1902, one of the “revered” company officials, probably either John C. Osgood, then the President of the company, or Corwin himself, spoke at the opening of Harmony Hall, which was built as a center for kindergarten classes and domestic education in Starkville in 1902:

> I am not one of those who would minimize the merit of a kindergarten. I believe, on the contrary, that it is an institution of untold benefits to both parents and children alike. In one sense the kindergarten is a modern solution of an old problem and from a psychological standpoint it is a step forward in modern pedagogy. At all events, it is a blessing. How many of you parents this institution has freed, and will continue to do so, from cares and worries. You know your children once at the kindergarten will be in good hands. The kindergarten leaves you free to attend to your work without anxiety. No more fear of danger to the little ones, no more need of watching – it is a source of rest for a mother’s eye and a balm for a mother’s heart. He who would sum up the advantages of a kindergarten solely in this, that it keeps the children off the streets, from unclear yards and alleys, away from hurt, uncleanliness and dirt, is a misguided and short-sighted individual, for great are the blessings of having one’s darlings under the motherly care of an intelligent lady, who will interest them, teach them pretty manners and sweet docility, cause the hours to pass on merrily and usefully, feeding their love of play with games, drills and songs, and always blending sweet pleasure with useful knowledge.35

This speech was virtually a company manifesto of the paternal goals of industrial welfare.

Children would be left under the supervision of a trained kindergarten teacher, who not only
would begin their formal education but would implement progressive pedagogical ideas, which included a particular set of values and ideals calculated to create social efficiency as useful knowledge. This supervision would replace the dangers that would result in the absence of such paternal educational care, implying that the parents, since they were engaged in industrial work, could not protect their own children from injury, squalor, vice, and pernicious knowledge that would result in intractability.

The Department’s goals also included that these paternal views were to be carried into the home by the children, in the hopes that the values and ideals espoused in the kindergarten classroom would also be transplanted into the homes of the workers and their families by the children. In Corwin’s words,

\[
\text{[t]he better the home the better the kindergarten. One may read the home by the children. The home is a kindergarten for good or for evil, the parents the teachers. Part of our work is trying to make parents see and understand this.}^{36}
\]

Therefore, the aim of the Sociological Department in its kindergarten program was to plant the seeds of social control and efficiency, both in the children in school and in the home, and thus transform industrial society for the benefit of the company.

The symbol of these Department goals was the kindergarten doll. At the outset of the Department’s work, the Superintendent of the kindergarten program, Margaret Grabill, wrote a story which was published in *Camp and Plant* entitled “Mabel,” or “The Tale of a Kindergarten Doll.” In this story, the example of the perfect child was the kindergarten doll, who was “arrayed in a splendid purple velvet dress, which satin vest, and a find, large brass breastpin” with “flaxen hair” which was soft and curly” and “bright blue eyes.” Mabel was always quiet and attentive.\(^{37}\) She was therefore the Department’s example of the model child – quiet, dignified, and docile. She was tractable, easily malleable, and exhibited the values and ideals
promoted by the Department for kindergarten children. She also was, as a model child, and unlike most of the children in many of the kindergarten classes in the camps, a child with curly flaxen hair and blue eyes. By the end of the 1901-1902 school year, the use of the kindergarten doll had been established as a Department-wide strategy, and the Department had planned to provide each kindergarten with a doll. Department officials believed that “no one, not excepting the teacher, had a greater influence for the good over each boy and girl,” and the mere presence of the kindergarten doll in the class was certain to insure quiet and attention.38

In providing such an example for the children and their parents, and providing kindergarten programs in which the innate potential of coal camp children might be salvaged, the spread of deviance and militancy might be implicitly checked from one generation to the next. The paternalism of the Department’s programs therefore had distinctly industrial ends. The leaders of the company hoped to inculcate industrial values in which the contagion of unionism might not spread. Children reared in spaces of domestic order and restraint, welfare capitalists generally believed, would become dutiful citizens schooled to live out their rest of their lives in productive labor.39 Children receiving such training would be more orderly, more systematic, and they would more readily understand the “dignity of labor.”40 Such training would constitute a formative “science of prevention,” in which the kindergarten teacher, as a gardener of children, determines how best to allow them to grow.41

*The Domestic Education Movement*

The domestic education movement, which was often referred to in its early years as the domestic science or home economics movement, began to gather momentum in the 1890s when Ellen Swallow Richards convened a number conferences for educators in Lake Placid, New
York. These conferences continued on an annual basis for the next ten years, and resulted in the formation of the American Home Economics Association in 1908. The domestic education movement was attractive to progressive reformers of education and administrative progressives alike, since such programs were both adaptable to the idea that schools should serve as social centers to build community and to the idea that education should prepare students for their roles in an industrialized society.

The use of the school as a social center in the community, or “school extension,” was popular at the turn of the twentieth century. The desire to utilize schools for broader public purposes than in the past through programs such as vacation schools, playgrounds, and use of local facilities for meeting places in order to foster social stability appealed to many Americans. Progressive reformers of education envisioned the school as a social center, to transform the public school house from a mere day school for children into a useable center for the “entire community life.” This was necessary in the view of progressive reformers because of the transformation of society from an agricultural community, centered on the home, to an industrial community. When before the rudiments and experience of almost all the trades and industries of life had been centered and practiced in the home, progressive reformers believed, by 1890, that those conditions had largely passed, “never to return.”

Administrative progressives at the turn of the century were also quick to co-opt these ideas of progressive reform, and transform them from a movement to create a new socio-industrial community into both a more economically viable use of school facilities and an enhancement of the reforms in education which would promote social efficiency. The tendency was to transform the “school plant” to the largest possible community use, and thereby transform it into a vehicle for the new efforts to “assimilate the new classes in society.” In that way, the
public schools would become the great, active, unifying, non-racial, non-political, non-sectarian force in the national life. These schools would be centers of service, better fitted for broader social use with the addition of playrooms, science rooms, libraries, and rooms for manual training and household arts.

Administrative progressives justified their efforts to assimilate and acculturate children through increasing efforts in domestic and industrial training by maintaining that the nature of the national need must determine the character of the education provided. Administrative progressives believed that as the social life of the nation increased in complexity, public educational programs were required to broaden their activities and increase their efficiency. Cubberley spoke for a generation of schoolmen in justifying the broadening the school curriculum to include domestic and manual training:

Our schools are essentially time- and labor-saving devices, created by us to serve democracy’s needs. To convey to the next generation the knowledge and accumulated experience of the past, important as this may be, we now see is neither the only nor the chief function of public education. Instead, our schools, within the past quarter-century, have been asked to prepare their children more definitely for personal usefulness in life, and the future citizen more directly for the to-morrow of our complex national and international existence. Instead of mere teaching institutions, engaged in incorporating book-information and imposing discipline, our schools have been asked to grasp the significance of their social relationships, to transform themselves more fully into institutions for the improvement of democracy, and to prepare the young who attend them for greater social efficiency by teaching more that is directly useful and by training them better for citizenship in a democracy such as ours.

To administrative progressives in the early twentieth century, school programs were to be designed and implemented for maximum social, economic, and political efficiency, to prepare children to assume their roles in an industrial society in the most utilitarian manner possible.

Company sponsorship of domestic education programs made it even clearer that the purpose of such programs was to assimilate large numbers of immigrant workers and their
families. Classes offered in the speaking, reading, and writing of the English language were virtually mandatory offerings in company sponsored domestic education classes. Other classes offered training in hygiene, clothing, and cooking. All of these classes were efforts to assimilate the immigrant workers and “Americanize” them. The curriculum of company-sponsored non-technical adult education, accordingly, centered on language classes but included the other themes of “Americanism” as well.

The domestic education classes were also used as tools for undercutting the organization and operation of unions. Some company officials felt that unions arose from a lack of understanding of the company’s point of view, and that if the workers were more fluent in English and more readily receptive of the company’s message, issues regarding union “agitation” would be more easily resolved. If non-English speaking employees had a grievance, they needed an interpreter to voice their complaints. If they could speak English, they had one less reason to organize. Ironically, as the immigrant workers learned English, it ultimately made it easier for unions to organize, as the language barriers were lessened. Under the same theory, company officials often concentrated on providing books, periodicals, and the means to obtain further education as a tool to “open the vision of the people and widen the horizon so that they can see that both laborer and employer are working for the same end,” and therefore labor strife would be reduced.

This was essentially the appeal made by Rockefeller as he spoke before groups of coal miners in Colorado in 1915. Ironically, education often was a vehicle for their understanding of the inequities inherent in the capitalist welfare system which Rockefeller was so vigorously defending. The workers, in 1913, wanted a higher quality of life, dignity, and basic freedoms. They wanted to improve their working and living conditions, free of undue control and restraint
from the company, and they wanted a better life for their children. These were the issues which
the UMWA was promoting in their campaigns to organize workers in the camps. The
Sociological Department’s educational programs were expressly designed to create a sense of
community, but with an industrial focus on control and containment which would be favorable to
the company’s activities. But, through educational programs which stressed, among other things,
the importance of democratic participation in national life and the importance of the industrial
community, the company unwittingly transformed disputes into an all-out struggle in which the
very meaning and fate of America seemed to hang in the balance.52

Goals of the Sociological Department’s Domestic Education Programs

The Sociological Department implemented numerous programs promoting domestic
education for children, as well as some programs for adults, between 1901 and 1909. These
programs owed their genesis to the trend toward philanthropic reform and the creation of
community; however, the Department’s purpose was to impose social efficiency and industrial
stability in the camps and the coal mining communities in southern Colorado. To carry out its
goals, the Sociological Department initiated programs in domestic education in a variety of
contexts both in the camps and in Pueblo.

The Sociological Department established reading rooms and offered night school and
other practical training courses for workers, which consisted almost exclusively of courses in
speaking, reading, and writing the English language. This part of the Department’s work was
self-supporting. All students were charged a dollar per month to compensate the teachers and
defray the costs of renting or maintaining rooms.53 From the outset, the night school classes
were taught in various subjects such as geography and arithmetic. Attendance was low and there
was not a great deal of enthusiasm for these classes, although, according to Department officials, attendance began to grow when the Italian workers began to recognize the value of learning English:

Strange to say, this increase of interests was due largely to the Italians. They did not take kindly to the idea of entering a school where there were English and Americans, but it was not long before the Americans and other English-speaking people lost interest and ceased to attend, and then it was that the Italians began to fill the classes. Often knowing but a few words of English, sometimes even unable to read and write their own language, they came night after night with commendable regularity, and in some instances requested that sessions be held every evening of the week. 54

Thereafter, the night classes were almost exclusively English language classes, and were attended by Italians as well as “Mexicans, Austrians, and Slavs.” The ages of the students ranged from ten to fifty years old, and the classes were taught by the public school teachers in the camp schools. 55 By 1906, however, Department officials conceded that there was “not much demand” for night schools, as the adult “foreigners” who worked hard all day and were “entirely unused to mental work” could not be persuaded to “spend an hour or two at night in hard study” in any appreciable numbers. 56

For children, the Sociological Department sponsored and funded social activities, clubs, and domestic science classes. Often these classes spawned “mother’s clubs” as well, as the mothers would attend with younger children and also associate with each other. Training in practical subjects was an important part of the Department’s work with young people in the camps. Since most of the children were destined to become miners, or the wives of miners, Corwin insisted that they be exposed to the skills requisite for the roles in life. Girls were taught to maintain neat homes and to prepare savory meals, while boys acquired proficiency in technical pursuits that would enable them to command good wages as a means and to provide comfortable homes for their families.” 57
The clubs for boys and girls were governed by selected officers and met once a week. Members of the boys’ clubs would play games, act out stories, and participate in dances, contests, gymnastics, military drills, and music. The girls’ clubs were organized much the like the boys’, but focused on domestic work. As with the educational programs in the schools, the company intended these club activities to improve the children by helping to inculcate “American” social and political values. The camp schools often doubled as community centers where these classes were taught, where the clubs could meet, and where dances were held on Saturday nights.

After the first year of the Department’s work in sponsoring the clubs, it touted their encouraging results in both attendance and as a firm foundation for “future remunerative results.” Corwin pointed out that the clubs were well attended, in particular by “a greater
number of foreign mothers” who also attended the mother’s meetings. Furthermore, Corwin laid out the express goals of the Department’s sponsorship of the clubs:

As in other schools, special stress is laid upon ethical and moral culture, and reasons why explained. Mothers are to keep the houses clean because it is a duty to their families, not because the dirt looks bad, or they may be ashamed to have dust discovered by neighbors; fathers should treat their wives and children well because it is a privilege and a pleasure; children should learning their lessons as best they can, not because they are told to do so by their teachers, but because it is right for one to do his at all times.62

By the following year, Corwin was referring to mothers of children attending the club meetings as “adult members,” and by then the mother’s meeting were under the direction of the Department’s kindergarten teachers as an extension of the kindergarten program. In this way, the clubs functioned both to assimilate and acculturate the adults as well as the children. Corwin pointed out that there were significant language issues in the classes, and that often it became necessary to provide some form of manual activity such as making candles, cutting out pictures and making scrapbooks, or making decorations for the kindergarten rooms.63 In this way, the language barrier was lessened for participants in the programs. In the boys’ clubs, these manual training activities included making work aprons, making wooden looms on which small rugs were woven, and weaving book bags for school and hand bags for their mothers.64

In many mining camps and in Bessemer, south of Pueblo where the steelworks were located, the Sociological Department regularly conducted courses in the domestic sciences in the schools and community centers. Classes in the preparation of foods, sewing, and housekeeping were regularly held. Many daughters of non-English speaking workers took courses in these fields, although usually their mothers generally did not due to the language barrier.65 These classes were also taught in many cases by the kindergarten teachers in the camps, and a standardized method of teaching cooking and sewing was in use by all the teachers. Students in
these classes made models, worked button holes, darned, and some of the more advanced students made various types of underwear and shirtwaists. They also engaged in basketry and the making of lace.

![Sewing Class, Primero, 1904](image)

Sewing Class, Primero, 1904 Courtesy CF&I Archives

The goals of these domestic science courses were decidedly assimilationist, and calculated to train children to take their places in stratified socio-economic roles. Corwin argued that the Department’s work in providing domestic science education was important because most of the children in the camps would be manual laborers or the wives of manual laborers, and therefore they had an “early need” for industrial and manual training. By 1907, the “Housekeepers” classes, held in the camp schools for girls of eight to fourteen years of age, had been regularly held in many of the camps, including Rouse, Berwind, Pictou, Engle, Segundo, and Starkville. Department officials reported that Italian and “Mexican” or Hispano children
came freely to these classes. These classes were not required, but were offered as clubs for young girls to learn homemaking and housekeeping skills. At the time, the camps and communities in which these classes were offered were predominantly comprised of Italian immigrant and Hispano workers and their families. These classes taught what Department officials referred to as housekeeping duties, including fire-building, table-setting, dish-washing, bed-making, sweeping, dusting, scrubbing, washing, ironing and child care. Girls in these classes also learned to make many household articles, such as towels, dust cloths, cap and apron, and napkin rings.69 Kindergarten teachers also taught these classes after regular school hours, and the Department provided cooking stoves, tables, cupboards, cooking utensils and other necessary items for the “proper” preparation of foods. Often these cooking classes were held on Saturday mornings or in the evenings for older girls and for the few mothers who chose to attend. Department officials claimed that, even when adults did not attend, the girls took the skills they learned in the classes into the home and “transformed” the homes.70

The establishment of housekeeping classes, particularly for young Italian and Hispano girls, was a manifestation of the influence of administrative progressives on Department officials. In directing kindergarten teachers to implement these educational programs, it was clear that the Department’s policy was to create in these young Italian and Hispano girls the proper attitude toward domestic labor, which, given their social and economic circumstances, would be the most appropriate practical training for their future lives in a stratified industrial society. While many of the young girls in the camps did, in fact, move on to domestic positions in the homes of more affluent community members or in boarding houses regardless of race or ethnicity, the Department’s training programs perpetuated assumptions regarding socio-economic stratification in the camps based on those factors.
The Sociological Department also provided a number of circulating libraries for the camps, which were donated by the Colorado Federation of Women’s Clubs. The selection of titles in these circulating libraries was subject to review by company officials. The only newspapers allowed on the properties were local publications of emphatically antiunion flavor and, while miners were permitted the *Saturday Evening Post, Puck, Life, and Judge*, no socialist magazines were allowed. *Harper’s Weekly*, which was increasingly hospitable to the nation’s most clamorous muckrakers, was eventually not welcome in the circulating libraries.71

Through the work of the Sociological Department, lectures were provided in the camps as part of the domestic education program. Many local physicians and educators provided talks in the schools and community centers and club houses on a wide variety of topics. These topics included moral hygiene, social conditions in the coal fields, welfare work, healthy foods, exercise, proper clothing, infectious diseases, and sewage and refuse treatment.72 These lectures were often accompanied by a copy of a bulletin issued by the Sociological Department as well as “lantern slides” to illustrate the topics, particularly for non-English speakers.73 Not only did these bulletins deal with topics of particular interest to adults in the camps, but also dealt with the larger context of the Department’s work with adult education, including advice to public school teachers, the dangers of socialism, and nursing services.74

In particular, *Camp and Plant* offered a series of bulletins which dealt with hygiene in the camp homes. Through those bulletins, the Sociological Department urged workers and their families to keep themselves and their homes clean and germ-free and to keep their clothes neat and clean. The bulletins also urged workers and their families to be thrifty and frugal with their money, to have a sound germ-free water supply and to properly dispose of waste and sewage, and to attractively and cheaply furnish their homes.75 While all of these efforts were aimed at
assimilation and acculturation, Department officials were also concerned with health conditions in the camps, both for the sake of the camp’s residents and also to insure that the mining operations remained unaffected by sickness and absenteeism.

*Sociological Department Settlement Workers*

Consistent with Corwin’s progressive educational views, kindergarten teachers in the camps were considered social settlement workers. These teachers were expected not only to teach the children in the classroom, but to work in the homes of the children and their parents in order to win their confidence and help in forming mother’s organizations. Kindergarten teachers were expected, by “tactful visitation and invitation,” to dispel the suspicions and “secure the patronage” of all nationalities by securing the confidence of the mothers. The object of this settlement work was self-improvement, betterment of the camp, visiting the sick and promoting harmony and sociability. Teachers were also expected to carry out proper supervision in school as the foundation for life, and adapt themselves to conditions in the camps, even when those conditions were “against national customs.”

In this way, the Department’s kindergarten teachers were expected to do much more than simply inculcate American values and support ideas concerning social efficiency and class stratification. In practical terms, teaching in the kindergarten classroom required teachers to adapt the educational programs to children who initially spoke little or no English. Often kindergarten teachers had to focus on activities such as painting, drawing, construction work, music, games, and story-telling in order to carry out the classes, since many of the students could not speak English. Department officials claimed that the kindergarten children, unlike their parents, readily adapted to speaking English, and that the parents of the kindergartners “gladly
assented” to the teaching of English in the classroom.80 Department officials likened the kindergarten settlement workers and the importance of their programs, as a “center from which radiate many lines of effort toward social improvement.”81 The work was of a varied character, since the kindergarten teacher taught in the classroom in the mornings, with a good-sized number of students which were both “native and foreign,” and in the afternoons conducted mother’s meetings, child study clubs, and “other gatherings of a social and industrial character.”82 In the evenings, the kindergarten classrooms were often used for dances, concerts, minstrels, amateur theatricals, lectures and other entertainments” which were often conducted by the kindergarten teachers. Some knowledge of Spanish or Italian was “almost an essential” on the part of the teachers.83 Presumably, therefore the speaking of Spanish or Italian in the classroom was not banned, as it was the only language which many young students could speak in the early grades.

As settlement workers, the Sociological Department’s kindergarten teachers were well-organized and professional. They regularly met in Trinidad, on the last Saturday of each month, for the purpose of consulting with each other, and with the Superintendent of Kindergartens, Mrs. Margaret Grabill. At these meetings, they received instructions and suggestions from Department officials.84 Teachers from the “regular corps” of primary teachers also attended these meetings.85 Department officials touted the kindergarten program as being equal to any of the corresponding programs in the cities.86 Many of these teachers lived and worked in the camps for years, even with declining funding and despite labor unrest. And, given the nature of their profession as settlement workers as well as teachers, and the level of training and organization that the program required, that claim – unlike many of the grandiose claims made by company and Sociological Department officials – was true. The kindergarten teachers were undoubtedly a dedicated cadre of professional teachers.
The Sociological Department’s Kindergarten Teachers, January 30, 1904
(Top row, standing, left to right) Miss Genevieve Cook (Segundo), Miss Edyth Carrington (Primero), Miss Gertrude Heenan (Starkville), Mrs. Margaret Grabill (Superintendent of Kindergartens), Miss Mary Mason (Pictou), Miss Mabel Milligan (Sopris)
(Bottom row, sitting left to right) Mrs. Frances Lander (Rouse), Miss Charlotte Corbett (Berwind-Tabasco), Miss Angie Gilbert (Tercio), Mrs. Laura Lambert (Engle)  
Courtesy CF&I Archives

Kindergarten and Domestic Education Programs in the Camps

The Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic training teaching staff was active in the camps from 1901 generally through the end of the decade. Initially, the company funded the Department’s programs to a significant degree; however, after the strike of 1903-1904 the company invested far less in the kindergarten and domestic education programs. By 1909, the most of the programs had either been curtailed or had been assumed by the local public schools. While these programs were active, however, they affected significant numbers of
children and adults, and provided educational programs which had not been available before and were not available in other coal camps and communities. Further, despite their express goals of assimilation and acculturation of immigrant children and their families, as well as Hispano children and their families, the kindergarten and domestic education staff did help, as social settlement workers, to define the new industrial communities in the camps by working with individual children and adults.

The Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs were particularly active in the camps around Walsenburg and Trinidad. These camps were newer, and larger, than many of the camps in the mountain communities or in the Arkansas Valley west of Pueblo. The Department concentrated its early efforts in these camps, establishing both kindergarten programs and extensive domestic education programs in the public schools and in community centers which were constructed by the Department.

The kindergarten in the Kebler School in Pictou was established in 1902. The kindergarten classes were held on the second floor of the new school building. During its initial years, it was taught by Miss Mary Mason, who taught her students through music, games, and construction arts due to language issues. Miss Mason also held two classes in physical culture for older school children – one for boys, and one for girls. She also held a physical culture class for some of the older boys who had already started to work in the mines. The Kebler School also had a mother’s club, which was active in the early years of the program. The Department held monthly physician’s lectures, conducted by the company’s camp physician, Dr. Baird, which were well attended. In the winter of 1902, a cooking class was held on the second floor of the Kebler School, which a stove which had been provided by the Department. For the first two years, the kindergarten and domestic education programs were wholly funded by the
Department. Social gatherings as well as church services were also held in the upstairs hall at the Kebler School. By 1907, there was also a sewing class active in Pictou, and some of the girls had made and worn their own dresses as part of the class work.

Many of the children who attended the Kebler School in Pictou also were present for the social programs sponsored by the Department and organized by the teachers. Yvonne Picket, who was born in Pictou, attended school events put on by the teachers in the Kebler School on the weekends. Pickett also learned how to dance during socials that were held at the school, and attended church in the school building when she was a young girl. According to Martha Todd, who lived in Pictou as well as nearby Toltec, stated that social events were popular and everyone attended. No one ever had babysitters – even the young children were taken along. According to Todd, the babies that were taken to the social events were placed in cubbyholes formed when the students’ desks were stacked up, and the babies were “wrapped in blankets, stuffed in on the seats, all along.” Todd also attended some of Dr. Baird’s physician’s lectures in her early years, which were sponsored by the Sociological Department and regularly offered at the Kebler School. Dr. Baird usually gave his lectures just before the dances started, to insure that the young people would attend.
In Old Rouse, south of Walsenburg, kindergarten programs were originally established in 1892, when the school principal hired a kindergarten teacher in Denver and brought her south to teach in the camp. The first kindergarten classes held in Huerfano County were held in Old Rouse, but the program only lasted three years. After the Osgood School was established in Rouse, however, the Sociological Department once again initiated the kindergarten program. By 1902, the program was under the direction of Mrs. Frances Lander, and the program was completely supported by the Sociological Department. By that time, the Sociological Department was sponsoring a wide range of clubs for adults and children in Rouse. A night school was organized for the men in the camp for instruction in the English language. Both boys’ and girls’ clubs were also established. There were two boys’ clubs, called the Rouse Club and the Huerfano Club, at
which the boys would engage in infantry drill, listen to selected readings, engage in debates and
discussions, and have athletic events. There was a sewing class for girls. The Department
sponsored a mother’s clubs, which met on a bi-weekly basis both for English-speaking mothers,
which focused on child care. Another mother’s club, for non-English-speaking mothers, called
the Columbine Club, focused on sewing, weaving, basketry, and other industrial work which did
not require reading. The Department claimed, in 1902, that “[i]n nearly every instance the
foreign mothers have taken an interest in this social betterment work as far as they have been
able to understand, and especially have the calls of the kindergartner and the little entertainments
of the kindergarten children been instrumental in winning a way to their hearts.”96

The Sociological Department also sponsored a wider range of social activities in Rouse in
the initial years of the Department’s work in the camps. The Department provided a traveling
library of over a hundred volumes and established a reading room for the residents of the camp,
for which the camp residents had to pay a small usage fee. The Department also sponsored a
traveling art exhibit and lectures by the camp’s resident physician, and presentations by
Professor Wilson, the Assistant Superintendent of the Sociological Department.97 For example,
in 1902 Wilson presented a lecture entitled “The Discovery of America,” which was illustrated
by stereopticon views of Columbus with vivid representations of the hardships encountered
before and after staring on the voyage to the new world.98
The Department’s programs, however, did not reach all the children in the camp. Manual Reyes Martinez, who was born in 1890 and was twelve years old when the school and domestic education programs were initiated, never had an opportunity to participate. Martinez was already working the mines by that time, and although he thought the physical improvements to the camp were beautiful, the only times he went to the school were when he attended the social events there and learned how to dance.\textsuperscript{100}

By 1905, despite the loss of Sociological Department funding, at least one boys’ club remained active in Rouse. This club stressed manual training, particularly simple carpentry and the use of tools.\textsuperscript{101} In 1906, the local school district built a large “kindergarten hall,” which resulted in increased enrollment. The kindergarten curriculum during the 1905-1906 school year...
The kindergarten and domestic science programs in Huerfano County, which in 1902 were extensive, slowly began to either transfer their programs to the local public schools, or the programs were curtailed. By 1915, there were no remaining kindergarten programs in the camp schools in Huerfano County.

In Starkville, southeast of Trinidad in Las Animas County, the company initiated kindergarten work in 1899 in the town’s Red Man Hall. In 1900, the only domestic activities offered were limited mothers’ meetings. In 1900, the Red Man Hall burned down, and the kindergarten moved to a small building across town. In 1901, the Sociological Department assumed the costs and supervision of the kindergarten program, and the Department almost immediately commenced work on a new building to serve as the headquarters for the all of the kindergarten and domestic training programs in southern Colorado. The new facility was named Harmony Hall.

The Department touted Harmony Hall as a modern facility which would serve all of the needs of the company both in Starkville and the surrounding region. The building was constructed of wood with a stone foundation, and cost approximately $3,000. It contained two large meeting rooms with a divider that could be moved to create a large auditorium, 70x40 feet in size, with a stage at one end, and expanded without partitions it could serve as a social center for over 300 persons. It also contained a small kitchen off the stage which was used for cooking classes, and on the other side of the stage was a cloak and storeroom. Harmony Hall was heated with a furnace and was lighted with electricity.

On the evening that the Sociological Department opened Harmony Hall, Corwin spoke to 350 assembled citizens of Starkville. In his speech, Corwin suggested that a reading club be
organized, and that the town elect a managing board consisting of three men and three women in order to assist Margaret Grabill in selecting books and periodicals for the Harmony Hall Library. By the end of the 1901-1902 school year, a number of musicals, dances, and other entertainments had been staged at Harmony Hall.

The Hall was also used for one of the Department two cooking schools and the sewing classes. The Department referred to the classes in cooking and sewing as “social settlement work,” and the instruction was carried on by Department cooking and sewing teachers as well as the kindergarten teachers assigned to schools in the Trinidad area. The instruction for the sewing classes was carried out in “sewing circles,” and the classes were well-attended by “foreign women,” who were mostly Italians and Hispanos. The participants would furnish their own materials, and were taught the basics of the running stitch, hemming, and gathering. The classes also, according to Department officials, resulted in a “noticeable improvement in the conduct of the girls, especially in the increase of good fellowship, kindness, and respect for the rights of others.” In this way, the cooking classes not only addressed domestic skills, but the assimilation of immigrants and other non-English speaking adults.

The enrollment and participation in the domestic science classes at Harmony Hall, particularly in the cooking school, were relatively high. In its inaugural year, the total enrollment in the cooking classes was 130. This included 58 young women of school age, twelve women in the adult cooking class, and 31 women in the evening classes. There was also a cooking class for boys, and there were 29 students initially enrolled in this class. All of these classes were taught by a Department cooking teacher, Miss Prendergast, who actively encouraged her students to host events to exhibit their skills. On January 18, 1902, for example, Miss Prendergast’s school-aged students served snacks to their mothers, which consisted of some
of the children acting as hostesses, some acting as “housekeepers,” some preparing the snack, and some serving hot chocolate. Over 100 “guests” were in attendance, and the children cleaned up the hall after the event was over.\textsuperscript{109}

The kindergarten program sponsored by the Sociological Department also held classes in Harmony Hall. In 1902, fifty students attended the kindergarten classes under the direction of Miss Gertrude Heenan.\textsuperscript{110} Six years later, however, the actual attendance had dropped to half of that total.

![Kindergarten Children, Starkville, 1904\textsuperscript{111} Courtesy CF&I Archives](image)

In El Moro, northeast of Trinidad, the Department had built a one-room brick building to house the kindergarten program in 1901. The building had some available land surrounding it for the use of the children, and a playground was built for them. Initially there were 21 children enrolled in the kindergarten. In 1903, the actual attendance of the kindergarten in El Moro had
dropped to 14; however, the program was active for eight years, from 1901 through 1908. After 1903, the costs of the program were assumed by the local public school district. Frances Lander was the kindergarten teacher in El Moro for a number of years. Most of the students attending the El Moro kindergarten were children of Italian immigrants. According to Department officials, although nearly all were of Italian parentage, after their first year in school they were “picking up English quite rapidly,” and already had “exhibited strong tendencies toward American patriotism.” In some cases, the Department implied that the Italian immigrant parents were sending all of their children, regardless of age, to the kindergarten in order to benefit from the Department’s educational programs:

Children under three years of age were brought, and the expedient was resorted to of having pillows for these to sleep on. One little fellow, who came tugging his tiny baby sister, was asked how old she was. “Oh,” he replied, “she’s five years old when she comes to school, but she’s two and a half at home.” On the other hand, girls of fourteen and sixteen years attended in order to learn English.

El Moro, as a center for coking operations, was covered in a fine layer of coal ash much of the time; however, the children in the kindergarten program built flower beds and planted “sweet peas, candy-tuft, nasturtiums, phlox and other flowers.” Department officials informed readers of *Camp and Plant*, that the children were expecting a “rich harvest” in the fall of 1902. Officials stated that “considering the assiduity with which they rake and re-rake once planted beds and then flood them with water – they certainly ought to be rewarded by attaining their hopes.” The Department also pointed out that “the interior of the kindergarten is very pleasant and is unusually well equipped with material and furniture,” and, “on the whole,” the “child garden” was in a flourishing condition.

The gardening activities at the school were also carried over to domestic training for adults. Since W. A. Garner, who had donated the land for the kindergarten building, had also
donated some fairly expansive property surrounding the schoolhouse, the Department had
marked the ground off into garden plots which were “as nearly equal as possible” and assigned
those plots to twenty or thirty families. Both the adults and the children worked these
experimental “village garden” plots through the summers of 1902 and 1903. The families
planted vegetables, including peppers, lettuce, radishes, cucumbers, beans, peas, beets, turnips,
spinach, watermelons, muskmelons, tomatoes, cabbages, cauliflower, and asparagus plants both
for consumption and for sale.\footnote{115}

One of the original company kindergarten programs was established in Sopris, several
miles southwest of Trinidad, on a volunteer basis by Mrs. J. A. Kebler, whom Bowers had
referred to as a tireless volunteer in caring for the children in the camps. The first kindergarten
class in Sopris was taught in 1891, and the class was taken over by the Sociological Department
in 1901. By 1903, Department officials were referring to her early work in Sopris as
“experimental,” but touting it as the forerunner of the Sociological Department’s expanded
kindergarten programs in the camps.\footnote{116} The kindergarten classes initially held in the local
Methodist church. By 1903, there were 30 children enrolled in the Sopris kindergarten, which
was taught by Miss Mabel Milligan.\footnote{117}

The Department’s programs in Sopris initially included a number of domestic training
programs in addition to the kindergarten school. Miss Milligan sponsored a “child study club,”
in which some of the children and their mothers met once a month and discussed the proper
training and development of children, “physically, mentally, and morally,” and played music and
games.\footnote{118} She also sponsored evening classes for adults, along with the kindergarten teachers in
Tercio and Starkville; however, these classes cost several dollars per month, were accordingly
sparsely attended and, according to the company, “only the most ambitious” derived any value
from these classes – implying that it was the fault of the those who did not participate. Miss Milligan also taught in the local Sunday school.

The Department also sponsored a reading room in Sopris, which was initiated after a box of containing various periodicals were donated to the company by the Denver Public Library. To augment the donation of these periodicals, the Department subscribed to a number of popular magazines on a regular basis, including *The North American Review, American Review of Reviews, Success, Cosmopolitan, Frank Leslie’s Popular Monthly, Current Literature, Truth, National, Munsey’s, Ladies Home Journal, Harper’s Weekly, American Boy, World’s Work, Everybody’s Magazine, Pearson’s, Strand, The Outlook, The Household, Out West.* These periodicals generally shared a strong tone of Americanization. By 1909, despite the fact that the
public school in Sopris continued to thrive, the kindergarten and domestic education programs there had been curtailed.

In the Sociological Department’s inaugural year in 1901, the kindergarten program in Engle, southeast of Trinidad, contained 35 students. After a one-year hiatus, due to a lack of a place to hold the classes and that fact that the original kindergarten teacher had resigned, Miss Laura Lambert took over the kindergarten and domestic science classes. At that time, in 1903, the kindergarten program in Engle enrolled 59 children, who were mostly Hispano children or children of Italian immigrants. The kindergarten class met in an upstairs room of the Engle School.

There were a variety of domestic training classes and activities offered in Engle during the years in which the Department’s programs were active. Miss Prendergast also conducted cooking classes in Engle, as in Starkville, and her classes were usually well attended by the girls attending the kindergarten as well as some of the older girls. In the afternoons, Miss Lambert also sponsored a sewing club for girls as well as a basket-weaving club for the girls and their mothers. There was also a club for boys, in which Miss Lambert supervised “construction” work, including making miniature models of buildings. In the summer of 1902, Miss Lambert had a student assistant from the University of Colorado who helped her in her sociological work. By 1909, however, the Sociological Department had ceased to sponsor the kindergarten or domestic training programs in Engle.

One of the domestic training courses offered in Engle and El Moro was lace-making. The Department referred to this training as “industrial work,” which was undertaken to create a marketable industry for mothers, with a “cash return,” as well as to train the children. The Sociological Department hired a teacher to conduct classes in lace-making during the 1904-1905
In 1904, the Department donated 28 looms for use in the classes, and students made both fine and coarse lace for clothing and curtains. The lace-making program was also intended to train the Department’s kindergarten teachers so they could expand this marketable industry into other camps.\(^{124}\)

In Primero, west of Trinidad, the kindergarten class met in the Cass School. In 1903, Miss Edyth Carrington was the kindergarten teacher, and she had 21 students. Miss Carrington also sponsored girls’ and boys’ clubs, as well as a monthly women’s club. Classes in sewing and weaving were conducted by Miss Carrington as well as another teacher hired by the Department. Most of the children in Primero, as in other camps around Trinidad, were either Hispanos or children of Italian immigrants. The kindergarten and domestic education programs were the center of social life in the camp, with both children and adults meeting regularly in the clubs and for social events which were held in the kindergarten hall which were attended by many of the camp residents.\(^{125}\) As in many of the camps, the Department ultimately transferred the program to the public schools. Although the Primero kindergarten was still functioning in 1909 under the supervision of the public schools but with a teacher hired by the Sociological Department, by 1915 there were no kindergarten classes in Primero.

The kindergarten program in Segundo was also housed in the new school built by the Sociological Department, the Jerome School.\(^{126}\) The kindergarten attendance during the first several years of the program fluctuated between 25 and 35, depending on the season. As in other camps, the kindergarten teacher was expected to conduct social settlement work in a number of fields, including cooking classes, sewing lessons, and manual training for boys.\(^{127}\) The cooking classes, even when directed by Miss Prendergast, did not have good attendance during the year they were offered, in 1903, and the first two kindergarten teachers left during the first year
because of “illness.” In Segundo, the school district hired a driver to transport many of the kindergarten children and the older students to the new school in Segundo from Varros and Old Segundo, which were located across the Purgatoire River. By 1904, the school district was assuming the cost of paying the salary of kindergarten teacher, Miss Cook, but the expenses of the program were still borne by the Department. By 1915, as in many of the other camps, the kindergarten program was no longer functioning in the Jerome School.

Similarly, in Tercio, up the Purgatoire Valley from Primero and Segundo, the local school district assumed the responsibility of the payment of the kindergarten teacher’s salary by 1903; however, the Department continued to financially support the kindergarten program, including purchasing uniform textbooks for the all the students attending the Beaman School. Miss Angie Gilbert was the kindergarten teacher in Tercio, and in 1903 there were 22 students enrolled in the kindergarten program. In Tercio, as in the other camps around Trinidad, cooking classes were held for students in addition to the kindergarten teacher’s work teaching domestic science. By the following year, there were more children attending the domestic science courses, as well as eighteen adults. By 1904, the children’s clubs in Tercio were very active:

At each session of the club there is a short business meeting, presided over by the officers elected from among the boys and girls. Then follow games and sometimes dancing, and at the close of the session light refreshments are always served. The club is now trying to raise money for a small printing press and expects to print a club paper.

The Department officials were quick to tout the achievements of these elected officers in the student club, as well as their democratic activities. In *Camp and Plant*, the Department pointed out that the leadership and influence of these children was felt “throughout the camp.”
Christmas in the Camp Kindergartens

One of the most important activities in the Sociological Department’s kindergarten program was the celebration of Christmas. One of the things shared by almost all the children in the camps, other than their socio-economic status, were Christian religious beliefs. Both the children of immigrants and those native to the area were either overwhelmingly Christian. The Christmas holidays were therefore utilized as an opportunity for the Department to provide a unified social program for the benefit of the children in the camps, and use the holidays as an opportunity to enrich and enhance the Department’s standing in the camp communities and accordingly further its work.

Typically, beginning in 1901, kindergarten children were offered traditional gifts and the schools prepared holiday programs to which their parents and other workers in the camps were invited. Children in many of the camps received boxes of candy or fruit, and the girls received blonde-haired, blue-eyed dolls and the boys received small drums. In the fall of 1901, there were five kindergarten’s open in southern Colorado, and the Department distributed 228 dolls, 240 drums, many boxes of fruit, and 250 pounds of candy. In Rouse, for example, in the Department’s inaugural year, the kindergarten children decorated a Christmas tree and presented a holiday program. In Camp and Plant, Department officials noted that the entertainment which was presented was “good evidence of the value of kindergarten training.” Further, the Department saw the Christmas celebrations as having “wrought incalculable good in the benefits they have given the mining camps,” and such celebrations were “instrumental in prompting the formation of this department” and “rendered much easier its work of organizing for the present year.”
The Decline of the Programs

The apex of the Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic educational programs came in 1904, when the Department was awarded a Gold Medal for its display at the St. Louis World’s Fair. The Medal was awarded for the Best Industrial Exhibit, and the Department’s entry was entitled “Free Kindergartens in Mining Camps.” After the strike of 1903-1904, and in the teeth of criticism from progressive reformers who had accused company officials of “paternalistic” control, the programs initiated by the Sociological Department began to decline. As the costs of the programs mounted, and the financial pressure on the company to pay dividends to its stockholders continued to mount, the company short-sightedly reduced the Department’s funding, and Department officials thereafter urged local school districts to assume the costs of the salaries of many of the kindergarten teachers. Although the Department continued to offer financial and other support to the programs initiated in the larger camps, and attempted to continue some of the philanthropic activities it had initiated, increasingly the value of the Department by the end of 1903 was in its public relations program, particularly the publishing of *Camp and Plant*. By the end of 1904, even these programs were at an end, although Corwin continued to extoll the Department’s educational programs in the Sociological Department’s annual reports.

In its inaugural year, the Sociological Department had two full-time domestic science teachers, Miss Prendergast, who taught the cooking classes on an itinerant basis, and Miss Mary Billings, who taught the sewing classes in several of the camps. The Department employed eight full-time kindergarten teachers in the newer camps, as well as eight night school teachers in selected camps. The Department employed five reading room managers, as well as a number of seasonal workers and musical directors. In particular, the Department’s kindergarten programs started
their slow decline at the end of 1903, although they continued for years on a limited basis. The kindergarten programs were slowly abandoned as local school districts assumed the financial and other responsibility for them.

### Sociological Department Camp Kindergarten Programs, 1901-1909

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>Kindergartens Active</th>
<th>Teachers Salary Paid</th>
<th>Other Financial Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictou</td>
<td>1902-1909</td>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>1903-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsen</td>
<td>1905-1909</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1903-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouse</td>
<td>1901-1909</td>
<td>1901-1903</td>
<td>1901-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwind/Tabasco</td>
<td>1902-1909</td>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>1902-1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Moro</td>
<td>1901-1907</td>
<td>1901-1903</td>
<td>1901-1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engle</td>
<td>1901-1908</td>
<td>1901-1903</td>
<td>1901-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starkville</td>
<td>1901-1907</td>
<td>1901-1903</td>
<td>1901-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sopris</td>
<td>1901-1908</td>
<td>1901-1903</td>
<td>1901-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primero</td>
<td>1902-1909</td>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>1903-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segundo</td>
<td>1902-1909</td>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>1903-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tercio</td>
<td>1903-1908</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1903-1909</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the end of 1908, Corwin announced that, since the kindergartens were “supported by the school boards of the various camps and for that reason separate supervision is no longer deemed necessary.” He added that the Department would “hereafter simply furnish the equipment and necessary supplies and furnish teachers when requested.” In 1908, several of the kindergartens were shut down either due to the closure of the camp or a lack of funds in the school district’s budget. After 1909, several of the kindergarten programs continued; however, by 1915, when the Young Men’s Christian Association surveyed the larger camps in Huerfano and Las Animas counties, including the school programs offered in the camps, there were no remaining kindergarten programs in Huerfano or Las Animas counties.

Despite the claims made by the Sociological Department in *Camp and Plant* regarding the purportedly high attendance rates of children in both the kindergarten programs and the primary grades in the camp schools, the reality was that many children only attended
intermittently, and some did not attend at all. The necessity that children work, or their parents' suspicions concerning type and manner of schooling which was being offered in both the camp schools and the kindergartens, did result in decreased attendance. Furthermore, the fortunes of the miners changed from year to year, as they were transferred from camp to camp by the company to deprive the workers of an opportunity to organize or the mines in the camps expanded or were closed. Labor strife always brought a decline in attendance, and sometimes caused school to be cancelled completely. Overall, the claims made by the Department for the total enrollment in the kindergarten programs usually did not reflect the actual attendance of children in the kindergartens. For example, the actual attendance in the classes for the 1905-1906 school year did not match the increasing enrollment numbers, and although the actual attendance was a significant percentage of the total enrollment, the numbers were disappointing to Corwin and other Department officials.

**Average Monthly Enrollment in Kindergartens, 1902-1903, 1905-1906**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>1902-1903 Enrollment</th>
<th>1905-1906 Enrollment</th>
<th>1905-1906 Actual Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictou</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsen</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouse</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwind/Tabasco</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Moro</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engle</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starkville</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sopris</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primero</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segundo</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tercio</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>339</strong></td>
<td><strong>363</strong></td>
<td><strong>268 (74%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Generally, a quarter of the enrollment numbers reported by the Department in *Camp and Plant* can be discounted for irregular attendance of children in the kindergarten programs.
Nevertheless, Department officials still believed that an additional year of kindergarten could hardly be over-estimated, in view of the fact that twenty-five percent of the camp school children did not complete the eighth grade. According to Department officials, the addition of one or two years to the child’s school life at the beginning was “a great boon to the child and a gain to the state.” The claims of Department officials regarding the number of students that completed eighth grade were, however, were also highly inflated to make the educational programs in the camp schools seem more effective.

Under national criticism in the wake of the strike of 1913-1914, Department officials continued to extoll the educational programs offered by the company through the Sociological Department, and, in particular, the training of its teachers and the graduation rate of students in camp schools from the primary grades. In 1915, at the end of the Department’s existence, Department officials claimed that thirty-five percent of all eighth grade graduates in Las Animas County came from camp schools. Most of these graduates, however, came from the schools in the incorporated towns of Trinidad, Sopris, and Starkville, not necessarily from schools in which the Department had a significant presence and had provided financial support. Similarly, to counter criticism which arose after the strike of 1913-1914, the superintendents in Las Animas and Huerfano counties reported that of the thirty-nine teachers employed in those two counties, twelve held Normal School diplomas and others held lower grade certifications. By 1915, however, the number of students that were completing eighth grade, or going on to high school, was virtually negligible. Assuming that the primary grade graduation rates were stable in the camp schools, the Department’s claims were wildly inaccurate. Further, since many of the kindergarten programs were closed or in the process of closing in 1907 and 1908, the official position of the Department, as set forth in *Camp and Plant*, was very misleading.
Percentage of Eighth Grade Students, Camp Schools, 1915\textsuperscript{145}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>Total Students</th>
<th>Eighth Grade Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primero</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>5 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segundo</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>2 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sopris</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>10 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwind/Tabasco</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>12 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsen</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>8 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouse</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>6 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>950</strong></td>
<td><strong>43 (4%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only a small percentage of students attending the camp schools, even if they began at an early age and spent one or two years in kindergarten in the early years of the Sociological Department’s work when the kindergarten programs were large and well supported, actually graduated from the primary grades in any of the camp schools.

*The Pueblo Normal and Industrial School*

The Sociological Department expanded its programs when, in 1903, the old hospital in Pueblo was renovated and designated as the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School. During the summer months of each year, teachers from the camps had the opportunity to enroll in academic courses as well as training sessions for manual and domestic educational programs. In addition to the regular curriculum, instruction was offered in cooking, sewing, music, art, dancing, basketry, weaving, and other skills required for conducting social, industrial, and recreational programs in the camps. On occasion, prominent educators lectured to the teachers.\textsuperscript{146}

The classes offered for teachers at the Normal and Industrial School were quite varied, and outline the concerns which the Sociological Department had with life in the camps. These classes included training in the legal regulation of the liquor traffic, training in the basis for social settlement work, training in kindergarten work, lessons in the importance of manual
training in public school work, exploration of the proposed plans and models for small schools, and training in the “education of the Negro.”

Like many of the Sociological Department’s programs, the strike of 1903-1904 brought some changes to the availability and scope of the programs offered at the Normal and Industrial School. In the initial year of the school, an evening course was begun under the management of the Pueblo Business College, with special rates for steelworkers. According to the Department, this was very well patronized at first but the closing of the steelworks due to the strike required the evening course to be cancelled that year. Thereafter, however, the Department conducted night school courses at the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School. These classes, by 1904, were being conducted three evenings a week. The attendance for these classes was not large, but those who attended the school were able to take English language and other classes for three dollars a month, which was an appreciable sum for these workers.

The National School Gardening Movement

School gardens were expressions of modern and progressive education of the sort encouraged by Dewey. For approximately thirty years, from the early 1890s until about 1920, school children across the county planted gardens as part of the regular school curriculum in order to “take the spontaneous development of the child’s mind under the influence of the natural environment” as a guide to instruction. The process of gardening was considered a way to stimulate a child’s curiosity and enthusiasm. While school gardens were initially promoted as a method to teach the natural sciences, a wide range of ambitions emerged as proponents of school gardens sought to provide practical agricultural training, promote an appreciation for the beauty and bounty of nature, or develop civic pride. While some teachers very systematically linked the
outdoor work to specific subjects – geometric patterns for the garden, arithmetic calculations linked to expenses and production, reading assignment about caring for plants, and art projects that might use materials from nature to create collages or encourage self-expression in watercolors or clay sculpture – others provided simple instructions and presumed that he experience of gardening was itself a lesson. Often this was linked to science and nature study.151

The national school gardening movement in America began as many of the progressive ideas in education, such as the kindergarten, had begun – with adaptation of European educational practices. Pestalozzi and other European educators had adopted the practice of school gardening by the mid-nineteenth century, and by 1890 such gardens were required by law in Austria and French teachers were required to give practical instruction in gardening.152 As early as 1879, Mary Tyler Peabody Mann, the wife of Horace Mann, translated a German manual regarding school gardening into English and published it widely.153 These practices were adopted by progressive educators, particularly Francis Parker at the Cook County Normal School, Wilbur Jackman at the University of Chicago Laboratory School, and extension services provided through Cornell University in New York, and they quickly took hold on a nationwide level.154

The national school gardening movement also revealed how deeply the metaphors of nature were embedded in thinking about the educational process at the turn of the century. Nature was organic, and growth could either be wild or could be nurtured with strict tending. Progressives believed that some measure of control was necessary to control or enhance nature.155 Later, the echo of this could be heard in Corwin’s view that young children were “seeds” which needed to be nurtured by the Department’s educational programs.
The school gardening movement was subject to some of the same assumptions as other progressive methods of education which were being implemented at the turn of the twentieth century. There existed a mix of philanthropic and administrative tendencies underlying the school gardening movement, as with the kindergarten movement and the movement toward providing manual training. Some educators viewed school gardens as a method to encourage a connection between the child’s experiences and the organic world, and to foster self-expression and community involvement, and others viewed school gardens as a way in which undisciplined “foreign” children could be manually trained by utilizing agricultural values and skills. And, as with a number of progressive educational ideas, the principles underlying the school gardening movement were co-opted by administrative progressives. Cubberley emphasized the practical aspects of school gardens, which included manual training to serve the interests of social control and efficiency:

Wholly aside from the money-value and food-production aspects of the work, now most emphasized, the work makes a strong appeal from a purely educational point of view. To many city children it is almost the only contact they ever get with nature; to some it is a type of education in which they become deeply interested; and to many it means good and health exercise, under proper conditions, in the fresh air and sunshine. The nature-study value of the observation of how plants germinate, grow, and mature; the lessons in social cooperation which gardening can be made to teach; the industrial experience coming from the money value of the products raised; the efforts to excel developed by competition in production; the withdrawal of children from the games and vices of the streets; and the possibilities offered by the work for carrying over a vacation-school interest, -- all are features of the school gardening movement which are of much moral and social as well as educational value.  

Cubberley’s view of school gardens as a method of controlling children and redirecting them toward manual work was far different than the views of progressive educators like Dewey, who envisioned school gardens as an effort toward creating an organic social community and fostering the individual educative experiences of children in relation to the curriculum. In fact,
administrative progressives increasingly applied the ideas of school gardening not toward children in school but toward troubled youth across the country as a way to “rehabilitate” them. At the same time that students at the University of Chicago Laboratory School were planting large garden plots, youths in detention at the George Junior Republic in upstate New York, were spending many hours doing farm work as part of their school garden with the products which were then sold to benefit the institution. Similarly, youths in urban areas of Dayton, Ohio, farmed their own plots courtesy of the National Cash Register Company. Like other progressive educational reforms, school gardens began as expression of progressive pedagogy, but ultimately were adapted to establish social control and efficient and produce a “better crop of girls and boys.” Inevitably, the school gardening movement could not fulfill the expectations of administrative progressives and the sponsorship of such programs faltered. 157

The Sociological Department and School Gardens in Pueblo

It is not surprising that Corwin, with his underlying philanthropic nature his strong administrative progressive ideology, would direct the Sociological Department toward the adoption of school gardening. Although Corwin’s position had changed beginning in 1906, when he was limited to his duties as Chief Surgeon at the hospital and was not issued another long-term contract, he still continued to advise the Department and report on its progress.158 Accordingly Corwin, with the assistance of Superintendent Keating, helped to establish a widespread school gardening program in Pueblo. Beginning in 1900 and continuing for a number of years, school gardening programs were established at a number of the schools, and these programs would grow for a number of years until the school gardening program declined on a nationwide level.
The Pueblo school gardening program was modeled after those established for troubled youths at the George Junior Republic and the National Cash Register Company. In *Camp and Plant*, the qualities of both these programs were extolled at length. The George Junior Republic was established in 1890 as a community reformatory for orphaned, wayward, and delinquent youth in Freeville, New York. The reformatory adopted a system in which the inmates governed themselves, worked in various manual and agricultural occupations, were schooled, and sometimes incarcerated by the authorities. One of the activities was farm work. Corwin believed that the reformatory was an appropriate model of social control and efficiency that could be emulated for the same purposes in the city schools surrounding the mill in Pueblo.

Corwin and other Department officials also admired the National Cash Register’s program of gardens provided by a large corporation to youth from urban areas, and believed such programs were effective in developing individual character and self-helpfulness. Department officials and other administrative progressives generally believed that the safety and civilization of the United States depended largely on the successful dealing with the great problem of how to “purify the surroundings, elevate the ideals, and Christianize the character” of children, whose home life was “corrupt.” Corwin and others believed that these uncontrolled children were a “menace to society, and a fascinating study to the philanthropist.”

The Sociological Department, along with School District No. 20 in Pueblo, initiated the school gardening program in Pueblo as a vacation or summer school program for kindergarten students. The work in the school gardens was envisioned as “theoretical and practical” work in nature study, and was undertaken as one of the first “experimental” programs of its kind in the western United States. Corwin and Superintendent Keating were aware of the work of progressive educators in Europe, and were also aware that such school garden programs had
been active in New York since 1871. Corwin was aware of the work done in Chicago by Dewey and other progressive educators at the Laboratory School, and was also aware of the specific developments in other philanthropic school gardening programs. In *Camp and Plant*, Department officials quoted Froebel for the benefit of the readers in the camps:

> Let your child plant his own garden, gather his own harvest of fruit and flowers, learn though his own small experienced something of the influence of sun, dew and rain, and gain thereby a remote presentiment of the reciprocal energies of nature, and a reverent feeling for the divine life and law expressed in nature. – Frobel

Department officials expressly suggested those teachers and parents in the camps to adopt the Pueblo school gardening program, which ultimately was done in El Moro and some of the other camps.

The school garden program in Pueblo was initiated when the owners of the property adjoining several of the schools allowed the school district to use the land rent-free to plant gardens, and the Pueblo Water Company furnished the water for the gardens free of charge. The school district paid for seeds and gardening tools, and assigned the supervision of the gardens to the kindergarten teachers. The gardens were located in the kindergartens at the Bessemer School, near the steelworks, and Corona School and the Wildeboor School. The students at these schools planted cereals, flowers and vegetables for the first several years that the school garden programs were active. The children worked these garden plots during the morning hours each weekday during the summer under the supervision of the kindergarten teachers, and when the heat of the day took hold, the student would go inside and work on sewing, folding, weaving, singing, and playing games.

The school gardening programs in Pueblo did differ in some respects from the national models. Instead of being fully directed toward industrial activity, they were regularly
interspersed with children’s activities in the schools – although the strong assimilationist aspect remained. At the Corona School, the average attendance for the first two years was thirty-seven students. Many attended regularly. The Corona School was located in an affluent area of Pueblo, and many of the children in the school went elsewhere for the summer. It also adjoined Corona Park, so that the students were not driven indoors when the days became too hot. At the Bessemer School, which was located near the mill, the student planted their garden on the shady side of the school. During the growing season in 1900, grasshoppers inflicted great damage on the garden, but the following year the Bessemer School was the “best in the district.” Children at the Bessemer School, in 1901, sold their produce locally and reinvested the money earned in more seeds, tools, and kindergarten materials for their school. Department officials stated, in regard to the Bessemer program, that the interest among parents of the children, most of whom are employees of the steel works, had greatly increased, and the enrollment had also increased to over 100 students. In *Camp and Plant*, Department officials made the support of the working families clear:

> [T]he support given the kindergarten by mothers has been enthusiastic, and their interest has been shown by their attending mothers’ meeting and by frequent calls at the school.” The Department also pointed out that “[t]he men, when taking a day off, have often visited the kindergarten, and shown the keenest enthusiasm for the ‘work’ in which their children were engaged.”

At the Wildeboor School, many of the kindergarten students were unable to speak English at first because they were children of immigrant workers at the mill, and spoke Italian, German, Spanish, or Slavonic languages. The school garden work therefore presented many practical difficulties for the teachers assigned to conduct it, which they dealt with by compensation for further training to assimilate and acculturate the immigrant and Hispano children:

> Some thirty children have been in attendance this year. The great difficulty in getting the children at this school is not suspicion on the part of the parents, most
of whom are employed either at the Minnequa Works or at the smelters, but an inability on the part of the people to understand what the teachers tell them about the kindergarten. When they finally learn the nature of the work they seem most enthusiastic, although they are reluctant to visit the school, because of inability to understand English. Most wisely the teachers have directed their efforts at this school along patriotic lines, and have spent a great deal of time in the inculcation of a spirit of love of country. The children have shown most surprising interest in the history of America and in the deeds of her great men, which the teachers have presented in a simple form. Exercises appropriate to the day have been held on each Fourth of July, when the children wore sashes and red, white and blue caps, which they made themselves, and when those who did best in the work were rewarded by being knighted with a revolutionary sword, the history of which was explained to them. As in all the schools, the garden work has been, however, the chief feature of the summer months. Especially attention has been given to flowers. The plot of ground is surrounded by a high board fence, and has not suffered from heat or from insect pests.169

Eventually, Corwin characterized the school garden programs in Pueblo as the chief feature of the summer kindergartens, and used the programs as an example for teachers, students, and parents in the camp schools.170

Conclusion

The Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs were based on essentially philanthropic views. The idea that such programs could constitute a “social mission of child saving” was certainly part of the basis for the implementation of such programs. The Department’s emphasis on socialized play for kindergarten students as well as students attending the club meetings, at least so far as they took into account the interests of the children, were consistent with the philanthropic ideals of progressive education. Further, the underlying idea that domestic education programs could serve to create an “industrial community” was also consistent with those ideals. The children in the Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs were consistently allowed and encouraged to engage in play, music, games, and other activities which were designed to create a “society of children.” The goal of these
activities was essentially a “preventative charity,” to insure some measure of social stability while allowing the children to express their interests and desires through directed play. The work of the children in the kindergartens and domestic education programs was focused on language and other practical work, and then making connections between their work and the larger, integrated organic community surrounding them in ways Dewey would have certainly approved.

However, the philanthropic basis for the Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs were overlaid with an overwhelmingly assimilationist structure which was also calculated to insure social efficiency by preparing children for their stratified roles in an industrial society. Within this structure, the Department’s teachers served roles as the “gardener of children,” nurturing a generation of children to fulfill the national socio-industrial needs by providing a particular type and level of education. Schools in the Department’s system were to become “time and labor saving devices” by educating children for their future roles in the most efficient manner possible. In this way, the programs would ultimately support the industrial goals of the company. The domestic education programs, in particular, were hard-edged in that they explicitly designated groups of immigrant and Hispano children for attendance in classes and clubs which fostered training in housekeeping and other tasks under the assumption that these groups of children were particularly well-suited, in terms of their social class, their race, and their ethnicity for futures as menial laborers.

To carry out these industrial goals, the Sociological Department implemented programs which would serve as a bridge between the school and the home, stressing cleanliness, citizenship, self-respect, industrial culture, and proper child-raising. Underlying these programs was the paternal assumption that professional educators could train these children properly while
their parents could not. By essentially co-opting the child-rearing process, Department teachers not only could impart their own social and cultural values, but could serve as “rest for a mother’s day, and a balm for a mother’s heart.” Corwin clearly believed in these paternal views, and was willing to direct company resources into carrying out these programs.

The Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs were seen as another level of schooling for children in the camps, and were initiated to more efficiently begin the process of assimilation and acculturation at an earlier age when these children were more tractable. In regard to the kindergarten programs, the activities were initially designed to include “foreign” children in social activities, and begin the process of teaching them the English language as well as “American” social values and skills. In conjunction with the kindergarten programs, the domestic education programs were calculated to reinforce these values and skills with older students, and also “bridge the gap” by starting the process of assimilation and acculturation with mothers of the children in the schools. The ultimate goal of these programs was to impose social and industrial stability in the camps.

The Sociological Department was not wholly successful in achieving its goals for these programs. First, the children in the camps were almost uniformly “foreign,” and did not speak English when they started school. This required the teachers in the schools to engage in activities with extremely large classes of kindergartners and first graders which did not require the speaking of English. While this served the interests of the Department in that domestic and manual training skills were stressed even for young children, it raised almost insurmountable communication problems and impeded the ability of the teachers to serve as a “bridge” to the families of the children. Second, there was virtually no demand for the night schools, probably due to the costs of the programs and the difficulty of encouraging mine workers to begin the
ambitious study of English and other subjects. Third, although the claimed enrollment in the
camps kindergarten and domestic education programs was impressive, the actual attendance
figures were lower. To compound that problem, after the first several years of schooling, the
children rarely continued to attend school in the upper grades or complete their primary
schooling. There were several reasons for this, including that children started work or married at
an early age due to the need either to help support the family or start one of their own. While the
facilities in which the kindergarten and domestic education programs were held were excellent,
that alone was not sufficient to insure a high rate of attendance of the children in the camps.
Finally, particularly after the strike of 1903-1904, there was a heightened level of suspicion in
regard to the Sociological Department’s motives in providing the kindergarten and domestic
education courses, which, regardless of those motives, caused the ultimate collapse of the
programs both through the loss of funding and declining attendance.

The Sociological Department’s programs, however, were important in a number of
respects, and, by some measures, given the stated industrial goals of the Department, they were
successful. In many ways, the Department’s programs were a forerunner of the imposition of the
ideas of administrative progressives throughout the nation. The Department’s programs were
certainly at the forefront of industrial sociology at the time, and carried programs which had until
then only been established in urban areas of the United States to the relatively rural areas of the
coal camps and communities in southern Colorado. While the programs were active, they
enrolled hundreds of young children in the camps which otherwise would not have had access to
kindergarten or domestic educational programs of any sort. While these children were enrolled,
they were instructed in a manner which was calculated to foster many of the attributes sought by
the company and administrative progressives, including the learning of English. These children,
while the programs were active, were drilled and participated in exercises regarding hygiene, citizenship, “American” social practices, gardening, and other subjects calculated to assimilate and acculturate them fully to the Department’s socially efficient industrial model.

And, in a broader sense, the programs were effective in a number of other ways. First, despite the emphasis on social efficiency, the work in the Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs did, for a short time, create a legitimate industrial community of children. The progressive methods used by the kindergarten teachers were often attuned to a child’s individual needs and desires, and were based on creating educational experiences for the children which would nurture and assist them in becoming part of a more organic community which did not necessarily include hard-edged Americanization. Often young children were instructed in languages other than English, or activities were developed which were not dependent on the English language. Further, the Department insured that these children were taught by a high trained, competent, and professional cadre of teachers. These teachers were required to conduct their activities along “many lines of effort,” in many subjects and methods of manual training, and in many languages. To that end, they truly were social settlement workers. The Department’s cohesiveness in insuring that cooking and sewing classes were carried out in a uniform manner, carrying out programs in gardening and manual training, and creating opportunities for ongoing professional development both through teachers’ meetings and summer programs offered through the Pueblo Normal and Industrial School, were initially impressive. The teachers and the programs offered by the Department to kindergarten children and children and adults of all ages through its domestic education programs, were at the forefront of the development of modern educational practices in the United States. Although the aims of
these educational programs were decidedly assimilationist, they did provide a stable educational environment for many children in the coal camps and communities.
Notes

Chapter Five

Child Gardening

1 Manuscript, RG 2 OMR, Series C, Box 25, 54-55. This manuscript is a long typescript of 85 pages marked in John D. Rockefeller’s handwriting as “Introduction.” The typescript was prepared by Lamont Bowers, and includes a section dated “May 4, 1914,” so it likely was prepared by Bowers in May of 1914 in preparation for the Congressional Hearings regarding the Colorado strike. The manuscript includes marginal notations in both Bowers’ and Rockefeller’s handwriting.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Cremin, The Transformation of the School, 68.

5 Tyack, The One Best System, 237.

6 Tyack, The One Best System, 232.

7 Bowles and Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America, 48.

8 Joel Spring, Education and the Rise of the Corporate State (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 151.


10 Ibid., 121-122.

11 Tyack and Cuban, Tinkering Toward Utopia, 64.

12 Ibid., 65.


15 Tyack and Cuban, Tinkering Toward Utopia, 65.


19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.


22 Ibid., 432.


27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.


33 Clyne, “Coal People,” 89.


41 Ibid.

42 Reese, *The Power and the Promise of School Reform*, 159.


44 Ibid., 350, 354.


46 Ibid.

47 Ibid., 355.


49 Ibid., 60.

50 Ibid.


54 Ibid., 32-33.

55 Ibid.


58 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 91. This display won first prize at the Colorado State Fair that year, and shows what the Department referred to as “construction work” of the kindergarten students at the camp schools.


60 Clyne, “Coal People,” 58.


62 Ibid.

63 Ibid., 12.


80 Ibid.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid.


88 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 91-93.


90 The Coal Project, Interview of Yvonne Pickett, A-25.

91 Ibid.

92 The Coal Project, Interview of Martha Todd (August 22, 1978), transcript 02058-4, 4.

93 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Minnie Grace Branch, 18.


95 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 565-566.


100 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Manual Reyes Martinez (January 5, 1980), 10.


104 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 83.


107 Ibid., 42-43.


110 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 568.


114 Ibid.


117 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 82.

120 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 82.
123 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 89.
125 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 93.
126 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 566.
127 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 93.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid., 94.
130 CF&I, “Excellent Public Schools,” 568.
132 CF&I, “Kindergartens in the Camps,” 94.
133 Ibid.
139 These years of operation are indicated in the annual reports issued by the company, in which the Department’s employees were listed, as well as various issues of *Camp and Plant*.


144 Schenck to Editor (undated), RG 2 OMR, Series C, Box 23, Folder 206, Rockefeller Family Archives, RAC.

145 Roberts, *YMCA Report*.


154 Ibid., 67-68.

155 Ibid., 61.

156 Cubberley, *Public Education in the United States*, 399-400.

157 Ibid., 92.

158 Welborn to Rockefeller, July 19, 1915, RG 2 OMR, Series C, Box 14, Folder 116, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, RAC.


161 CF&I, “The George Junior Republic,” 506. Rockefeller’s staff, given their hard-edged beliefs in social control, efficiency, and Americanization in an industrial society, heartily approved of the George Junior Republic system. Murphy to Welborn, October 5, 1914, RG 2 OMR, Series C, Box 23, Folder 212, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, RAC.


163 Ibid., 274.

164 Ibid., 279.

165 Ibid., 279-280.

166 Ibid., 275.

167 Ibid., 275-276.

168 Ibid., 276-277.

169 Ibid., 277-278.

170 Ibid, 279.
Chapter Six

The Failure of Paternalism

Introduction

After Alfred Owens had completed the fifth grade at the Kebler School in Pictou, he was fourteen and went to work in the mines around Walsen and the nearby coal camp of Rugby. Owens was a young Black man whose family had moved to Colorado after moving around a when he was young. His family had lived in the states of Washington, Missouri, Iowa, and Wyoming prior to finally settling in Colorado in 1902. His father worked in the mines in Primero, Pictou and Walsen, and the family had lived in several of the local camps. He worked underground with other men of various races and nationalities including, in the Walsenburg area, a high percentage of Greek and Italian immigrant laborers. According to Owens, he was not treated differently than his co-workers in the mines did not feel race prejudice. He believed that in the camps people were treated as equals by other miners.1 One afternoon as he was coming out of the mines with one of his friends, an Anglo miner, and Owens noticed that his friend’s face was blackened by coal dust. As they smiled at each other, all Owens could see was a black face and white, smiling teeth. Owens laughed at his friend, who said, “What are you laughing at?” Owens replied, “You’re so black.” His friend laughed and answered, “Well, what do you think about yourself?” Owens stated that “practically everybody’s the same in the mines.”2

Despite some racial, ethnic, and nationalist conflicts in the camps and in the steelworks, the mine and mill workers and their families lived in relative commonality. They were brought together due to the harshness of labor in the mines and in the steelworks, and the shared socio-
economic and political exploitation carried out by the company.\textsuperscript{3} The shared poverty of the miners brought them together, and they felt that they “were all in the same boat – poor the same.”\textsuperscript{4}

Class divisions in the coal mining communities in southern Colorado were often more important than racial or ethnic divisions. Loyalty to other men and their families in the camps usually outweighed racial, ethnic, or political divisions – even among immigrants and Hispanics. To a certain extent, this also applied to Black miners and their families in the camps. While segregation in housing along lines of race, ethnicity, and national origin was carried out in some of the camps and in the coal communities of southern Colorado in the early 1900s, this segregation extended neither underground nor in the schools. This also helped unify the workers and their families.

The company’s own industrial welfare system, which was based on the paternal attitudes of company officials as well as the practices and policies of Sociological Department officials, had unintended consequences. Although the Sociological Department’s educational programs were calculated to assimilate and acculturate all of the children of the workers and to exert an increased measure of social control and efficiency over them, and thereby prepare them for work, the advantages of increased access to schooling for almost all of the children in the camps resulted in increasing class solidarity and empowerment. Also, as the company’s goal of increasing profits at the expense of its industrial welfare programs became more evident, the company came under intense national scrutiny from both progressive reformers and national political leaders. In this chapter, I will explore the growing unification of the workers and their families in the camps and the inherent contradictions and problems associated with the paternalistic nature of the company’s industrial welfare programs as they related to schooling. I
argue that, to a certain extent, the unifying effects of the common socio-economic and political conditions in the camps, including access to schooling and similar educational opportunities, played a role in empowering workers and their families and in giving them an increased level of autonomy and local control which was not endorsed by the company. Class division became more important than racial, ethnic, or national divisions. This, in turn, brought some of the company’s repressive socio-economic policies and practices into sharper relief. The ideology of the administrative progressives, which was heavily based on assimilation and class reproduction, did not address the needs of the workers. Further, I argue that the company’s intransigence in dealing with socio-economic issues in the camps and at the steelworks, coupled with its increasingly crucial short-term profit motive, culminated in the violence of the 1913-1914 strike and the curtailment of its industrial welfare programs, including the Sociological Department.

The “Melting-Pot”

The idea that the infusion of millions of immigrants during the late 1800s and early 1900s could form a “new nationality” – one not wholly dependent on the dominant Anglo-Saxon ideals and values prevalent at the time, particularly among administrative progressives – was increasingly adopted by progressive reformers at the same time that the company was attempting to assimilate and acculturate its immigrant and other “foreign” workers. In 1909, the protagonist of Israel Zangwill’s play The Melting-Pot exclaimed, “Into the crucible with you all! God is making the American.”⁵ Being forged in this crucible could, conceivably, result in some level of cultural pluralism, in which immigrants could retain some cultural characteristics while adopting some of those of the dominant Anglo-Saxon mainstream.⁶
This idea was clearly not consistent with the ideas and values which were being promoted by administrative progressives by 1909. Cubberley, as the spokesmen of schoolmen throughout urban areas of the United States which had been greatly impacted by the influx of immigrant children, believed that the cultural traits of immigrants should be “broken up” and replaced with Anglo-Saxon conceptions order to the fullest extent possible to insure the preservation of what he referred to as the national character. At the same time that Zangwill’s play was on stage in New York, therefore, administrative progressives across the country were attempting to implement educational programs which would result in further stratification and social efficiency in the industrial age – they were essentially trying to mold immigrants into predetermined “Americanized” citizens.

The Sociological Department’s educational programs were similarly marked by this conflict between the progressive reformers advocating for a new type of American, and those who were essentially trying to preserve the old Anglo-Saxon order. The kindergarten and domestic education programs implemented by the Department in some of the newer and larger camps and communities were certainly calculated to carry out extensive assimilation and acculturation of immigrant and Hispano children, in essence to “Americanize” them. However, the Department also at least acknowledged the idea that these children should retain some of their cultural traits despite the Department’s strong focus on acculturation. According to Department officials, the kindergarten programs were intended to place each child and nationality on an “equal standing and, while recognizing individual differences, attempted to inculcate sympathy, unselfishness, and an appreciation for equal rights, the essentials of a democratic society.”

Further, the Department acknowledged the complex interaction of the racial, ethnic, and national groups which comprised its workforce and the importance of taking their differences into account to conduct sociological work. According to Department officials,

[in such a mixture of races it is not strange that there should be a great variety of customs imported from the homeland, some of which are clung to most tenaciously. Neither is it strange that their ideals differ much from the common American standard, that they possess many and strong prejudices, and that their suspicions are easily and quickly aroused.]

Corwin, while acknowledging these cultural differences, considered them, however, only in the context of “securing cooperation” among their employees to carry out their work. Department officials pointed out that “Mexicans will associate with Mexicans, Italians with Italians, English-speaking with English-speaking, but usually any attempt at admixture of races comes to grief.” As a result, the Department’s workers were compelled to grudgingly recognize cultural differences and adapt to the “tastes and customs and prejudices of racial characteristics represented by the various languages,” even though to do so made their work “well nigh impossible, certainly most difficult.”

Although Department officials at least acknowledged these differences in race, ethnicity, language, and cultural practices, they were still seen as barriers to achieving the administrative progressive goal of social efficiency. Despite recognizing the cultural differences, Department officials still viewed all “foreign” peoples, including immigrant and Hispano workers and their families, within the myopic perspectives of Anglo-Saxon values. “Mexicans,” announced Department officials, were communal peoples who chose to live together in the “shackles” of patriarchal plaza communities in which the living conditions were primitive. Italians were viewed as people who were used to living in the cities of Europe and therefore created their own slums in Pueblo. Department officials further pointed out that even the more “aristocratic”
Hispanos, who lived and worked at agrarian pursuits in southern Colorado, faced a continual struggle which prevented “the accumulation of wealth and the establishment of great enterprises.”13 In pointing out these differences, Department officials labeled the “southern race” as less “energetic” than the Anglo-Saxon “master minds” who “established the great enterprises on the former American desert,” who were “not fatalists” but had felt, “as a heritage from their Teutonic ancestors, that they were individual thinking beings.”14

Accordingly, while the Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs adopted a policy of inclusion in that no students were subjected to segregated schooling, the cultural traits of the children were only minimally respected and recognized as a precondition to further assimilation and acculturation. Even the speaking of Italian, German, or Spanish with kindergarten students by the trained cadre of the Department’s kindergarten teachers was seen by Department officials as a troublesome and temporary necessity, which could be abandoned when the students had learned enough language to progress to higher grades which were conducted in English. While democratic values might have been important, Department officials did not allow either the children or their parents to exercise a level of local control of the schools that would result in any recognition of those values – they only permitted a certain level of participation in the educational programs. And, in many cases, the children became ashamed of their European backgrounds as they became Americanized.15 In short, Department officials felt they knew best when it came to every aspect of life in the camps and in the coal communities of southern Colorado.
Unlike the educational programs carried out by the Department, the housing in coal camps and communities were sometimes segregated to a certain extent by race, ethnicity, or nationality. Often the most favorable housing went to Anglo Americans and northern European immigrants, while Black, Hispano, and southern and eastern European immigrant workers and their families sometimes lived in inferior housing in specific areas of the camps and communities. In Walsen, for example, the Black miners and their families generally lived in what came to be known as “nigger town,” which was a row of red-painted houses in the Red Camp, which earlier had been given up by long-term Hispano families in the area on the company’s orders. While these choices were made by company officials in regard to available company housing, some of the segregation which occurred in the coal camps was a natural result of new immigrants and other non-English speaking workers seeking their own communities in which to settle.

Other camps were not segregated. Many of the stories told by persons educated as children in the camps reflected a recognition of differences in race, ethnicity, and national origin; however, the common social class of the families in the camps sometimes served to bring the residents together. Dan DeSantis, whose family had come from from Italy, had lived and worked in Morley, a camp near Trinidad, as well as Berwind. DeSantis related that he and his family lived in neighborhoods that were integrated, including Black families, and he “didn’t see no difference.” Bill Lloyd, who grew up and was educated in the camps around Walsen until he went to work at age 14 in 1907, stated that and “everyone knew everybody else.”

Despite some level of class solidarity in the larger camps and the lack of racial segregation in many of the camps, ethnic animosities were not unusual. This was particularly
true regarding various nationalistic grudges brought from Europe. Often this was manifested in
the interactions between different ethnic Italians, Hispanics, and eastern Europeans. Clarence
Cordova’s family lived in a section of Rouse in newer company housing, and he played with
children of immigrants from eastern Europe, known as “Slavish people,” who lived near him. As
a result, he did not always get along with the other Hispano children that lived in “Mexican
town” outside of the camp.20 Department officials pointed out that immigrants from northern
and southern Italy, both adults and children, were often at war with each other both in the camps
and in Pueblo.21 Tony Hungaro related that he used to laugh at some of his friends, who were
from northern Italy, when they would criticize workers from southern Italy and call them “no
good.”22

And, despite some measure of class solidarity, racial divisions could also sometimes be a
source of conflict. This was usually limited to particular camps in which company supervisors
made discriminatory decisions were not to hire certain non-Anglo groups of workers. The
company supervisors in other coal towns were more even-handed, and, as a result, those coal
towns were more diverse. Asians, mostly Japanese, were rarely accepted as equals in any of the
camp camps and communities, and were segregated in their own neighborhoods and in the
mines.23

Often the problems with segregation, even to the extent that the Sociological
Department’s programs might remedy some of the difficulties, were exacerbated by the
company’s own anti-union activities. The company had a policy, in the years leading up to the
strike of 1913-1914, of replacing one ethnic group with another to keep the workers divided. In
that way, the company could insure that mines would be kept open in the face of potential labor
strikes and they could replace striking miners with unskilled non-English speakers who would
work for lower wages and tolerate a higher degree of labor exploitation. Such policies also frustrated labor organization and unification of the workers to engage in concerted activities. As a result, the workers and their families began to struggle to overcome their differences and divisions. They made increasing efforts to join and organize in the UMWA, and become more integrated in the camp communities. Foremost in this struggle were the bonds of mutual aid and interdependence forged underground as men worked together to overcome unsafe conditions. Above ground the miners united against the company perceived as a common enemy. Although racial prejudice and ethnic animosity worked against the sense of community at first, gradually a greater sense of solidarity developed among the miners and their families. The workers in the camps ultimately demonstrated their class identity through social interaction and participation in strikes.

The commonality of the workers and their families was developed both in the “pit” and in the schoolroom. The same attributes of common interest, integration, and economic and social mutualism were at work both underground among the miners and in the participation of children and adults in the educational programs sponsored or provided by the company through the Sociological Department. This commonality extended far beyond the mere recollections of those attending school and working in the mines, and was not simply a matter of nostalgia. This is true for a number of compelling reasons.

First, the comprehensive integration of the schools in some of the newer and larger camp schools under Department supervision beginning in 1901 is beyond dispute. Despite some problems with issues of social class being played out with seating and attendance, both the kindergarten and primary school classes were available to children in the camps regardless of race, ethnicity, or national origin. Despite differences in the camps along racial, ethnic, and
national lines, when the children came to the camp schools they integrated. In regard to the color line, Martha Todd stated:

And in Walsen camp school, this is kind of funny, there was a boy in the class with me, I only went to Walsen camp school about a month, or six weeks, and he was just as black as he could be. His name was A.C. Marshall and my name was Marshall too. You know how children tease. A boy said to me, ‘it is sure funny that you’re so white and you’re brother’s so black.’ I said, ‘it just so happens we are not brother and sister.’

Alex Bisulco, who attended school through the seventh grade before going into the mines to work, referred to his childhood community, which was made up predominantly of immigrants from Greece and Italy, as “the League of Nations.” John Tomsic, who lived in Berwind as a child and attended the Corwin School, stated that although he lived in a camp which was racially and ethnically diverse, when the children got to school they did not criticize each other even if they lived in different parts of the camp. Ann Laney, who grew up in the camps and attended school in Tercio, stated that there were a lot of Spanish people there and all of the children got along well and communicated readily. Integration and the provision of equal access to schooling fostered a degree of commonality that had not been present prior to the building and staffing of the new schools.

Second, the social events sponsored by the Sociological Department were significant unifying forces in the coal camps and communities. Lectures and dances in the camp schools, for example, were attended by all racial and ethnic groups, with the endorsement of the Department. According to Donald Mitchell, all the neighbors got along fine, particularly at the camp dances.

Finally, the unification of the workers and their families in the camps, whether through their shared poverty or their increased social interaction, played a significant role in the events leading up to the strike of 1913-1914. The sense of common identity and of common cause
resulted from the conjunction of migrant traditions, subterranean conditions, and coalfield realities. The distributive practices of the miners carried over into the interactions of their families in the camps. Mike Livoda, who was one of the UMWA organizers prior to the strike, stated that to organize the miners he had to rely on others to communicate. He organized in camps that had Mexican immigrant workers, Spanish-American workers which he referred to as “our Spanish,” Scotch-English, Russians, Poles, Romanians, Japanese, Serbians, Montenegrans, “Negroes,” Yugoslavs, and Czechs. Livoda believed that everyone got along fine, and “there was no trouble as far as the nationalities was concerned.” In his view, “it was all like one big family. No trouble.” According to Kate Livoda, who had grown up and was schooled in the camps, the various races, ethnic groups, and nationalities that were living in the tent community at Ludlow lived in harmony with each other. They socialized together, helped each other with the children, helped those in need, and generally got along. Martha Todd stated that what she remembered from her early years was “the sociability of the people.” She stated that “the wages were poor, but people loved one another.” Because the Department’s educational programs, particularly the kindergarten programs, fostered communication across racial, ethnic, and national lines, it appears that the schools played their role in building a common identity in the camps.

*The Pueblo Industrial High School*

By 1907, the movement supporting vocational education was gaining momentum. President Theodore Roosevelt, in his annual address to Congress, declared that

Our school system is gravely defective in so far as it puts a premium upon mere literacy training and tends therefore to train the boy away from the farm and the workshop. Nothing is more needed than the best type of industrial school, the
Charles Eliot, speaking for administrative progressives a year later, advocated for industrial high schools, stating that teachers in the elementary schools should be required to “sort them by their evident or probable destinies.” Industrial education was seen both as appropriate for pupils of low academic ability, but particularly appropriate for certain social and economic classes of society. Progressive educators criticized this endorsement of industrial education as “early selection and educational stratification,” that would have the result of channeling working class, immigrant, and Black children into manual jobs.

The movement for industrial education, as in other areas of progressive educational reform in the early 1900s, was marked by contradiction. Dewey and other progressive educators sought to build a community within the school and foster a sense of unity and common experience. Those ideas were co-opted by administrative progressives, who advocated stratification of education, sorting, and social efficiency to support the new industrial society. In the hands of administrative progressives, the vocational education movement was less a response to the specific job training needs of the rapidly expanding corporate sector than an accommodation of a previously elite educational institution, the high school, to the changing needs of reproducing class structure. The use of vocational training served the educational tracking system, which was intended to separate and stratify young people loosely according to race, ethnic origins, and class backgrounds. This would serve to bind children of laborers to manual employment, and very likely to the very company which was indirectly responsible for providing industrial education in the first place.

Corwin and Superintendent Keating, as administrative progressives, were quick to advocate for an industrial high school to serve the families who lived and whose children
attended school near the steelworks in Pueblo. Consistent with the nationwide movement toward differentiation of education at the high school level to serve the interests of industry, they approached Bowers with a plan for the Sociological Department to support an industrial high school.

Bowers was enthusiastic about such a plan and vigorously advocated for it, ultimately approaching Rockefeller to see if such a school could be supported by the Rockefeller philanthropic interests. Bowers wrote a letter requesting philanthropic support from the Rockefellers in September, 1910 through his uncle, Gates. He explained to Gates that the city of Pueblo had two school districts, one on the north side of town, and one on the south side of town, School District No. 20, which was attended by many of the children of steelworkers. Superintendent Keating and Corwin had approached Bowers about building an industrial high school in School District No. 20, at an estimated cost of approximately $150,000, and Bowers turned to Gates to fund the school through the Rockefeller’s General Educational Board. In a letter to Gates, Bowers explained that thousands of the children of the steelworkers would benefit from such a school, since there were about 450 students taking a high school course in different buildings. Bowers pointed out to Gates that the taxpayers could not possibly build an industrial high school for many years, and that such a school, “right in the midst of such an industry as we have there,” would be of almost “untold benefit” to the children of the steelworkers.45

Bowers clearly saw the benefit, as he saw it, to both the children and to the company of vocational training for the children of the steelworkers. Characteristically, Bowers’ request was passed through Starr Murphy, who was the elite and tireless corporate watchdog who headed the Rockefeller’s legal department at 26 Broadway. Murphy replied to Gates, in no uncertain terms,
that the Rockefeller interests would not fund such a school, as the city had already issued bonds for the completion of the new high school and there were no further funds available to build an "adequate industrial training building" for the public school district near the steelworks. Gates further pointed out that funding the construction of such a school would set a poor precedent:

I do not know just how large Mr. Rockefeller's holdings in the Colorado Fuel & Iron Co. now are, but even though he be a large stockholder, inasmuch as he has uniformly declined to make contributions to committees in which the Standard Oil Company plants are located that precedent would seem to control in this case, as there is much less reason why he should recognize the validity of the plea in the case of the Colorado Fuel & Iron than in the case of the Standard Oil Co.46

Starr then suggested that the city increase the assessed values of the "working men’s homes" to cover the cost of building the industrial high school, "‘not as a matter of charity but as a matter of justice.’” Starr concluded that he could “see no reason why Mr. Rockefeller personally should undertake to build and equip the school.” Clearly the Rockefeller’s philanthropic interests in education did not extend, at least according to Murphy, to serve the children of the workers in Pueblo.

Gates then replied at length to his nephew, “Mont” Bowers, softening the Rockefeller position in regard to the school – but not much. This reply was representative of the level of protection that Rockefeller enjoyed due to his staff, as well as the overall level of detachment and isolation that Rockefeller was subject to in regard to the actual welfare of the thousands of employees and their families working for corporations in which he held significant business interests.

Gates’ reply to Bowers covered numerous main points of importance to 26 Broadway, and clearly outlined the policy of the Rockefeller Committee, and Rockefeller himself, regarding industrial welfare programs in companies he controlled. First, Gates made it clear that
Rockefeller would no longer support the endowment of educational institutions, much less educational programs for communities in which his companies were very active:

I knew in advance there would be no hope of enlisting Mr. Rockefeller’s Committee here. We have tried and experience of Mr. Rockefeller’s funding institutions of learning once – the case of the University of Chicago. He has now put $25,000,000 into it and the institution is understood to require $10,000,000 more of his money at the present time. In other words – it is a physical, moral, mental and financial impossibility for Mr. Rockefeller to become connected, as special patron or founder to any sort of institution at all and have it run within proper and reasonable bounds. We have quit. We are out of that sort of thing. It doesn’t make much difference how needy or how valuable the thing may be. We simply can’t become related to it in any such way as these gentlemen desire.

Second, Gates made it clear to Bowers that Rockefeller’s interest in the company, as well as the interests of CF&I in supporting such a school, were far too narrow to justify support:

These gentlemen are expecting, because of his relation to the Colorado Fuel & Iron, that Mr. Rockefeller will have a special interest in this institution. Here is another of our limitations. Mr. Rockefeller’s interests are world wide and universal. His oil is transported by camels across the Deserts of Sahara; it burns in the window of the cottager in the interior of China and his railroads and his other interests are scarcely less extensive. When it comes to his benevolences there is nothing on earth to do but to cut out the business and run the benevolence by itself as a separate department unrelated to the business at all. We do this not to save him money but to give the largest, surest and richest benefit to humanity as a whole.

Third, Gates summarized Rockefeller’s true interest in the company, which had nothing to do, at that time, with the welfare of the workers and their families. Gates made it clear that Rockefeller was only interested in profits from CF&I, and that those company officials and employees with a vested interest in such a proposed industrial high school should be responsible for funding it:

If that is so, then there must be ways in which the thing can be founded and come equitably upon those who are interested in the C.F.& I. Co. Mr. Rockefeller’s interest is, as you know, mainly a bond interest. The company owes him money and through you and Mr. Welborn he is running the C F. & I. Co. mainly in order to get back his money with interest. He has very little interest in the stock. If the thing presents itself as an advantage to the company it should be so arranged as to fall on those who are interested in the company and not exclusively on one man.
Fourth, Gates pointed out to Bowers that industrial education was an untried idea and investing in industrial schooling was suspect. Ironically, Gates objected to industrial education not on the grounds that it would tend to limit educational programs or result in further class stratification; instead, he objected because it had not been proven that industrial education was of significant benefit to industry:

I have one final thing to say about the industrial school: If I had $100,000 or $150,000 to spend in an industrial school, I would spend at least $10,000 of it in finding out about industrial schools before I did anything else and I wish you would tell these friends who are so earnest about it that that would be my advice. Silver and gold have I none but such I have, namely advice, I am willing to impart and I advise them to go slow and before they start out into the vast and almost unknown field of industrial education, find out what the world is doing on that subject; what successes there are, if any, and what failures. I do not mean to intimate that I have vast knowledge of this subject and it is all discouraging; I simply know that there are two sides to the question and that industrial education is not all that it seems to be and particularly that it is not as advantageous in its present form to industrial plants as used to be hoped. Perhaps our friends at Pueblo can solve the problem and make it more useful.

Finally, Gates made it clear that the Rockefeller business interests were completely separate from his philanthropic interests:

The facts are that Mr. Rockefeller does all his educational work through the General Education Board and the General Education Board does not plant or endow industrial schools because the Board does not believe this to be the best way in which it can use its funds. Besides this Mr. Rockefeller’s benevolence is detached from his business in the interests of a larger humanity. 47

The issues raised in this reply were representative of the Rockefeller Committee’s dismissive attitude toward CF&I, its industrial welfare programs, industrial education, and the well-being of the miners and steelworkers and their families working for CF&I in general. The message to Bowers could not have been clearer. Despite Bowers’ long service to the Rockefeller business interests, and his personal association with Rockefeller, Bowers and the company were alone in
their interest in creating the industrial high school in Pueblo – or even funding any of the company’s industrial welfare programs. 26 Broadway did not approve of them.

This dismissive attitude toward CF&I’s activities was to be played out again in two years, as the UMWA strike of 1913-1914 brought the CF&I enterprise to a standstill. The Rockefeller interests remained removed from the strike, insulated by the attitude they only held a financial interest, and had no responsibility for the actions of the company in regard to its employees and their families.

Bowers reaction to the Rockefeller Committee’s dismissal of his proposal was characteristically swift. As in his dealings with the UMWA, when Bowers met any type of resistance to his leadership of the CF&I he became aggressive and launched a personal attack on those who had the temerity to oppose his will. In regard to the proposed Pueblo Industrial School, he responded virulently to Gates: “I wish to say, in regard to Mr. Murphy’s letter to you, which indirectly charges The CF&I Company with being ‘tax dodgers’ that I am not surprised at this because Mr. Murphy has lived so long in the shadow of Wall Street and is doubtless so familiar with the methods of multi-millionaires in avoiding taxes, he naturally believes that all men are alike in this particular.” Specifically, Bowers pointed out, with sarcasm that was characteristic of his dealings with those that thwarted his intentions, that the company had long enjoyed substantial tax incentives for the steelworks in Pueblo. He believed that it was time to give back to the community to salve the corporate “conscience.”

I can actually imagine, not only the stockholders, but the officials of the company going down into their own pockets and relieving the poor overburdened home owners of all their taxes, until they have been reimbursed to the extent that the newly converted Zacchaeus agree to return to those he had unjustly overcharged or cheated. In the meantime, we will be compelled to keep our hard hearts locked up for the lack of ready cash to meet the obligations that our good friend and fellow director Murphy has seen fit to lay upon our already overburdened consciences.48
Ironically, Bowers, in his reaction, not only recognized the need to support the workers at the steelworks, and not encourage the city to levy additional property taxes to support the industrial high school, but he conceded that the company had been given tax breaks and incentives for years without the necessity of investing the community. Bowers acknowledged that such an arrangement was unjust.\textsuperscript{49} Bowers then notified Keating, in measured language, that the Rockefeller Committee had rejected the request for an endowment to create the Pueblo Industrial School as they were not sure that industrial education was effective in supporting the business interests of the corporation. Bowers concluded that “[t]he one point of importance is that they do not care to contribute funds for industrial schools, but would not do anything or say anything to discourages others from doing so who hold different views.”\textsuperscript{50}

Regardless of Bowers’ response to Gates, the Rockefeller Committee’s decision to reject philanthropic support of the proposed Pueblo Industrial School mirrored the company’s attitude toward its ongoing sociological work in general. The company had already, after the strike of 1903-1904, made the decision not to invest significant funds to support the sociological work it had already initiated several years before. The denial of support for vocational education for children of the workers at the steelworks was consistent with Bowers’ own short-term interest in the company showing a profit and paying dividends to stockholders.

Bowers himself was an enigma. He carried out the most draconian measures in support of making the company profitable at the expense of its employees. He sometimes referred to the employees and their families – particularly immigrants and Hispanos – in the most dismissive and racist of terms. He was a man of business whose practices had developed during the early years of the industrial revolution. He had built corporations from scratch, and was ruthlessly dedicated to the Rockefellers. On the other hand, he could also express support for progressive
educational reforms, express support the Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs, and bitterly criticize the Rockefeller interests for the lack of support for sociological work. Bowers’ character was marked by a tragic flaw, in that he could not tolerate any opposition to his leadership – whether his decisions served benevolent purposes or otherwise. His leadership of the company, and his bitter opposition to the UMWA, was ultimately to end in violence.

CF&I Child Labor and Education

Progressive reformers opposed the practices of large corporations in the United States in using child labor to support industrial activities. Jane Addams, speaking for a generation of settlement workers, stated that her work had resulted in extensive data regarding “many pathetic cases of child labor and hard-driven victims of the sweating system” which insured her support of proposed child labor laws. Child labor during the progressive era was anathema to schooling.

In Colorado, by 1907 child labor laws were in place to protect children under the age of fourteen from the worst excesses of child labor. As a result, many children of workers in the camps the coal communities waited until the age of fourteen, when some children had completed their primary schooling, to go to work in the mines and in the steelworks. Many children, however, had already dropped out of school at that point and had been helping to support themselves and their families for a number of years. Often children wanted to work, against the wishes of their parents. Other children were compelled to work for economic reasons.

Corwin, with his concerns for the health of the company’s workers and their children, and his generally progressive views on industrial health, was concerned, during the early years of the Sociological Department’s work, with the “child labor problem.” Under his direction, the
company issued a directive that the steelworks should not employ any child under the age of sixteen.\textsuperscript{51} Corwin conceded, however, that this did not sufficiently address the problem, because, according to him, parents often wanted the children to work in the steelworks and falsely testified as to a boy’s age in order to facilitate their employment. Corwin ignored the economic imperatives that might force children to work in a poorly paid job with brutal working conditions in order to help to support the family. Corwin argued that the Sociological Department would continue to work with the Juvenile Court and the School Department to eliminate child labor in the steelworks and in the mines.\textsuperscript{52}

Nevertheless, such practices continued. In early 1911, just several months after the Rockefeller rebuff of Bowers’ plans to support the Pueblo Industrial School, an anonymous writer, who later was eventually identified as a former employee at the steelworks, sent a letter to Bowers and Rockefeller accusing the company of exploiting child labor:

\begin{quote}
Ever since I first went to Pueblo and became acquainted with the steel works I have thought many times how I should like to tell you the condition of the children working in the works and when I had the chance, I was so busy talking to you about myself I forgot them, but as long as I was there the conditions were shameful, many children under age being employ from seven to six and also working at night, dangerous jobs in dark and most unsanitary conditions. I think the case of the boy who sent me the Christmas present I did tell you of, stating how he lost his fingers. I don’t think the big people know and the minor bosses don’t care, and although Dr. Corwin knows it is unpleasant. If outside the unprejudiced investigation were made in the bolt mill, nut factory, the smaller rolling mills, the keg factor of the wire mill and the door boys at the open hearth, who also work from six at night to seven in the morning, I think some astonishing things would be shown. The only time I spoke about it I was told the boys say they are over sixteen so what can be done.\textsuperscript{53}
\end{quote}

Bowers, characteristically, bitterly resented the accusations in this letter and responded accordingly, stating that Colorado law permitted boys of fourteen years or older to work, but that the company had set the age limit for employment at the steelworks at sixteen. He vigorously rejected the allegations that the company was employing child labor, and stated that he had “been
through every nook and corner of the works, including the bolt mill, nut factory, rolling mills, cooperage plant and the open hearth department which this party specifies as employing boys under age and where the conditions he says are shameful, and I will say that this party’s criticism is based upon a visionary notion of what sort of labor a boy should be engaged in and knows nothing whatever of the work that nine-tenths of the poor boys everywhere on the farms in the mills and mines have always had to do when forced to earn their own living or that of their parents and younger brothers and sisters.”  

Bowers then lashed out at the allegations, accusing the anonymous complainant of wanting to “wiggle into favor at 26 Broadway posing as a social reformer,” of being a “dreaming impractical socialist.” Finally, Bowers compared his own early work days with that of the boys he had observed working in the steelworks, and stated

I would like to take him and go back to your own or my boyhood days of 14 and 16 and show him that the boys at our works in every department have a soft snap in comparison. I flatly deny from my own knowledge and observation his charges.  

Over the next month, at Bowers’ order, the company conducted a survey of the boys working in the steelworks. By February, 1911, Bowers reported to Gates that there were no underage boys working there, and that “if the reasons given by the boys for their working are true, the company can be regarded as doing a better work than a charitable institution.”  

Bower then asked Gates to forward the survey directly to Rockefeller for his review, to assure him that charges of the company’s exploitation of children were false. 

In general, despite the fact that there is no way to determine whether it was accurate, or whether underage workers lost their jobs in an effort to answer criticisms of exploitation of children, the survey did show that no boys under the age of fourteen were working at the steelworks – although 25 of the 114 workers surveyed were under the age of sixteen, contrary to Corwin’s directive. The survey also established the educational level of these workers, and
their reasons for working at such an early age. These workers had an average of seven years of schooling, and many of the workers had completed their primary schooling in the public schools in Pueblo. Only three of them had no schooling.\textsuperscript{58} There were four reasons for leaving school given by almost all of these workers: that they had completed eighth grade, that they were compelled to work to support their parents or siblings, that they had to support themselves, or that they were simply too old for school.\textsuperscript{59} The great majority of these younger workers were immigrants from southern or eastern Europe, or were naturalized American citizens.\textsuperscript{60} Most of these young men were working a twelve-hour day – despite a weak state law prohibiting such work – and they making eleven cents an hour, with the most experienced being paid the adult average wage of seventeen cents an hour.\textsuperscript{61} National criticism of the company’s practices of exploiting children as laborers in the mines and the mills continued until wage and hour legislation put the company’s practices to an end after the strike of 1913-1914.

The Failure of Sociological Paternalism

By 1914, many of the social issues regarding the treatment by CF&I of its workers and their families had come to the attention and raised concerns among prominent national progressive reformers. Ida Tarbell, one of the leading social critics, or “muckrakers,” of the progressive era, became interested in the company’s activities during the strike of 1913-1914. In March, 1914, just prior to the outbreak of violence at Ludlow, she sent a letter directly to company officials requesting information regarding the company’s industrial welfare programs:

My dear Sirs:

Can you give me reports of the safety, medical and welfare work which I am told you have been carrying on in your company? I shall be very glad for any information that you can give me.

Very sincerely yours, Ida M. Tarbell.\textsuperscript{62}
Tarbell had published an exposé of Standard Oil in 1904, *The History of the Standard Oil Company*, which was an indictment of the business practices of the John D. Rockefeller and marked her as a social critic of the industrial giants of the progressive era. Her investigative work was a significant factor in the anti-trust actions against Standard Oil, which, by 1911, been broken up into numerous smaller corporate entities. By the time her request was received by company officials, however, the labor battle with the UMWA had been fully joined. Although Bowers saved a copy of Tarbell’s letter, it is clear that no response was ever given by the company to her request.

The company, even if it had considered such a request, had good reason to ignore it. Tarbell’s reputation as a muckraking journalist was well known, and by the time the letter was received, the work of the Sociological Department, with the exception of the expansion of the Minnequa Hospital and Dr. Corwin’s expanding medical work, was virtually dead. After showing great initial promise, the educational programs sponsored and controlled by the Sociological Department had been almost fully discontinued.

There was no need for Tarbell to issue an indictment of CF&I’s sociological work. That function was very effectively carried out by an officer of Sociological Department, Eugene S. Gaddis, who had been hired by Corwin after the Department’s Assistant Superintendent, Walter Morritt, left to take up another position. In the wake of the violent strike of 1913-1914, Gaddis testified in hearings before the United States Commission on Industrial Relations in regard the educational work of the Sociological Department and the social and economic conditions in the camps. According to Gaddis, as long as Bowers was in control of the company, the Department’s programs were considered unnecessary and they were underfunded if they were funded at all.63
Gaddis, during the hearings, accused the company of deliberate mismanagement of the coal camps. According to Gaddis, local company superintendents treated the camps as their personal fiefdoms, and ruled in a brutal manner. Company officials, such as Bowers, were far removed from the camps in their offices in Denver, and, if not consciously, allowed a de facto policy of coal production at any price in terms of human neglect and suffering. In his testimony, cited many examples to support his conclusions, including that the public schools located in the camps in 1913 were often inadequate, and the faculty was chosen without regard for qualification by local boards that were controlled by the company. Gaddis also criticized the lack of medical care in the camps, the system of company stores which robbed workers and their families of their wages, and company housing. According to him, the company had virtually unlimited resources to improve conditions in the camps, but made a conscious decision not to do so to increase profits. Bowers, in particular, was referred to as a corporate leader “clothed with authority” from the Rockefeller Committee and constituted as “the sole arbitrator in all minor and major matters with which he might address his attention,” and who therefore had responsibility for all matters dealing with the health and welfare of the employees.

Gaddis was very critical of the actions of the company in curtailing the educational activities of the Sociological Department, and in its lack of support for public schooling in general. Gaddis referred to the public relations work of the Department in its early years as “propaganda,” which was issued in order to justify the company’s work in developing the facilities of the company in Pueblo. In regard to the public schools in the camps, Gaddis testified that “some of them are good, and some of them could not be worse.” Gaddis testified that, while the company had established schools in some camps as well as night schools for the teaching of English, and that some of the schools “were as good as could be found in the state,”
but that many of the school directors were “company hirelings” who were not responsive to criticism. In one instance, according to Gaddis, a school principal had been removed from his position and a superintendent’s daughter given his place; in another instance a local board of education member wished to remove a teacher from service because she would not trade at the company store which was run by the school board member. Gaddis maintained that the public schools in the camps, by 1913, had few trained teachers. He also maintained that the company, including company officials in Denver, had virtually complete power over the appointment of teachers and administrators and routinely hired or dismissed them based on their political interest, their union sympathies, or their personal biases. Finally, Gaddis accused the company of skimming money from local school districts by issuing informal bonded indebtedness for construction and school materials, then doing the construction work and providing the materials, and then demanding that the local school districts pay the company back directly, with excessive interest, even though the indebtedness was never publicly recorded.

Bowers again, characteristically, bitterly denied Gaddis’ criticism of his leadership of the company and the company’s alleged unjust and arbitrary management of educational activities in the camps. Bowers testified that the schools in the camps were no longer controlled by the company in any manner, and that, in accordance with state law, those in control of the schools were not answerable to the company. Bowers argued that “[w]hile men in our employ at our various camps usually are selected as commissioners they have to be elected and are responsible to the State for all of their acts.” He added, that “[t]herefore if we should undertake to be over dictatorial and exacting, the State would be justified in ordering us to keep our hands off.” Bowers also testified that he had directed Sociological Department officials to supervise the selection of teachers and hire only the best class of teachers. Bowers further testified that he
wished to “rid himself” of Gaddis and his work in the camps, which, ultimately, he was successful in doing.\textsuperscript{73}

Bowers’ testimony mirrored his protestations which had been frequently made as criticism of the company’s paternalism grew. From 1912, when Bowers had appealed directly to President Wilson, stating that the work of the Department in the camps was essentially philanthropic, until he resigned at the end of 1915, Bowers always maintained that his attentions had always been solely on the “betterment” of thousands of men in his employ, including providing the best of schools and teachers.\textsuperscript{74}

What was clear from the testimony during the hearings, as well as the company’s own records regarding their support of the Sociological Department’s programs, was that the company had virtually abandoned the philanthropic educational work that had begun fourteen years before, and that some local school districts had essentially been subject to the whims of camp superintendents, local political leaders, and local company officials. By any measure, the Department’s educational programs were, by 1915, a virtual failure, strangled by the very administrative progressive ideology which had inspired the work in the first place.

The Industrial Commission’s hearings were held beginning in December 1914, after the crescendo of national criticism which had been directed at CF&I for its actions in regard to the UMWA strike. Appointed by President Woodrow Wilson, who had strongly opposed the intransigence of the company in regard to the striking miners, the Commission was appointed to examine the issues underlying labor unrest, particularly in the coal fields of Colorado, and to recommend ways to improve labor relations in general. Thomas P. Walsh, who was a lawyer from Kansas City, was appointed the Chairman of the Commission. Walsh focused on the problems associated with the Colorado strike.\textsuperscript{75}
The hearings gained national attention. Rockefeller, Bowers, Welborn, and other company officials were subjected to prolonged and intense questioning. It became apparent, in the course of the hearings, that Rockefeller had viewed Bowers as their agent in Colorado and, with or without the explicit approval of 26 Broadway, the company had endorsed actions which had led to the labor violence the previous year. The hearing ultimately led to Bowers’ resignation, and Rockefeller’s determination to be personally engaged in rehabilitating the company’s reputation without the necessity of recognizing the UMWA as the bargaining agent for the company’s miners. It was that determination that led to his trip to the Colorado coal fields, and his “square deal” speech in Walsenburg in 1915.

Conclusion

The school and social programs which were sponsored, financed, supported, and organized by the Sociological Department helped the diverse population of workers and their families in the camps to build a greater sense of commonality. Although there was some racial and ethnic strife in the camps, class divisions ultimately became much more important than racial, ethnic, or nationalistic divisions. To workers in the mines as well as the children in the classroom, and through the Department’s educational and social activities, the educational programs helped to unify members of the camp communities. In that way, the educational programs offered by the Department in the camps functioned as a “melting-pot” to create new identity among the workers and their families.

To a certain extent, the segregation in the camps was due to company officials who, either due to their own racism and classism promoted the divisions in the camps, or divided the workers and their families along racial, ethnic, or national lines in order to suppress labor
organization and the empowerment of the workers. The company’s intransigence in regard to social and economic empowerment of their workers in the camps ultimately undercut, to a certain degree, the efforts of the Sociological Department to provide educational programs.

In regard to industrial education, the goals of local school districts were clearly in tune with the ideas of Sociological Department officials. The views of administrative progressives, which drove the movement toward social efficiency and class stratification through industrial education, were consistent with the Department’s and the company’s goals for children in Pueblo. By the time these ideas were proposed, however, the company had abandoned the commitment to the Department’s educational programs, and such programs were eliminated before they could be initiated. Similarly, the company’s commitment to progressive educational ideals, which included the prohibition of child labor, was clearly not a priority and the company’s impulse toward industrial welfare was clearly subordinate to its commitment to simply making the industry profitable. In less than fifteen years, the company had essentially abandoned its efforts to improve the quality of life for its employees and their families through sociological work in favor of its short-term profit-making goals. The Sociological Department’s programs were doomed to failure due to the very ideas of social control and efficiency which had spawned the Department in the first place.
Notes

Chapter Six

The Failure of Paternalism

1 The Coal Project, Interview of Alfred Owens, transcript no. 020578-3, 11-12.

2 Ibid, 12.

3 Clyne, “Coal People,” 51.

4 The Coal Project, Interview of Angela Tonso; Clyne, “Coal People,” 51.

5 Israel Zangwill, The Melting-Pot (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 33. The protagonist, David, told Vera, who did not understand the idea of the “crucible,
Not understand! You, the Spirit of the Settlement! Not understand that America is God’s Crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming! Here you stand, good folk, think I, when I see them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups, with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty blood hatreds and rivalries. But you won’t be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God you’ve come to – these are the fires of God. A fig for your feuds and vendettas! Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American.

6 Cremin, The Transformation of the School, 69.

7 CF&I, Annual Report, 1901-1902, 17.

8 Ibid., 15.

9 Corwin to Kebler, CF&I, Annual Report, 1902-1903, 5-6.


12 The Colorado Fuel & Iron Co., “‘Mexico’ or ‘Mexican Town,’” Camp and Plant, Vol. IV, No. 11 (September 26, 1903), 247.

13 CF&I, “Mexicans and Their Customs,” 223
14 Ibid., 223.

15 The Coal Project, Interview of Martha Todd, transcript no. 08228-1, 22.

16 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Robert C. Riley (November, 1980), 11.


18 The Coal Project, Interview of Dan DeSantis (January 19, 1978), 59.

19 The Coal Project, Interview of Bill Lloyd (May 18, 1978), transcript no. 05188-2, 13, 22.

20 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Clarence Cordova, 10.


22 The Coal Project, Interview of Tony Hungaro (March 8, 1978), 11.

23 Margolis, “Western Coal Mining as a Way of Life,” 49.

24 Ibid., 44.

25 Ibid., 45-46.

26 Munsell, *Redstone to Ludlow*, 118.


28 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Martha Todd, 5-6.

29 The Coal Project, Interview of Alex Bisulco (June 27, 1978), transcript no. 06278-1, 27.

30 The Coal Project, Interview of John Tomsic (April 28, 1978), transcript no. 04288-2, 4-5.

31 Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project, Interview of Ann Laney, 10.


33 The Coal Project, Interview of Donald Mitchell (February 5, 1978), 35-36.


35 The Coal Project, Interview of Mike Livoda (November 15, 1968), 9.
36 The Coal Project, Interview of Mike Livoda (September 20, 1980), 22.

37 The Coal Project, Interview of Kate Livoda (September 10, 1980), 54.

38 The Coal Project, Interview of Martha Todd, transcript no. 02058-4, 2.


42 Bowles and Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America, 194.


44 Brandes, American Welfare Capitalism, 56.

45 Bowers to Gates, September 21, 1910, Box 28, File 97, SUNY.

46 Murphy to Gates, October 3, 1910, Box 27, File 84, SUNY.

47 Gates to Bowers, October 8, 1910, Box 27, File 84, SUNY.

48 Bowers to Gates, October 11, 1910, Box 28, File 97, SUNY.

49 In 1910, the company had invested, by its own account, over $25,000,000 in the Minnequa steelworks, and the plant nevertheless had an assessed value of only a little over $2,500,000.

50 Bowers to Keating, October 24, 1910, Box 28, File 97, SUNY.

51 Corwin to Welborn, CF&I, Annual Report, 1906-1907, 6-7

52 Ibid.

53 Anonymous to Bowers, undated, Box 28, File 98, SUNY.

54 Bowers to Gates, January 17, 1911, Box 28, file 98, SUNY.

55 Ibid.
56 Bowers to Gates, February 28, 1911, Box 28, File 98, SUNY.

57 Child Labor Survey, Box 27, File 84, SUNY, Column 7.

58 Ibid., Column 9.

59 Ibid., Column 12.

60 Ibid., Column 14.

61 Ibid., Column 13.

62 Tarbell to CF&I, March 9, 1914, Box 27, File No. 88, SUNY.


65 Ibid., 85-86.


67 Ibid., 8491-8492.

68 Ibid. 8496-8497.

69 Ibid., 8497.

70 Ibid., 8498.

71 Ibid. Eugene Gaddis’ statement is included in its entirety as an exhibit, with his statements regarding the public schools outlined at 8910-8911.

72 Ibid., 8771.

73 Ibid.

74 Bowers to Wilson, November 8, 1912, RG 2 OMR, Series C, Box 23, Folder 210, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, RAC, 3-4.

Conclusion

The Irony of Industrial Welfare and Progressive Education

On October 2, 1915, after sweeping the coins off the table, Rockefeller continued to outline his “square deal” for the miners and their families. Contrary to the stated position of the Rockefeller Committee prior to the strike of 1913-1914, that Rockefeller was only interested in recouping his investment in CF&I, Rockefeller was now full of sympathy for the company’s employees. Rockefeller announced that he had gone into “scores” of the miners’ homes on his western tour, and met the families of the miners. He sympathized with the miners and their families and complimented them on their settlement in the camps:

I have looked at your gardens, and in camps where fences were only recently built have seen how eagerly you have planted gardens the moment the opportunity was afforded, an how quickly you have gotten the grass to grow, also flowers and vegetables, and how the interest in your homes has thereby increased. I inquired about the water supply at each camp; I went down into several of the mines and talked with hundreds of the miners; I looked into the schools, talked with the teachers, inquired what educational advantages your children were getting. I asked what opportunities you men, my partners, had for getting together socially, and I visited some of your club houses and saw plans for others. I went into your wash-houses and talked with the men before and after bathing.1

Two years after dismissing the welfare of the miners and their families, and after the some of the worst labor warfare seen in the United States, the miners were now, ironically, his “partners.”

But Rockefeller took this even further, as he reminded the miners that they had “pretty near slept together,” since it had been reported that Rockefeller had slept in a miner’s nightshirt. And he confessed that he would have been proud had that been true.2 Although Rockefeller had looked into the welfare of the miners’ children by asking about their school programs, his own company had, by 1915, completely divested itself of its previous support of its public school educational
programs through the Sociological Department. Whether for good or for ill, the Department’s activities had ceased, and the Department had failed to achieve almost all of its early goals.

There were many reasons for this failure. Henry Atkinson, speaking on behalf of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, observed that CF&I’s sociological work was only fragmentary and partially successful because the workers felt that the welfare work came at too high a price, and that philanthropy could not “fill the place of justice.” In the wake of Bowers’ resignation, Welborn, on behalf of the company, continued to maintain that the company’s interests in the schools and educational programs were exclusively philanthropic, and that any failure was due to the misunderstandings of the company’s critics in regard to the social and economic circumstances in the camps. He also attributed the failure to local school districts that had not provided good educational programs for “illiterate” camp children. Mike Livoda, an organizer for the UMWA, attributed the failure of the company’s efforts to the conspiracy of company and county officials as “tools of the coal corporation” and their treatment of the workers, “trying to make miners do like slaves.”

The Seventh Street Massacre

The death knell for the Sociological Department was the breakdown of labor relations and the violence of the long strike of 1913-1914. The strike was called on September 23, 1913, and the miners moved to the tent cities which had been established by the UMWA. Unfortunately, the winter of 1913 was one of the worst on record in Colorado, and as the strike dragged on through the winter there was great suffering on the part of the workers and their families. There were numerous violent incidents. Beginning in October, 1913, mine owners
hired many additional security agents and guards, which were stationed at the tent colonies and near the coal mining communities.

On October 24, 1913, violence broke out in Walsenburg when camp guards attempted to intervene and protect the homes of “scab” workers in the closed and guarded camp of Walsen. When the camp guards arrived in town that day, school was just letting out and a group of strikers, along with women and children coming from the Seventh Street School, started to harass and jeer the guards. The guards then moved out into the street, and began to threaten the crowd, and the crowd replied by yelling that the guards were “scab herders.” Some of the children returning home from school began throwing dirt clods at the guards. At that point, both armed striking workers and the guards exchanged gunfire, and when it was over two miners had been killed. UMWA officials later referred to this violent incident as the Seventh Street Massacre.6

Frances Nelson, whose family owned a boarding house on Seventh Street, was directly affected by the labor violence. Her father was a scab worker in Walsen at that time, and when she was a little girl she regularly carried bread to her father by walking around the striking miners’ homes on Seventh Street and handing the bread through the barbed wire around the camp. The guards recognized her, and allowed her to come and go as she pleased. Her uncle, Tim Valdez, was also one of the camp guards. On October 24, she was also coming home from school and noticed that everything was quiet, and there was no one on the street:

Of course, it had all happened already, and I was coming up the street and I don’t think anyone was walking with me. I remember being alone and as I approached the corner I saw this dead man lying in the middle of the street right between our house and the bakery, in that area some place, and I could see he had a pipe in his mouth. It was the queerest thing. I’ll never forget it.
Let’s see the schoolhouse was next door, about the fourth house up. I could see a man lying over the gate post and whether he was wounded or dead I don’t know. I think he was shot through the neck. 7

Nelson ran home and went into their boarding house. Nelson, contrary to the anti-union sentiments of most of her family, including her father, was in favor of the strike and admired Mother Jones even though she was too young to fully understand the reasons for the strike. Some of the men in the Nelson family, and some in the Atencio family to whom she was related, were scab miners and others were strikers. She stated that “she didn’t know which side to be on, so it was rather a strange situation.” 8 For Nelson, many lessons were learned that day as a school child, but none of them could have been intended by the administrative progressive officers of the Sociological Department.

In late October, 1913, the Governor of Colorado called out the state National Guard to intervene, but eventually many of the guards were hired by the company. On April 20, 1914, the tension and violence of the long strike culminated in the attack of Ludlow, one of the tent cities. Ultimately, the tent city was burned and many in the camp died in the fire. The day after what came to be known as the Ludlow Massacre, Bowers sent a telegram to Rockefeller reporting an “unprovoked attack upon a small force of militia” and suggested that Rockefeller give the information to “friendly” newspapers. 9 The Ludlow Massacre touched off a wave of violence through the coal camps as the UMWA retaliated. 10

The End of the Sociological Department

The UMWA’s activities were squarely based in their members’ belief that they lacked basic civil rights, and the power to control their own lives. In the aftermath of the 1913-1914 strike the federal government investigated the cause of the labor unrest and concluded that “the
striker’s passionately felt and believed that they were denied, not only a voice in fixing working conditions within the mines . . . but that political democracy, carrying with it rights and privileges guaranteed by the laws of the land, had likewise been flouted and repudiated by the owners.\textsuperscript{11} The result of this strike was ultimately considered to be “the weakening of a system of paternalistic despotism.”\textsuperscript{12} The hearings held in the wake of the strike of 1913-1914 raised the issue of whether or this type of system was even workable in a community in which “every man’s livelihood depends on the good will and the favor of a handful of men who control his opportunity to work.” The United States Commission on Industrial Relations concluded that “[e]xperience in the Colorado coal camps . . . proves that all the safeguards yet devised for the free exercise of the popular will are futile to prevent political domination when corporations or individuals control absolutely the political and economic life of the community.”\textsuperscript{13} The evidence of corporate callousness that surfaced during these hearings forced the company to reassess their goals for containment and control through industrial welfare programs.

Ultimately, the company curtailed the activities of the Sociological Department and divested itself of the paternal supervision of the social and educational programs which it had previously exercised in the camps and coal communities. During the height of the strike, in early April, Charles Towson, the Secretary of the Industrial Department of the Young Men’s Christian Association, had sent a query to Rockefeller asking if the company would be interested in turning over the social programs in the camps and communities to a “non-paternal” organization which was interested in welfare service in the camps. Towson pointed out to Rockefeller that the Y.M.C.A. had carried out such welfare activities in other places with good results, even though the Rockefeller interests had not, to date, considered such a program. Towson gave Rockefeller an opportunity to change his policy regarding such assistance, and argued that the Y.M.C.A.
could offer something which no “sociological department” could: non-paternal trained leadership, under careful supervision, which could objectively work for the physical, intellectual, and moral welfare of workers and their families. Rockefeller forwarded Towson’s letter to Bowers and Welborn, and by the following year the Y.M.C.A. was conducting its survey of social and economic conditions in the company’s camps.

The Implications of Irony

This study has explored the history of the Sociological Department from its inception as an industrial welfare programs for CF&I workers and their families from 1901-1915. In doing this research, I found it compelling that many historians had attributed varying levels of philanthropy, including the establishment and improvement of educational programs in the camps and steelworks community, to the work of the Department – while others vilified all the company’s efforts to provide such programs for its constituents. These different views of the essential conflict between capital and labor during the progressive era were often clouded by the assumptions made in regard to the Department’s programs. To Scamehorn, whose view of CF&I concentrated on the commercial achievements of the company, the Department’s educational programs were seen as benevolent. To Andrews, whose views were that the labor strife was an inevitable result of CF&I’s intransigence and oppression of the workers as they sought greater social and economic freedom, the work of the Department was simply a failed effort at assimilation and a further catalyst for the labor violence which followed. And yet, a different story was told by many of the children of miners and steelworkers during the era when the Department was active. To them, the schools and the social programs which were initiated by the Department were positive developments, and part of the establishment of a common identity
and community of immigrants and Hispanics in the camps and the steelworks. My purpose was to attempt to explain these differences by examining the origins of the programs, the experiences of the children, the purposes of the company in establishing the Department, and the effects of the Department’s work in education. In doing so, I wanted to “look behind” some of the well-established arguments of historians and take a fresh look at the available evidence.

What I found in doing the research for this study was that these differences are solidly rooted in the irony inherent in the company’s industrial welfare programs, especially in the context of the ideas underlying social and education reform in the progressive era. Both historical viewpoints are therefore, to a certain degree, justified. To the extent that the Department’s educational programs were deliberately intended to assimilate, acculturate, and thereby to control the workforce and reinforce class stratification, they did raise justifiable suspicions of “paternalism.” To company workers, and to the social reformers who did not support such efforts, the programs embodied everything that was unjust concerning any system of industrial welfare. Accordingly, there is ample evidence to support the theories of educational historians, such as Curti, as well as Bowles and Gintis, that progressive educational reforms were implemented to improve labor control, reproduce class structure, and “sort workers.” The company offered expanded educational programs to the children in the camps and around the steelworks only to the extent that the programs could be at least partially controlled and directed by company officials to create a vast source of tractable laborers. In doing so, the company pursued its own industrial goals of socio-economic efficiency and the dampening of potential social conflict.

To the extent, however, that the Department’s programs did result in improvements in local schools, as well as virtually universal access to education in the camps, they clearly had
beneficial qualities as well. Accordingly, there is evidence to support the theory of educational historians, such as Cremin, that school reforms at the outset of the progressive era was intended to meet the social needs of workers and their families. At its core, the irony of industrial welfare and progressive education describes a symbiotic relationship as argued by Wrigley, Reese, and other historians of education. Working families, including immigrants, were actively pursuing increased socio-economic standing, while corporate interests were actively pursuing increased social control and socio-economic stratification. To the extent they occurred at the same time describes the tension between the ideas of progressive social reformers and those of administrative progressives.

My own view is that this tension is what drove the programs in the first place. In southern Colorado, the forces at the heart of this irony played out in unique ways. Company officials never did come to fully understand that the paternal attitude of the company toward the workers and their families, and the company’s industrial welfare programs, were inherently at odds with ideas of social justice and democratic principles. This carried over into the work of the Department, which was heavily influenced by the ideas of the administrative progressives. Corwin and other Department officials co-opted ideas of progressive educators to create a system in which immigrants, Hispanics, and other “foreign” peoples living in the camps would be subject to greater levels of social control to insure efficient, productive, and profitable industrial activity. It is clear that company officials created the Sociological Department to train adults and children to be more tractable industrial workers through assimilation and acculturation. The evidence indicates that it was not their purpose, however noble their stated intention of Department officials – particularly in the early years – to create organic communities of immigrants and Hispanics living and working in the mining camps. Company officials clearly intended that the
Department’s main activity was to educate and inform both its workers and public opinion regarding the activities of large industrial corporations, create a positive image for such corporations, and minimize the risk of further labor organization and strife.

The Department did carry out some activities that directly supported the education of both children and adults in the camps and at the steelworks. The Department built and supported new schools in many of the newer camps, created kindergarten and domestic science educational programs, made efforts to standardize the curriculum in the primary grades, and hired well-trained professional educators to staff the schools. In doing so, the Department fostered a legitimate organically related and integrated system of human relationships among the miners and their families, and encouraged democratic participation across racial, ethnic, and national lines. The educational programs which were briefly put in place by the Sociological Department did, in fact, improve lives and social experiences in order to promote social stability.

Those efforts, however, proved to be short-lived. When it became clear to company officials, after the strike of 1903-1904, that the Department’s efforts to increase labor stability had not initially been effective, the budget of the Department was scaled back and many of the ambitious plans of the Department were abandoned. The short-term profit motive of the company, and the needs of the stockholders, clearly took immediate precedence over the Department’s industrial welfare programs. While the Sociological Department was active, it did increase the access to schooling for children in the camps and the quality of the educational programs which were available to workers and their families. The schools constructed or supported by the Department were newer and more modern physical plants than those one-room schools that had preceded them. All of the new camp schools offered graded instruction in the primary grades, with some schools offering instruction in secondary programs. The Department
also sometimes provided instructional supplies, textbooks, furniture, and other necessary support for the schools in the camps.

Ironically, to achieve its goals of social efficiency and class stratification, the Department was instrumental in insuring that the access to schooling was universally offered to children in the camps, without regard to race or ethnicity. All of these children in the camp schools were subject to many of the same assumptions regarding assimilation and acculturation. The evidence supporting this was quite surprising since, with the onset of increased Mexican immigration to Colorado in the period beginning in 1919, Hispano and Mexican children were increasingly marginalized in the public schools. Further, Department officials made efforts to insure that children actually attended the camp schools, and, in some cases, made efforts to involve “foreign” parents in the educational programs offered in the schools. As a result, the camp schools supported by the Department had higher attendance rates, and offered more consistent and comprehensive primary schooling, than other county public schools in the region. Often, teachers were encouraged, at least initially, to teach students in their native languages, but always with the goal of insuring the Americanization of children in the camps.

The Department’s emphasis on inclusiveness, despite its motives and goals, was also extended to schools in company communities such as Starkville. Company officials referred to two of the three schools in Starkville as “Spanish schools,” in which teaching was conducted both in English and Spanish by Hispano teachers and the schools were directed by predominantly Hispano community leaders. While the community of Starkville was segregated, as were its three schools, Hispanics living in the community did enjoy a measure of autonomy in regard to public education despite the company’s overall socio-economic control of the community.
Like in many of the Department’s educational programs, the efforts to assimilate and acculturate were carried out under a guise of paternal philanthropy. The aims of the Sociological Department’s kindergarten and domestic education programs, in particular, were essentially philanthropic but were often subverted by the Department’s overwhelmingly assimilationist goals. While many different types of educational activities and programs were offered to children under the auspices of the Department, and they did, by some measures, contribute to the creation of a community of children, they were calculated to insure social efficiency by preparing children for their roles as laborers in an industrial society. Within this structure, the Department’s teachers served roles as the “gardeners of children,” nurturing a generation of children to fulfill the national socio-industrial needs by providing a particular type and level of education. The Department’s domestic education programs were often hard-edged in that they explicitly designated groups of immigrant and Hispano children for attendance in classes and clubs which fostered training in manual occupations, under the assumption that these groups of children were particularly well-suited, in terms of their race and ethnicity, for futures as menial laborers.

It was also ironic that the Sociological Department’s education programs resulted in increased levels of commonality among the worker and their families in the camps. To the extent the workers were exploited, paid low wages, forced to live in relative poverty, and subjected to virtually complete company control, their children’s access to schooling and domestic educational programs resulted in a degree of inclusion which they otherwise would not have experienced. Because the workers and their families in the camps achieved a measure of commonality, class divisions became much more important than racial, ethnic, or nationalistic divisions. For example, although Hispano children were subject to many of the same
assumptions regarding assimilation and acculturation as children of immigrants in the camp schools influenced by the Department, this was based on class differentiation. Inclusion may therefore have been an incidental socio-economic effect, given the emphasis placed on the education of “foreign” children by Department officials. Unfortunately, as Donato argued, as marginalization and segregation of Hispano and Mexican immigrant children in Colorado became more pronounced in the 1920s due to the growing numbers of Mexican immigrants, and considerations of class differentiation became less important than racial or ethnic differentiation, the autonomy and voice of Hispanics was greatly lessened. In that sense, the camp schools were “closed” systems that only had a limited effect in providing, though schooling, autonomy and voice for Hispanics in southern Colorado.

Nevertheless, the Department’s educational programs helped to establish a sort of “melting-pot” to create new identity among the workers and their families. Ironically, the greater the level of industrial containment and control that was sought over the workers and their families, the greater their level of socio-economic empowerment. Contrary to the situation in many other areas of Colorado, Hispano children at least initially shared, to some extent, in the social and economic benefits provided by the Sociological Department, including a measure of increased access to higher quality schooling. The workers and their families in the camps did achieve, in some measure, harmonious organic social communities, based on the establishment of new identities, a new cultures, and new political power.

In doing the research for this study, I was also struck by the immense power of the administrative progressives to carry out their brand of educational reform during the progressive era. While many educational historians are, as Donato pointed out, apprehensive about making connections between their work and present policy matters, the parallels between the
administrative progressives during the progressive era and the “new” administrative progressives during this decade are inescapable. As Tyack has noted, the powerful schoolmen at the heart of educational reform in the progressive era defined the nature of the educational “problems” in ways that defied opposition. So, today, do the “new” administrative progressives, the proponents of vouchers, charter schools, increased federal funding and incentives to support reforms, alternative views of teacher preparation and service, as well as various efforts toward testing and “accountability,” define educational policy discussions in a manner which defy dissent. Ironically, instead of aggressively pursuing school centralization, standardization, and bureaucratization, the new administrative progressives are rapidly tearing down the structures established by schoolmen one hundred years ago. In their place, in an age of vast corporate socio-economic and political power, even the school districts have adopted corporate models of authoritarian administration. While I do not argue in this study that the efforts of administrative progressives to co-opt ideas of social reform during the progressive era was wholly negative, or the vast power that these men was wielded solely in the interests of industrialization and social efficiency, it is clear that those ideas were sometimes criticized by social reformers. It is also clear that the efforts of administrative progressives did result in further class stratification and reproduction. The public schools were expanded and made more efficient, but often those reforms came at a cost. Whether the current “top-down” corporate models of education carried out to further the economic purposes of education, like those established one hundred years ago, are capable of improving the educational experiences and, ultimately, the quality of life, for future generations of children is unclear. Whether schools become harmonious communities in which the individual educational experiences of children are recognized and nurtured, or simply
more efficient sorting mechanisms, serving the social, political, and especially the economic
needs of corporate interests, has yet to be seen.

In the final analysis, CF&I’s specific industrial goals, which included social efficiency
and class stratification, clearly defined the Sociological Department’s efforts to provide
industrial welfare programs to workers and their families in the camps. In less than fifteen years,
however, the company had essentially abandoned its efforts to improve the quality of life for its
employees and their families through the work of the Sociological Department in favor of their
short-term goals of profit, paying dividends to stockholders, and exploiting its workers. While
the Department’s educational programs survived, they did provide a social mechanism for
unifying the interests of the workers and their families – despite the focus on Americanization
and training children to take up their roles as menial laborers in an industrial society. In this
sense, the schools became centers for the establishment of community. But the community
values developed in the camps as the result of increased opportunities for schooling were
incidental. The company intended to control the workers and their families, and the workers
were working for an increased measuring of socio-economic empowerment. The Department
could not sustain the growth and application of the more progressive aspects of its educational
programs, and, as a result, the only appreciable improvement in the lives of the workers and the
families were those elements of commonality and community which they adapted and forged,
especially, on their own.
Notes

Conclusion

The Irony of Industrial Welfare and Progressive Education

1 Rockefeller, To the Employes, Address of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.,” 45-46.

2 Ibid.


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5 The Coal Project, Interview of Mike Livoda, 49.


7 The Coal Project, Interview of Frances Nelson, 1-3.

8 Ibid., 6.

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15 Rockefeller to Bowers, April 14, 1914, Box 27, File 88, SUNY.

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**Theses and Dissertations**


**Transcripts of Oral Histories/Audio Recordings**

Huerfano County Ethno-Cultural Project (Walsenburg, CO: Archives, Spanish Peaks Public Library)(HCECP). The audio tapes upon which the transcriptions were done are held in the Huerfano County Historical Society Archives, Walsenburg, Colorado.

- Oren and Ethel Benson (May 31, 1979)
- Minnie Grace Branch (January 8, 1980)
- Pedro Castro (June 2, 1979)
- Eloyda Cisneros (July 19, 1980)
- Clarence Cordova (undated)
- Ann and Walt Laney, Jake and Cora Hribar (undated)
- Anna Lucero (November 28, 1978)
- Adam Maldonado (July 19, 1979)
- Escolastica Martinez (undated)
- Dan Mitchell (December 10, 1979)
- Agnes Mozar (undated)
- Frances Nelson (September 26, 1979)
Beatrice Nogare (undated)
Alfred Owens (July 24, 1979)
Jose Evan Pacheco and Estella Vigil Pacheco (undated)
Alfonso Pineda (undated)
Manuel Reyes Martinez (January 5, 1980)
Vinzie Scarfotti and Ann Orr (January 16, 1980)
Robert Riley (November, 1980)
Alton and Mary Tirey (undated)
Jeanette Thach (July, 1979)
Martha Todd (April 16, 1980)
Lupe and Anna Pino (June 20, 1979)
Minnie Ugolini and Arthur Bellotti (December 13, 1979)


Victor Bazanele (August 23, 1978)
Alex Bisulco (June 27, 1978)
Dan DeSantis (January 19, 1978)
Tony Hungaro (March 8, 1978)
Kate Livoda (September 20, 1980)
Mike Livoda (November 15, 1968)
Bill Lloyd (May 18, 1978)
Don Mitchell (February 5, 1978)
Frances Nelson (October 17, 1979)
Alfred Owens (February 5, 1978)
Yvonne Picket (March 8, 1978)
Susie Somsky (February 2, 1984)
Martha Todd (August 22, 1978)
John and Caroline Tomsic (April 28, 1978)
Angela Tonso (undated)